NEXT IAS

# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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# PERSISTENCE OF UNTOUCHABILITY DESPITE CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL SAFEGUARDS

## Context

- The purifying ceremony in Uttarakhand in August 2026 has reignited the discussion over the survival of untouchability despite constitutional and legal safeguards.

## What is Untouchability?

- Untouchability is a **historically entrenched form of caste-based exclusion** based on ritual of purity and pollution.
- It involves **denying individuals equal access to social spaces, resources and opportunities** because of their caste identity.

## Provisions Against Untouchability

- **Constitutional Provisions:**
  - **Article 15**: No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them, be subject to any disability, liability, restriction or condition with regard to;
    - access to shops, public restaurants, hotels and places of public entertainment; or
    - the use of wells, tanks, bathing ghats, roads and places of public resort maintained wholly or partly out of State funds or dedicated to the use of the general public.
  - **Article 17** has abolished the practice of untouchability in all its forms.
- **Legal Framework:**
  - **Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955** penalises the practice of untouchability and the enforcement of associated disabilities.
  - **The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, prevents** the commission of offences of atrocities against the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, to provide for the trial of such offences and for the relief and rehabilitation of the victims of such offences.

## Factors Behind the Persistence of Untouchability

- **Sociological Factors:**
  - **Purity and Pollution:** Traditional beliefs associating certain castes with impurity continue to sustain social exclusion.
  - **Caste as a System of Social Reproduction:** Family structures, kinship networks and social customs perpetuate caste hierarchies across generations.
  - **Endogamy:** Restrictions on inter-caste marriages reinforce caste identities and social divisions.
- **Cultural Factor:**
  - **Normalisation of Discrimination:** Practices such as separate utensils, segregated seating and restrictions on temple entry are sometimes justified as customary traditions.
- **Economic Factors:**
  - **Caste–Class Intersection:** Landlessness, insecure employment and economic dependence on dominant caste groups discourage victims from challenging discrimination.
  - **Occupational segregation:** The persistence of manual scavenging and hazardous sanitation work illustrates how caste-based occupational exclusion can survive despite legal prohibitions and rehabilitation measures.

## Key Judicial Intervention

- **Devarajiah v. B. Padmanna (1957):** The Mysore High Court ruled that "untouchability" under Article 17 cannot be interpreted in its literal or grammatical sense.
  - Instead, it refers specifically to the historical system of caste-based social disabilities imposed on individuals purely by virtue of their birth.
- **State of Karnataka v. Appa Balu Ingale (1992):** The Supreme Court held that the caste system must be totally dismantled for democracy and human dignity, emphasising the rigorous enforcement of the **Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955.**
- **Surya Narayan Choudhary v. State of Rajasthan (1988):** The Rajasthan High Court ruled that imposing caste-specific, ritualistic conditions for temple entry is a direct form of untouchability.
  - It held that conditions cannot be placed on one section of society if they are not applied to everyone else.
- **Sukanya Shantha v. Union of India (2024):** The Supreme Court held that **Article 17** extends beyond physical exclusion to any discriminatory treatment based on presence or touch.

### Measures Required Beyond Legal Prohibition

- **Reform education:** Incorporate equality, dignity and anti-caste social reform into curricula and sensitise teachers against discriminatory practices.
- **Promote social integration:** Encourage shared public facilities, inclusive neighbourhoods and inter-caste social interaction to weaken everyday caste boundaries.
- **Introduce accessible civil remedies:** Consider effective mechanisms for addressing discrimination and securing remedies, alongside criminal prosecution where offences occur.
- **Strengthen enforcement:** Ensure prompt registration of complaints, impartial investigation, time-bound trials and effective victim protection.

**Source: TH**

## CENTRAL ARMED POLICE FORCES ACT COMES INTO FORCE

### Context

- The Central Armed Police Forces (General Administration) Act, 2026 came into force from October 8, 2026.

### Major Highlights of the Act

- **Aim:** To regulate recruitment, deputation, promotion, and other service conditions for the paramilitary officers.
- **Power to Make Rules:** It empowers the central government to make Rules on matters related to officers of specified CAPFs.
- It will retain deputation of IPS officers **in the five CAPFs:**
    - the Border Security Force (BSF), the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), the Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), and the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) in leadership positions.
- **Reserving Posts:** It will reserve **67%** of additional director general posts and **50%** of inspector general posts for IPS officers on deputation.
    - The posts in the ranks of Special DG and DG shall be filled exclusively by deputation.
- The government argues that **IPS officers are necessary** in the interest of maintaining Centre-state relationship and ensuring close coordination between the Union and the states.

### Background

- **In 2015, Group A officers of the CAPFs** approached the court seeking Non Functional Financial Upgradation (NFFU), cadre review, restructuring, and changes to recruitment rules **to eliminate IPS deputation and enable internal promotions to Senior Administrative Grade (SAG).**
- In the case of **Sanjay Prakash & Others vs Union of India, 2025**, the Supreme Court ruled that:
    - **Group A officers of CAPFs** are to be treated as **"Organised Services"** for all purposes.
        - **An Organised Group A Service** has a defined cadre structure, hierarchy, promotional avenues and cadre-controlling mechanism, as opposed to isolated Group A posts.
    - The deputation of IPS officers to SAG posts i.e., up to the rank of Inspector General (IG), in CAPFs should be **progressively reduced within an outer limit of two years.**
    - The court also asked for a **time-bound review** of cadre and framing of service rules in six months.
- **Purpose of the Ruling:** The decision aimed to ensure **fair career progression** for CAPF cadre officers and to curb the longstanding dominance of deputed IPS officers within CAPFs.

### Earlier Organisational Setup of CAPF

- **The Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) include** the Border Security Force, Central Industrial Security Force, Central Reserve Police Force, Sashastra Seema Bal, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, NSG & Assam Rifles.
    - The **Ministry of Home Affairs** is the cadre-controlling authority for both IPS and CAPF officers.
    - However, while the Assam Rifles is under the **administrative control of the MHA**, its operational control rests with the Ministry of Defence (MoD).
    - The Centre had mentioned that the deputation of IPS officers was necessary to **maintain the operational readiness of the forces and to ensure Centre-State coordination.**
- **Reserved Seats:** 20% of Deputy Inspector General (DIG) posts and 50% of Inspector General (IG) posts in CAPFs are reserved for IPS officers.

### Concerns of IPS Appointments in CAPFs

- **Stagnation in Career Progression:** Due to high reservation of senior ranks for IPS officers, **CAPF cadre officers face limited promotional opportunities.**
  - On average, a CAPF officer takes 25 years to reach the rank of Commandant, a position they should ideally achieve in 13 years.
- **Organisational Autonomy:** The continued deputation of IPS officers hampers institutional autonomy and the long-term professionalization of CAPFs as elite forces.
- **Articles 14** (Right to Equality) and **Articles 16** (Equality of Opportunity in Public Employment) come into play, as CAPF cadre officers are denied equal promotional avenues compared to their IPS counterparts.

### Way Ahead

- **Balance Experience and Merit:** A balanced deputation policy should utilise the administrative experience of IPS officers while ensuring adequate leadership opportunities for CAPF cadre officers based on merit, experience and professional expertise.
- **Strengthen Career Progression:** Transparent, time-bound promotions and regular cadre reviews should address stagnation among CAPF officers while maintaining operational efficiency and organisational effectiveness.

**Conclusion:**

- CAPFs are vital to India's internal security and border management.
- A transparent and constitutionally sound service framework that balances operational requirements with merit-based career progression will strengthen morale, institutional autonomy and the overall effectiveness of these forces.

**Source: TH**

## GST 2.0 UPGRADE

### Context

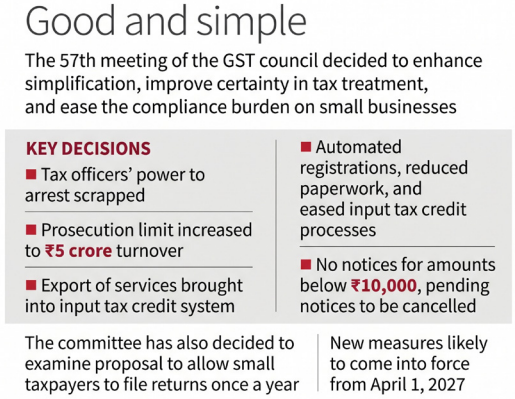
- The **57th GST Council meeting** introduced major process and enforcement reforms, including easing registration, refunds and litigation, while proposing to raise the prosecution threshold from **₹1 crore to ₹5 crore**.

### About GST Council

- The **GST Council** is a constitutional body established under **Article 279A**, inserted by the **101st Constitutional Amendment Act, 2016**.
- It is **chaired by the Union Finance Minister** and comprises the Union Minister of State for Finance/Revenue and Finance/Taxation Ministers of States.
- It embodies **cooperative federalism**, with the **Centre having one-third of the weighted voting power** and **States collectively having two-thirds.**
- The Council recommends GST rates, exemptions, model laws, principles of levy and other major GST-related matters.

### Key Decisions & Reforms at the 57th GST Council Meeting

- **Trust-based Enforcement:**
  - Recommended **removal of arrest powers of GST officers**.
  - **Prosecution threshold** proposed to rise from **₹1 crore to ₹5 crore**.
  - General penalty reduced from **₹25,000 to ₹10,000**.
  - Goods in inter-State movement can be inspected/detained/seized only by the **supplier or destination State officer**.
  - Interception will require **specific intelligence** and authorisation of an officer not below Joint Commissioner.
- **Simplified Registration:**
  - Greater certainty regarding documents required for registration.
  - At present, **61% of taxpayers receive automatic registration within three working days**.
  - Low-risk taxpayers will face fewer queries and rejections.
  - Small e-commerce sellers can register in **one State**, rather than every State where they sell.



- **Faster refunds and ITC:**
  - Refund applications are proposed to be acknowledged within **10 days instead of 15 days**.
  - About **90% of claims** are expected to be released within **three working days of acknowledgement**, based on risk assessment.
  - Reforms also seek to reduce hold-ups in **Input Tax Credit (ITC)**.
- **Relief For Small Businesses:**
  - An optional annual-return scheme is proposed for **B2C businesses with turnover up to ₹5 crore**, subject to final approval.
  - Amendments and cancellation of GST registration are also being simplified.
- **Digital & Predictable Taxation:**
  - **Faceless assessment** for Central GST is proposed, similar to income-tax assessment.
  - GST rate changes will henceforth be considered **once a year** and implemented from the beginning of the subsequent financial year.
- Most changes are expected from **1 April 2027**.

### Significance for India

- **Ease of Doing Business:** Lower compliance costs can particularly benefit MSMEs and small e-commerce firms.
- **Taxpayer Confidence:** Reduced coercive powers and trust-based enforcement can encourage voluntary compliance.
- **Lower Logistics Friction:** Specific-intelligence-based interception can reduce arbitrary stoppage of inter-State goods.
- **Faster Working Capital:** Quicker refunds and smoother ITC release can improve business cash flows.
- **Cooperative Federalism:** Clearer allocation of enforcement powers can reduce Centre-State and inter-State friction.
- **Administrative Efficiency:** Risk-based and faceless systems can shift GST administration from physical scrutiny towards data-driven compliance.

### Related Challenges

- Balancing **taxpayer rights with action against fraud, fake invoices and ITC misuse**.
- Risk-based systems require high-quality data, cybersecurity and robust algorithms.
- Annual rate-setting may improve predictability but could reduce flexibility during economic shocks.
- Smaller firms may continue to face difficulties due to digital literacy and frequent procedural changes.
- Effective implementation requires coordination among Centre, States and GSTN.

### Way Forward

- The next phase of GST reform should focus on **stable rules, predictable litigation, stronger data analytics and taxpayer facilitation**.
- A transparent faceless system, time-bound refunds, effective appellate mechanisms and targeted action against deliberate evasion can help realise the vision of **'minimum intrusion, maximum compliance'.**

Source: TH

## INDIA'S CEMENT SECTOR STANDS IN ITS WAY TO NET-ZERO EMISSIONS

### Context

- India aims to become a **net-zero emissions economy by 2070,** achieving it requires the Indian government to **reduce emissions from the construction sector.**

### About

- **By 2047,** India plans to become an economically developed country and **by 2070,** it aims to become a net-zero emissions economy.
  - Achieving both of these targets requires the Indian government to deal with one of the most important sources of emissions that is **construction.**
- This **sector consumes steel and cement,** among other materials, and its footprint contributes **35% to 40%** of all greenhouse gas emissions around the world.
  - **Most of these emissions** are because of the energy that the steel and cement sectors need to reach extremely high temperatures required for industrial processes.
  - But even between the two, the cement sector also emits carbon when calcifying limestone.

### Indian Cement Sector

- India is the **world's second-largest** cement producer **after China,** contributing about **13%** of global annual cement output.

- There are **333 cement manufacturing units** in India comprising 159 integrated, large cement plants; 116 grinding units; 62 mini cement plants; and five clinkerization units
- **India's production of about 391 Mt** of cement results in roughly 246 MtCO2e of emissions i.e. around **6% of national greenhouse gas emissions.**
- **Extraction of Limestone:** Limestone is the **raw material for cement**. It is formed when **calcium-rich marine life,** such as oysters and corals, is **fossilised and compressed** over millions of years.
  - Accessing it requires miners to first clear forests and all layers of fertile soil in specific areas to expose the sedimentary rock layer.
  - Limestone can be found 30-60 m under the topsoil in **Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, and Andhra Pradesh** and at more shallow depths in **Rajasthan.**
- **Calcination: Limestone is mixed with clay** and heated to around 1,450° C. This heating process alone accounts for **r 35% to 40% of emissions** from cement-making; the rest comes from the chemical breakdown of limestone.
  - During the process it releases **carbon dioxide as a by-produc**t along with small stone-like balls called clinkers.
  - They are crushed into **powder and mixed in several ratios with gypsum and fly ash** and sold as the various cement types available on the market.

## Suggestions

- **Traditional Building Materials:** Lime mortar, used in structures such as the Taj Mahal, and lime-based binders combined with volcanic materials used in ancient Roman buildings demonstrate the potential of traditional alternatives.
- **Refuse-Derived Fuel (RDF):** Processed combustible waste can replace coal and petroleum coke in cement kilns.
  - NITI Aayog recommends achieving a 20% thermal substitution rate by 2030, potentially reducing emissions by around 80 million tonnes of $CO_2$ equivalent cumulatively.
- **Reducing Clinker Content:** Replacing clinker with industrial by-products such as fly ash and blast-furnace slag can reduce emissions.
  - According to the International Energy Agency, replacing one tonne of clinker can avoid approximately 0.83 tonnes of $CO_2$ emissions.
- **Promoting Blended Cement:** Portland Pozzolana Cement (PPC) and Portland Slag Cement (PSC) contain less clinker than Ordinary Portland Cement (OPC), making them lower-carbon alternatives.
- **Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage (CCUS):** Since limestone calcination releases $CO_2$ through a chemical reaction, even a shift to cleaner fuels cannot eliminate all emissions. CCUS is therefore an important option for addressing residual emissions.

## Challenges in Adopting Green Cement

- **Structural Performance and Strength:** Builders often prefer OPC because it develops strength more quickly, whereas some blended cements take longer to gain strength.
- **Industry Preference:** The construction industry is deeply accustomed to conventional cement because of its established standards, supply chains, commercial availability and widespread use.
- **Waste Management:** Poor segregation of municipal solid waste limits the availability and quality of RDF for industrial use.
- **Limited Substitution:** Excessive replacement of clinker or conventional fuels may affect cement performance, depending on the materials and production process. Substitution must comply with technical and safety standards.
- **Lack of Commercial Infrastructure:** Traditional building materials and alternative binders often lack the standardisation, supply networks and large-scale manufacturing capacity available for cement.

## Way Forward

- **Government Procurement:** Increase the procurement of certified low-carbon cement for public infrastructure projects to create initial demand and encourage wider adoption.
- **Improve Waste Segregation:** Strengthen source-level segregation, waste processing and RDF supply chains to enable cement plants to use more waste-derived fuels.
- **Promote Research and Innovation:** Invest in CCUS, alternative binders, energy-efficient kilns and low-carbon construction materials.
- **Revise Construction Practices:** Encourage architects, engineers and builders to adopt alternative materials and designs wherever technically suitable, supported by reliable testing and standards.

**Source: TH**

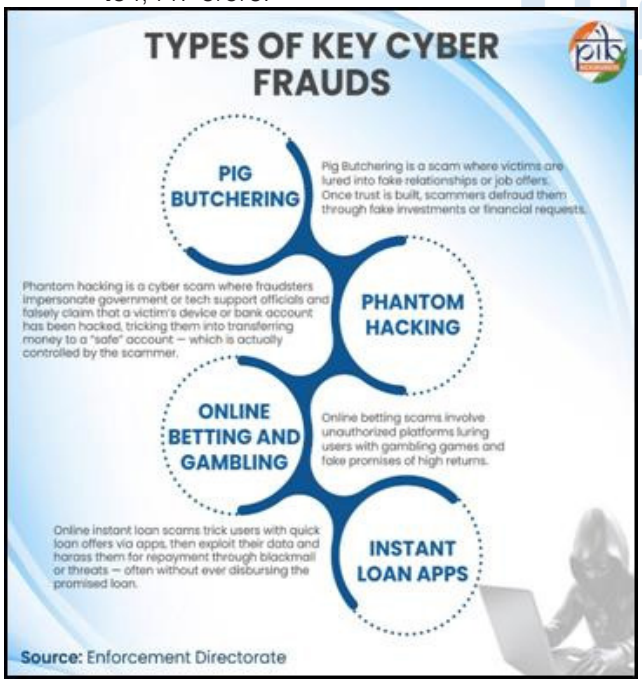
# PM MODI CALLS FOR GLOBAL COOPERATION ON CYBERCRIME

## Context

- At the India Mobile Congress 2026, PM Modi called for a global mechanism to prevent cyber fraud proactively following concerns over cross-border scam networks highlighted in the BRICS summit declaration.

## What is Cybercrime?

- Cybercrime is the use of digital technologies such as computers and the internet to commit criminal activities.
- These cases are **financial fraud** (credit card fraud, online transaction fraud), **crime against women and children** with regard to sexually explicit material, and **deep fake content** etc.
- According to the **Seventh Schedule** of the Indian Constitution, cybercrimes are within the **purview of state subjects.**
- **Cyber Crime Scenario in India:**
  - There were **98 lakh cybercrime complaints** registered between 2019 and 2026.
  - **Only 2.3 lakh FIRs** were registered, resulting in an FIR conversion rate of **2.36%.**
  - **Reported cybercrime losses** (2021– 2026): ₹64,447 crore.




## Reasons for increase in Cybercrime

- **Rapid Digitalization:** With a growing number of individuals and businesses relying on the Internet and digital technologies there are more opportunities for cybercriminals to exploit vulnerabilities.
- **Large Internet User Base:** India has **95 crore** Internet users. With a large population using the internet, there are more potential targets for cybercriminals, making it a lucrative market for cyberattacks.
- **Inadequate Cybersecurity Infrastructure:** Many organisations, especially smaller businesses, may not have robust cybersecurity measures in place, making them easy targets for cybercriminals.
- **Payment Systems Vulnerability:** With the rise of digital payments and online transactions, there is an increased risk of financial crimes such as phishing, credit card fraud, and online scams.
  - In 2024, India saw UPI (Unified Payments Interface) transactions worth about **Rs 20,64,000 crore** which is **46 percent** of the global digital transactions.

## Effects of Cybercrime

- **Financial Losses:** Cybercrime leads to substantial financial losses for individuals and organizations through theft of funds, fraudulent activities, or the cost of restoring compromised systems.
- **National Security Concerns:** Cyberattacks with a geopolitical motive pose national security threats. The attacks target government agencies, critical infrastructure, or defense systems, compromising a nation's security.
- **Data Breaches:** The unauthorized access and theft of sensitive data compromises the confidentiality of personal and financial information, causing reputational damage and potential legal consequences.
- **Disruption of Services:** Cyberattacks disrupt essential services and critical infrastructure, impacting businesses, governments, and individuals.
- **Loss of Intellectual Property:** Businesses suffer from the theft of intellectual property, trade secrets, and proprietary information which undermine competitiveness and innovation, leading to economic repercussions.

## Steps taken against Cybersecurity

- **Information Technology Act, 2000:** Section 43, 66, 70, and 74 of the IT Act, 2000 deal with hacking and cyber crimes.

- **Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In)** issues alerts and advisories regarding latest cyber threats/vulnerabilities and countermeasures to protect computers and networks on a regular basis.
- **National Cyber Coordination Centre (NCCC**) has been set up to generate necessary situational awareness of existing and potential cyber security threats and enable timely information sharing for proactive, preventive and protective actions by individual entities.
- **Cyber Swachhta Kendra (Botnet Cleaning and Malware Analysis Centre)** has been launched for detection of malicious programs and provides free tools to remove the same.
- **Chakshu Facility:** It is a newly introduced feature on the **Sanchar Saathi portal** that encourages citizens to proactively report suspected fraudulent communications received via call, SMS, or WhatsApp.
- **Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C):** It was established in **2018** under the Central Sector Scheme within the Cyber and Information Security Division of the **Ministry of Home Affairs.**
  - It provides a framework and eco-system for Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) to deal with Cybercrime in a coordinated and comprehensive manner.
- **E-Zero FIR Initiative:** Launched by the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** to enable swift registration and investigation of cyber financial crime cases.
  - The system automatically converts cyber financial crimes filed at NCRP or 1930 to FIRs, initially above the threshold limit of **₹10 lakh.**

**International Measures**

- **Budapest Convention:** It is the 1st international treaty to address cybercrime. India is not a signatory to the treaty.
- **Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN):** It is a US-based not-for-profit organization for coordinating & maintenance of several databases.
- **Internet Governance Forum:** It is the United Nations forum for multi-stakeholder policy dialogue on Internet governance issues.

### Way Ahead

- India is at the crossroads of digital transformation and cyber threats, where it has become both an iron pillar of progress and a magnet for cyber fraudsters.
- Realising the vision of Digital India, the government's multi-layered cyber response team is facilitating fraud prevention and disrupting thousands of scam operations.
- Advanced forensics, big data analytics, and indigenous tools have bolstered national cyber resilience.

**Source: TH**

# NEWS IN SHORT

## GROSS DOMESTIC KNOWLEDGE PRODUCT

### Context

- The NITI Aayog member said that India is working on a **"Gross Domestic Knowledge Product" (GDKP).**

### Gross Domestic Knowledge Product (GDKP)

- It is a proposed concept for **measuring the knowledge generated, accumulated, shared and applied** within a country, rather than assessing its economic performance solely through **Gross Domestic Product (GDP).**
- **GDP measures the monetary value** of final goods and services produced, whereas GDKP would focus on a **country's knowledge resources** and their contribution to development.
  - GDKP could consider **research and development (R&D), scientific discoveries, patents, innovation and academic output.**
- **At present, all expenditures on Intellectual Property Products (IPP)** are recorded under **Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF)** — the indicator for capital investments in the GDP dataset for the economy.

### What Is the Knowledge Economy?

- A knowledge economy is one **where human capital** like skills, information, innovation, and intellectual property drives growth, rather than physical inputs or natural resources.
- It operates on **two types of knowledge:**
  - **Codified Knowledge**: Documented, transmittable (know-what, know-why) like patents, software, academic research
  - **Tacit Knowledge:** Experience-based, harder to transfer (know-how, know-who) like artisanal skills, traditional medicine.

- In major OECD economies, knowledge-based activities contribute **over 50% of GDP.**
- **India's IT sector, start-up ecosystem**, pharmaceutical R&D, and traditional knowledge systems are all part of this, yet remain invisible in standard national accounts.

**Source: BS**

## THE NATIONAL SC-ST HUB (NSSH)

### Context

- The **National SC-ST Hub (NSSH)** is emerging as an important initiative to strengthen entrepreneurship among Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities.

### National SC-ST Hub

- It was launched in **2016** by the **Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME).**
- The scheme helps address barriers faced by SC/ST-owned enterprises and supports their participation in public procurement.
- **Implemented through** the National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC).
- **Enterprise development initiatives under NSSH include** training, mentoring, business development, networking and knowledge support.




- **Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Assam** emerged as the five leading States under the scheme.
- **Financial Support:** New and existing SC/ST-owned MSEs can receive a 25% capital subsidy, capped at ₹25 lakh, for investment in plant, machinery and equipment financed through institutional credit.
- **Single Point Registration Scheme (SPRS):** SPRS helps MSEs access Government procurement opportunities through registration with NSIC. Registered MSEs receive free tender sets and exemption from payment of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD).
- **Marketing Assistance:** The Special Marketing Assistance Scheme (SMAS) supports SC/ST enterprises in improving product visibility and competitiveness through exhibitions, trade fairs, workshops and awareness campaigns.
- **Reducing the cost of doing business:** Under the Bank Loan Processing Reimbursement Scheme, enterprises can receive reimbursement of 80% of loan processing fees or ₹1 lakh, whichever is lower.
- **Market Access:** Beyond financial assistance and market access, the National SC-ST Hub provides structured mentorship through its Business Accelerator Programme (BAP).

**Source: PIB**

## BRAHMOS

### Context

- The Ministry of Defence has signed a contract worth over 660 crore rupees with BrahMos Aerospace Private Limited for procurement of BrahMos Fire Control System and Launchers for Indian Navy ships.

### About

- The BrahMos System fitted onboard various frontline warships is the Indian Navy's primary Surface to Surface Missile system for maritime strike operations.

### BrahMos Missile

- **Joint Venture:** Between **DRDO (India)** and **NPO Mashinostroyeniya (Russia)**.
- **Name Origin:** Derived from the **Brahmaputra (India)** and **Moskva (Russia)** rivers.
- **First Test:** Conducted on **June 12, 2001**.
  - **Induction Timeline**: Navy (2005), Army (2007) and IAF (2017).
- **Type:** "Fire and forget" supersonic cruise missile — can be launched from **land, sea, or air** in all-weather conditions, and is nearly **impossible to intercept**.
- **Combat Use:** Reportedly used for the first time during **Operation Sindoor**.

- **Speed:**
  - Current: Mach 2.8 (Supersonic)
  - Future: Mach 5+ (Hypersonic version under development)
- **Range**:
  - Initially 290 km (under MTCR limit)
  - Extended to **400 km**, with a **600+ km** variant under development.
- **Stages:** BrahMos is a **two-stage missile** with a solid propellant booster engine.
  - Its first stage brings the missile to supersonic speed and then gets separated.
  - The liquid ramjet or the second stage then takes the missile closer to three times the speed of sound in the cruise phase.

**Source: AIR**

## SAREX-2026

### Context

- The Indian Coast Guard conducted the **12th National Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise (SAREX-2026)** off Paradip, Odisha.

### About

- The exercise witnessed participation by **32 international observers from 30 countries**, highlighting international cooperation and interoperability in maritime Search and Rescue (SAR).
- The exercise simulated a Mass Rescue Operation (MRO) involving simultaneous aeronautical and maritime distress situations.
- SAREX-2026 aimed to strengthen a faster, technology-enabled and coordinated Search and Rescue framework, aligned with India's vision of SAGAR and the spirit of MAHASAGAR.

**Source: PIB**

## NOBEL LITERATURE PRIZE 2026

### Context

- The 2026 Nobel Prize in Literature has been awarded to C**anadian author Anne Carson** "for her bold and inventive oeuvre that, in playful dialogue with the classical tradition, has created new forms for contemporary literature."

### About

- Born in 1950 in Toronto, Canada, **Anne Carson is a poet, essayist, translator and classicist** whose work often brings ancient Greek literature into dialogue with contemporary experiences.



- Her notable works include **The Glass Essay (1995), Autobiography of Red: A Novel in Verse (1998) and Float (2016)**, reflecting her experimental approach to literary form and genre.

### Nobel Prize

- The Nobel Prize in Literature is **one of the five Nobel Prizes** established by the will of **Alfred Nobel in 1895.**
- It is **awarded annually**, since 1901, to an author from any country who has produced the most outstanding work in the field of literature in an idealistic direction.
- The award is generally based on an author's body of work as a whole.

### Do you know?

- Rabindranath Tagore is the **only Indian to have received the Nobel Prize in Literature so far.**
- He was awarded the prize in 1913 for Gitanjali, a body of verse whose spare lyricism and philosophical clarity carried Bengali poetry to a world audience.
- He was also the first Asian to win a Nobel Prize.

**Source: TH**

## NOBEL PEACE PRIZE 2026

### Context

- The 2026 Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded to Navanethem "Navi" Pillay for her efforts to promote peace and international law.

### About

- Born into a family of Indian Tamil origin under apartheid in Durban, South Africa, Pillay became a lawyer and legal pioneer, confronting deep structural discrimination, segregation and exclusion.
- She chaired the United Nations Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which concluded in 2025 that Israel had committed genocide in Gaza.

### Nobel Peace Prize

- The prize is awarded by the Norwegian Nobel Committee, whose members are appointed by the Norwegian Parliament.
- The first Nobel Peace Prize was awarded in 1901, jointly to Frédéric Passy of France and Henry Dunant of Switzerland, a co-founder of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).
- It can be awarded to individuals and organisations, but individuals cannot be awarded the prize posthumously.

**Do you know?**

- Mahatma Gandhi was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize five times but never received it, despite his ideals closely align with the UN Charter.

**Source: DDNews**

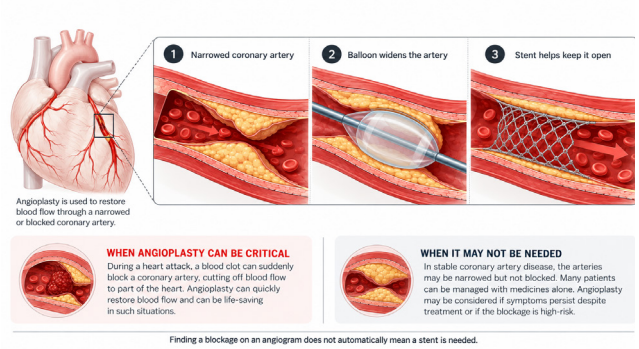
## ANGIOPLASTY

### Context

- The Chief Minister of Keralam called for a campaign against unnecessary **angioplasty.**

### What is an angioplasty?

- An angioplasty is a procedure to open a narrowed or blocked heart artery with a small balloon, often followed by **placement of a stent** or a mesh bridge to keep it wide enough for oxygenated blood to flow.
- **Modern stents are drug-coated** with clotting medicines and are designed to last a lifetime.




**Source: IE**