

APRIL-2026  
**PULSE**



**MONTHLY**  
**CURRENT**  
**AFFAIRS**  
**MAGAZINE**



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### IMPORTANT DAYS:

Date	Day / Celebrated As	Theme (2026)	Significance
1 April	Odisha Day (Utkal Divas)	—	· Formation of Odisha (1936) · First linguistic state
2 April	World Autism Awareness Day	<b>Advancing Neurodiversity and Inclusion</b>	· By UN· Rights & inclusion of autistic individuals
4 April	International Day for Mine Awareness	<b>Safe Ground, Safe Lives</b>	· By UN· Focus on landmine removal & civilian safety
5 April	National Maritime Day (India)	<b>Maritime India – Empowering Progress</b>	· Marks SS Loyalty voyage (1919) · Importance of maritime trade
5 April	International Day of Conscience	<b>Promoting Peace with Conscience</b>	· By UN· Ethical awareness & peaceful coexistence
6 April	International Day of Sport for Development and Peace	<b>Sport for Inclusion and Peace</b>	· By UN· Sports as tool for social change
7 April	World Health Day	<b>My Health, My Right</b>	· By WHO· Universal health access awareness
10 April	World Homoeopathy Day	<b>"Homoeopathy for Sustainable Health"</b>	· Birth anniversary of Samuel Hahnemann· Promotes alternative medicine
11 April	National Safe Motherhood Day (India)	<b>Equity in Maternal Healthcare: Leaving No Mother Behind</b>	· Focus on maternal healthcare · Reduce maternal mortality
13 April	Jallianwala Bagh Remembrance Day	—	· Honors victims of 1919 massacre · Colonial history awareness
14 April	Ambedkar Jayanti	—	· Birth anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar · Social justice & Constitution



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<b>17 April</b>	World Haemophilia Day	<b>Equitable Access for All</b>	· Awareness on bleeding disorders· By World Federation of Hemophilia
<b>18 April</b>	World Heritage Day	<b>Heritage Under Threat from Disasters and Conflicts</b>	· By UNESCO· Protect cultural & natural heritage
<b>21 April</b>	National Civil Services Day (India)	<b>Viksit Bharat: Citizen-Centric Governance and Development at the Last Mile</b>	· Honors civil servants· Governance & public service
<b>22 April</b>	Earth Day	<b>Planet vs Plastics</b>	· Global environmental movement· Climate change awareness
<b>23 April</b>	World Book and Copyright Day	<b>Read Your Way</b>	· By UNESCO· Promotes reading & copyright awareness
<b>24 April</b>	National Panchayati Raj Day (India)	<b>"Sashakt Panchayat, Sarvangeen Vikas"</b>	· Marks 73rd Constitutional Amendment· Grassroots democracy
<b>25 April</b>	World Malaria Day	<b>Accelerate the Fight Against Malaria</b>	· By WHO· Focus on malaria elimination
<b>26 April</b>	World Intellectual Property Day	<b>IP and Music: Feel the Beat of IP</b>	· By WIPO· Awareness on intellectual property rights
<b>28 April</b>	World Day for Safety and Health at Work	<b>Safe and Healthy Working Environment</b>	· By ILO· Workplace safety awareness
<b>29 April</b>	International Dance Day	—	· By UNESCO· Promote art of dance
<b>30 April</b>	Ayushman Bharat Diwas	<b>Comprehensive Primary Healthcare for a Healthier India"</b>	· Promotes healthcare accessibility· Linked to Ayushman Bharat scheme



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### APPOINTMENTS, PERSONALITIES AND AWARDS:

#### 1. Sur Jyotsna National Music Awards 2026

The Sur Jyotsna National Music Awards 2026 honoured eminent Indian classical musicians **Sumitra Guha** and **Laxman Krishnarao Pandit** for their lifetime contributions. Organised by the **Lokmat Media Group**, the awards recognise excellence in Hindustani classical music and aim to preserve India's rich cultural heritage. The event highlights the importance of sustaining traditional art forms amid modernisation. It also serves as a platform to honour senior artists whose work has shaped Indian music. The awards reinforce cultural continuity and promote appreciation of classical traditions among younger generations.

#### 2. N. Alim Yusuf – WWF Recognition

Indian botanist **N. Alim Yusuf** was honoured by the **World Wide Fund for Nature** for developing an AI-based conservation application. The tool uses artificial intelligence to monitor biodiversity, track species, and assist in habitat protection. It enables real-time ecological data analysis, improving conservation efficiency. This innovation reflects the growing integration of technology with environmental science, particularly in addressing climate change and biodiversity loss. The recognition highlights India's contribution to global conservation efforts and showcases how digital tools can support sustainable environmental management at scale.

#### 3. Goldman Environmental Prize 2026

The **Goldman Environmental Prize** 2026 marked a historic milestone with the first-ever **all-women cohort of winners**. Often referred to as the "Green Nobel Prize," it honours grassroots environmental activists from across the world. The award recognises individuals working at the community level to protect ecosystems, combat climate change, and defend environmental rights. The 2026 edition highlighted the critical role of women in environmental leadership and sustainability movements. It also emphasised inclusivity and local participation in solving global ecological challenges, reinforcing the importance of community-driven conservation initiatives worldwide.

#### 4. Samridh Gram Initiative – WSIS Prizes 2026

India's **Samridh Gram Initiative** was nominated for the **WSIS Prizes 2026** under the "Enabling Environment" category. The initiative focuses on **digital empowerment of rural areas**, improving governance, connectivity, and service delivery through technology. Organized by the **International Telecommunication Union**, the WSIS Prizes recognise innovative ICT-based development projects globally. India's nomination reflects its push toward **digital inclusion and rural transformation**, aligning with broader goals of e-governance and sustainable development through technology-driven infrastructure.

#### 5. Laureus World Sports Awards 2026

The **Laureus World Sports Awards 2026** were held in **Madrid**, recognising outstanding global sporting achievements. Known as the "Oscars of Sports," the awards honour top athletes, teams, and breakthrough performances across disciplines. Categories include Sportsman, Sportswoman, Team of the Year, and



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Comeback of the Year. The event celebrates excellence, resilience, and sportsmanship at the highest level. It is organised by the **Laureus World Sports Academy** and plays a key role in promoting sport as a tool for social change.

### 6. Sanjay Khanna – BPCL Chairman & MD

**Sanjay Khanna** was appointed Chairman and Managing Director of **Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited** by the **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet**. BPCL is a major public sector undertaking in India's energy sector, engaged in refining and fuel marketing. The appointment is significant amid ongoing energy transition and modernization efforts in the oil industry. Leadership at BPCL is crucial for ensuring energy security, improving efficiency, and aligning with India's long-term goals of sustainability and diversification in energy resources.

### 7. Sudarshan Pattnaik – Census 2027 Ambassador

Renowned sand artist **Sudarshan Pattnaik** was appointed Brand Ambassador for **Census 2027**. A **Padma Shri awardee**, Pattnaik is globally recognised for his sand art promoting social awareness. His role aims to increase public participation and awareness regarding the national census exercise. The Census is a crucial data collection process for policymaking, resource allocation, and governance planning. His appointment reflects the use of cultural icons to enhance outreach and citizen engagement. It also underlines the importance of accurate demographic data in shaping India's developmental strategies.

### 8. Mahavir Jayanti

- Celebrated to mark the **birth of Lord Mahavira**, the 24th Tirthankara of Jainism, usually in **March-April (Chaitra Shukla Trayodashi)**.
- Mahavira propagated core principles of **Ahimsa (non-violence), Satya (truth), Asteya (non-stealing), Brahmacharya, and Aparigraha (non-possession)**.
- It is one of the **most important Jain festivals**, observed through prayers, processions, fasting, and charitable activities.

### 9. Shyamji Krishna Varma

- **Shyamji Krishna Varma (1857–1930)** was an Indian revolutionary, lawyer, and journalist, born in **Mandvi (Gujarat)**.
- He founded the **Indian Home Rule Society, India House (London), and the journal *The Indian Sociologist*** to promote Indian independence abroad.
- A scholar of Sanskrit and influenced by **Swami Dayanand Saraswati**, he inspired revolutionaries like **Veer Savarkar**.



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### 10. Babu Jagjivan Ram

- **Babu Jagjivan Ram (1908–1986)**, popularly known as *Babuji*, was a **freedom fighter, Dalit leader, and former Deputy Prime Minister of India**.
- Born in **Bihar (Shahabad/Bhojpur region)**, he was a strong advocate of **social justice and rights of depressed classes**.
- He founded organisations like **All India Depressed Classes League, Akhil Bharatiya Ravidas Mahasabha, and Khetihar Mazdoor Sabha**.

#### Key Contributions

- Participated in major movements like **Civil Disobedience, Satyagraha, and Quit India Movement**.
- As a Union Minister (longest-serving), contributed to **Green Revolution, labour welfare, and defence (1971 war period)**.
- Demanded **voting rights for Dalits before the Hammond Commission**, highlighting early political assertion.

### 11. Raja Ravi Varma-PERSONALITY IN NEWS

- **Raja Ravi Varma (1848–1906)** was a pioneering Indian painter, widely regarded as the **father of modern Indian art**. Born in **Kilimanoor (Kerala)**, he belonged to the Travancore royal family and gained recognition for blending **European oil painting techniques with Indian themes**.
- His major contribution was making Indian art more realistic and accessible by depicting **Hindu mythological characters from the Ramayana and Mahabharata** in lifelike forms. His famous works include *Shakuntala, Damayanti and the Swan, and Nair Lady Adorning Her Hair*.
- He also established the **Ravi Varma Lithographic Press (1894)**, which enabled mass production of artworks, bringing religious imagery into common households.
- Awarded the **Kaisar-i-Hind Gold Medal (1904)**, his legacy lies in shaping India's visual culture and popular imagination of deities.



## DEFENCE

### 1. SLINEX 2026

- Bilateral naval exercise between **Indian Navy** and **Sri Lanka Navy**
- Conducted annually since **2005**
- Phases:



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- **Harbour Phase:** Planning, briefings, training exchanges
- **Sea Phase:** Tactical manoeuvres, weapon firing drills
- Core Areas:
  - **Anti-piracy operations**
  - **Search & Rescue (SAR)**
  - **Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA)**
- Strategic Importance:
  - Counters **Chinese presence in Indian Ocean Region**
  - Strengthens **SAGAR doctrine (Security and Growth for All in the Region)**

## 2. DRDO – NASM-SR

- Full Form: **Naval Anti-Ship Missile – Short Range**
- Designed for **helicopter launch (like Sea King, ALH)**
- Key Features:
  - **Imaging Infrared Seeker (IIR)** → high precision targeting
  - **Fire-and-forget** → no post-launch guidance needed
  - **Lock-on-before-launch capability**
- Role:
  - Targets **small to medium enemy vessels**
- Strategic Relevance:
  - Enhances **littoral warfare capability**
  - Reduces dependence on foreign missile systems

## 3. Exercise Pragati

- Multinational military exercise hosted by **Indian Army**
- Location: **Meghalaya (Northeast India)**
- Participation: **11 countries**
- Focus Areas:
  - **UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO)**



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- **Counter-Insurgency (CI)**
- **Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief (HADR)**
- Why Northeast matters:
  - Close to **Indo-Pacific strategic theatre**
- Importance:
  - Builds **multilateral defence diplomacy**
  - Enhances **joint command interoperability**

### 4. Exercise Dustlik (7th Edition)

- Annual bilateral exercise between **India & Uzbekistan**
- Location alternates; 2026 held in **Uzbekistan**
- Core Focus:
  - **Counter-terrorism operations in semi-urban terrain**
  - **Special forces coordination**
- Strategic Angle:
  - Strengthens India's **Connect Central Asia Policy**
  - Counters **extremism threats in the region**

### 5. CAPF Conference (First-ever)

- Chaired by **Narendra Modi**
- Includes forces like:
  - CRPF, BSF, ITBP, CISF, SSB, Assam Rifles
- Key Focus:
  - **Integrated internal security grid**
  - **Use of AI, surveillance tech**
  - **Border management & cyber threats**
- Significance:
  - Moves towards **centralised security coordination**
  - Bridges gap between **state police & central forces**



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### 6. India–Egypt Joint Special Forces Exercise

- Conducted in **Anshas (Egypt)**
- Involves **elite special forces units**
- Focus:
  - **Desert warfare tactics**
  - **Counter-terrorism drills**
  - **Hostage rescue operations**
- Strategic Importance:
  - Strengthens **West Asia–North Africa defence ties**
  - Enhances India's presence beyond Indo-Pacific

### 7. INS Aridhaman

- Type: **SSBN (Nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine)**
- Developed under **ATV Project**
- Completes India's **Nuclear Triad**:
  - Land (Agni missiles)
  - Air (fighter aircraft)
  - Sea (submarines)
- Key Role:
  - **Second-strike capability** → ensures deterrence after nuclear attack
- Strategic Edge:
  - Operates in **stealth mode (undetactable)**
  - Core pillar of **credible minimum deterrence doctrine**

### 8. Indian Army Command Reshuffle

- Commands:
  - **Western Command** → Pakistan front
  - **Eastern Command** → China front
  - **Southern Command** → Peninsular logistics/training



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- Purpose:
  - **Leadership rotation**
  - Exposure to **diverse operational theatres**
- Importance:
  - Keeps command structure **adaptive & experienced**

### 9. INS Dunagiri

- Built under **Project 17A (Advanced stealth frigates)**
- Shipyard: **Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE)**
- Features:
  - **Low radar cross-section (stealth)**
  - Advanced **combat management systems**
  - Equipped with **missiles, torpedoes, radar systems**
- Role:
  - Multi-role:
    - Anti-air warfare
    - Anti-submarine warfare
    - Surface combat
- Strategic Value:
  - Boosts **blue-water navy capability**
  - Supports India's ambition as **net security provider in IOR**

### 10. Atlas Drone Swarm System (Atelasi)

- Developed by **China**
- **Truck-based drone swarm platform** integrating launch + control systems
- Can deploy **up to 96 drones simultaneously**
- Enables **single-operator control (surveillance + attack)**
- Concern: boosts **asymmetric warfare capability & challenges air defence**



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### SCIENCE AND TECCHNOLOGY:

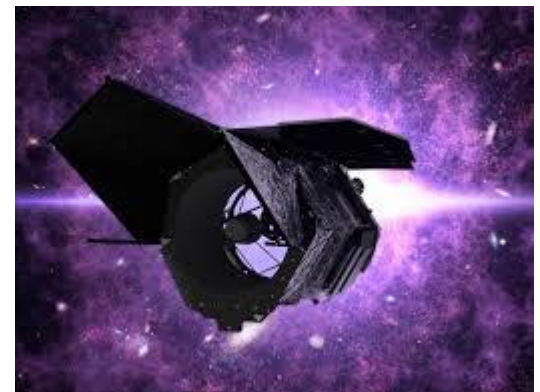
#### 1. World Health Organization – Infant Malaria Drug (2026)

The World Health Organization approved the **first malaria treatment specifically designed for newborns and young infants** ahead of World Malaria Day 2026. The drug, a formulation of **artemether-lumefantrine**, meets global standards of safety, quality, and efficacy. Earlier, infants were treated using medicines meant for older children, increasing risks of overdose and toxicity. This breakthrough fills a major treatment gap, especially in malaria-endemic regions of Africa, where millions of infants are at risk. The approval also enables large-scale procurement and distribution, strengthening global malaria control efforts and improving survival rates among the most vulnerable population.



#### 2. Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope

The Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope has entered its **final testing phase after successful assembly completion**, marking a key milestone before launch. Developed by NASA, it is designed to study **dark energy, exoplanets, and cosmic structure formation** using a wide-field infrared survey capability. The telescope will provide a field of view significantly larger than Hubble, enabling large-scale mapping of the universe. Final testing ensures system reliability under space conditions, including vibration, thermal, and vacuum testing. The mission is expected to enhance understanding of the universe's expansion and support next-generation astrophysical research.



#### 3. AAKA Space Studio – 3D-Printed Mars Radiation Shield

AAKA Space Studio developed **Asia's first 3D-printed radiation shield for Mars habitats**, addressing the critical challenge of cosmic radiation exposure. Mars lacks a protective magnetic field and dense atmosphere, making astronauts vulnerable to severe health risks. The shield uses **In-Situ Resource Utilisation (ISRU)**, relying on locally available Martian materials like basalt and carbonates instead of transporting materials from Earth. Built using robotic 3D printing, it ensures structural strength, thermal stability, and radiation protection. Tested under simulated Martian conditions, this innovation reduces mission costs and enhances feasibility of long-term human habitation on Mars.

#### 4. Outer Space Treaty



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The Outer Space Treaty (1967) is the **foundation of international space law**, ensuring that outer space remains peaceful and accessible to all nations. It declares space as the “province of all mankind” and prohibits the placement of **nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction in space**. It also restricts national sovereignty claims over celestial



bodies like the Moon and mandates that space exploration be conducted for peaceful purposes. The treaty binds signatory countries to take responsibility for national space activities, including those by private entities, and promotes international cooperation in space exploration.

### 5. Bio-Bitumen

- A **renewable alternative to petroleum-based bitumen**, produced from biomass such as crop residues, lignin, or vegetable oils.
- Developed in India by **CSIR institutes** for road construction, reducing **carbon emissions and import dependency**.
- Supports **sustainable infrastructure and waste utilization**, including agricultural residue management.

### 5. Ultraluminous X-ray Source (ULX)

- ULXs are astronomical systems where a **compact object (black hole/neutron star)** accretes matter from a companion star, releasing huge energy.
- They can exceed the **Eddington limit (maximum theoretical luminosity)** by over 100 times.
- Recent studies (RRI) analyzed **repeating high-energy bursts**, improving understanding of extreme cosmic phenomena.

### 6. Artemis II Mission

The **Artemis II mission** is NASA’s **first crewed mission under the Artemis program**, marking humanity’s return to deep space exploration after more than **50 years since the Apollo era**. It represents a major step toward future **human landing on the Moon and missions to Mars**.

#### Key Features of the Mission

##### 1. Crewed Lunar Flyby Mission

- Artemis II is a **crewed lunar flyby mission** (no landing on the Moon).
- Astronauts will travel around the Moon and return to Earth using a **free-return trajectory**.

##### 2. Launch and Duration



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- Launched on **1 April 2026** using the **Space Launch System (SLS)** rocket.
- Total mission duration is about **10 days**.

### 3. Spacecraft Used

- The mission uses NASA's **Orion spacecraft**, designed for deep-space human missions.
- It is the **first crewed flight of Orion**, testing its systems in real conditions.

### 4. Crew Composition

- Four astronauts: **three from the USA and one from Canada**.
- Includes historic milestones such as the **first woman and first non-American astronaut** to travel beyond low Earth orbit.

## Objectives of Artemis II

### 1. Testing Deep-Space Capabilities

- Evaluate **life-support systems, navigation, communication, and propulsion** in deep space.

### 2. Human Spaceflight Beyond Low Earth Orbit

- First mission since 1972 to carry humans **beyond low Earth orbit (LEO)**.

### 3. Preparation for Future Missions

- Acts as a **rehearsal for Artemis III**, which aims to land humans on the Moon.

### 4. Testing Re-entry and Safety Systems

- Orion will re-enter Earth's atmosphere at high speed, testing **heat shield and recovery systems**.

## Significance

- Marks the **revival of human lunar exploration** after the Apollo missions.
- Strengthens **international cooperation** (e.g., inclusion of Canadian astronaut).
- Lays the foundation for **sustainable human presence on the Moon** and future **Mars missions**.

## Conclusion

Artemis II is a **milestone mission in modern space exploration**, bridging the gap between experimental missions and future human landings on the Moon. It demonstrates that space exploration has shifted from symbolic achievement to **long-term strategic and scientific goals**.



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### 7. Parkinson's Disease

Parkinson's disease is a **progressive neurodegenerative disorder** that primarily affects movement due to the loss of **dopamine-producing neurons in the brain**.

It is characterized by **tremors, muscle rigidity, and bradykinesia (slowness of movement)**, along with balance problems.

### 8. CAR T-Cell Therapy

- Advanced **immunotherapy using modified T-cells**
- Used to treat **cancer & autoimmune diseases**
- Involves **genetically engineering T-cells to attack target cells**
- Personalized and **highly targeted therapy**

## SPORTS:

### 1. Weightlifting & Multi-Sport

- **Commonwealth Youth & Junior Weightlifting Championships 2026**
  - India won **4 gold medals**
  - Highlights India's **strong junior pipeline in weightlifting**

### 2. Football

- **Punjab FC**
  - Won **AIFF Elite Youth League 2026**
  - Defeated Zinc Football Academy **3-0**
  - Focus: **grassroots football development**
- **OmegaBall (IIT Madras Innovation)**
  - Introduced by **Indian Institute of Technology Madras**
  - India's **first 3-team football format**
  - Played in **circular field with 3 goals**
  - Aim: **increase speed, decision-making, engagement**

### 3. Governance / Inclusion in Sports

- **Rithika Sri**



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- First **transgender umpire in India (cricket)**
- From **Tamil Nadu**
- Milestone for **gender inclusivity in sports**

### 4. Badminton

- **P. V. Sindhu**
  - Appointed to **BWF Council**
  - Represents **athletes' voice globally**
  - Strengthens **player representation in governance**

### 5. Cricket Records & Awards

- **Virat Kohli**
  - First player to reach **9000 IPL runs**
- **Sanju Samson**
  - ICC Men's Player of the Month (March 2026)
- **Melie Kerr**
  - ICC Women's Player of the Month (March 2026)
- **Wisden 2025 Honours**
  - **Mitchell Starc**
  - **Deepti Sharma**
  - Named **Leading Cricketers in the World**
- **ICC Initiative**
  - Launched **Women's T20I Challenge Trophy 2026**
  - Venue: **Rwanda**
  - Aim: **expand women's cricket globally**

### 6. Shooting

- **ISSF Junior World Cup 2026 (Cairo)**
  - India topped medal tally with **16 medals**
  - Shows dominance in **junior shooting**



### 7. Athletics & Marathon

- **Sebastian Sawe**
  - Ran **sub-2-hour marathon (London Marathon 2026)**
  - Historic endurance milestone
- **Sawan Barwal**
  - Broke **48-year-old Indian marathon record**
  - Event: **Rotterdam Marathon 2026**
- **Murali Sreeshankar**
  - Won men's long jump at **Indian Athletics Series 2026**

### 8. Wrestling

- **Sujeet Kalkal & Abhimanyu Mandwal**
  - Won **gold medals**
  - Event: **Asian Wrestling Championships 2026**

### 9. Golf

- **Shubhankar Sharma**
  - Won **Boulders Classic 2026**
  - Return to **domestic golf success**

### 10. Chess

- **R Vaishali**
  - Won **Women's Candidates Tournament 2026**
  - Qualified for **World Chess Championship**

### 11. Tennis

- **Jannik Sinner**
  - Won **Monte Carlo Masters 2026**
  - Defeated **Carlos Alcaraz**
  - Reclaimed **World No.1 ranking**

### 12. Global Events / Hosting



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- **Tashkent (Uzbekistan)**
  - To host **World Para Athletics Championships 2027 (June)**

### 13. Recognition / Appointments

- **Blanka Vlašić**
  - Appointed Global Ambassador
  - Event: **World 10K Bengaluru 2026**

### 14. Inspirational Achievement

- **Payal Nag**
  - First **quadruple amputee** to win an archery championship
  - Symbol of **extreme resilience in para-sports**

### 15. Multi-Sport Event (India)

- **Khelo India Tribal Games 2026**
  - Winner: **Karnataka**
  - Focus: **tribal talent identification & inclusion**

## NATIONAL :

### 1. Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill, 2025

#### Introduction

The **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill, 2025** was passed by the Lok Sabha to strengthen the existing **IBC framework (2016)** and address delays, inefficiencies, and legal ambiguities in insolvency resolution.

The amendment aims to make the process **faster, more transparent, and value-maximising**, thereby improving the health of India's financial system.

#### Background

The IBC, 2016 provides a **time-bound mechanism for resolving insolvency** of companies and individuals to maximise asset value and balance stakeholder interests.

However, over time, issues such as **litigation delays, backlog in NCLT, and procedural gaps** reduced its





efficiency, necessitating reforms.

## Key Features of the Amendment Bill

### 1. Creditor-Initiated Insolvency Resolution Process (CIIRP)

- Introduces an **out-of-court mechanism** where financial creditors can initiate insolvency without immediate tribunal intervention.
- Helps reduce burden on **NCLT and speeds up resolution**.

### 2. Strict Timelines for Resolution

- NCLT must admit cases within **14 days** if default is proven.
- Appeals to be disposed of within **3 months**.
- Liquidation process to be completed in **180 days (extendable by 90 days)**.

### 3. Strengthening of Committee of Creditors (CoC)

- Greater powers to **appoint/remove liquidator and supervise liquidation**.
- Enhances creditor control and accountability.

### 4. Clean Slate Principle Reinforced

- Once a resolution plan is approved, **all past claims are extinguished** unless specified.
- Provides certainty to investors and resolution applicants.

### 5. Procedural and Institutional Reforms

- Mandatory admission of cases when conditions are met.
- Reduction of discretionary powers to avoid delays.
- Focus on reducing **litigation and interpretational issues**.

## Significance

The amendment is expected to:

- **Reduce delays and backlog** in insolvency cases
- Improve **recovery of bad loans (NPAs)**
- Enhance **ease of doing business and investor confidence**
- Ensure **faster revival or exit of stressed firms**

## Concerns



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- Increased creditor control may reduce debtor protection
- Out-of-court process may lead to **transparency and accountability issues**
- Implementation challenges due to institutional capacity

### Conclusion

The IBC Amendment Bill, 2025 represents a shift towards a **more efficient, creditor-driven, and time-bound insolvency regime**. Its success will depend on effective implementation and balancing **speed with fairness and transparency**.

### 2. Hate Speech in India

Hate speech in India refers to any form of expression—spoken, written, or symbolic—that **incites hatred, discrimination, or violence** against individuals or groups based on religion, caste, race, gender, or other identities. The Law Commission of India defines it as speech intended to **stir hatred against identifiable groups**, posing a threat to social harmony.

From a constitutional perspective, the right to freedom of speech under **Article 19(1)(a)** is not absolute. It is subject to **reasonable restrictions under Article 19(2)** in the interest of public order, decency, and morality. Thus, hate speech is not protected speech when it incites violence or disrupts societal peace.

India does not have a **single comprehensive law on hate speech**. Instead, it is regulated through multiple provisions such as:

- **Section 196 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (earlier IPC 153A)** – promoting enmity between groups
- **Section 299 (earlier IPC 295A)** – outraging religious feelings
- **Representation of People Act, 1951** – prohibits hate speech during elections
- **SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989** – protects marginalized communities

Judicial interventions have also shaped the framework. In **Shreya Singhal v. Union of India**, the Supreme Court struck down Section 66A of the IT Act for being vague and violative of free speech. In **Shaheen Abdulla v. Union of India**, it directed authorities to take **suo motu action** against hate speech.

However, major challenges persist: lack of clear legal definition, **low conviction rates**, misuse of laws, and rapid spread through social media.

In conclusion, hate speech in India is not just a legal issue but a **socio-political challenge**. Effective control requires a balance between protecting free speech and ensuring **social cohesion through precise laws, enforcement, and public awareness**.

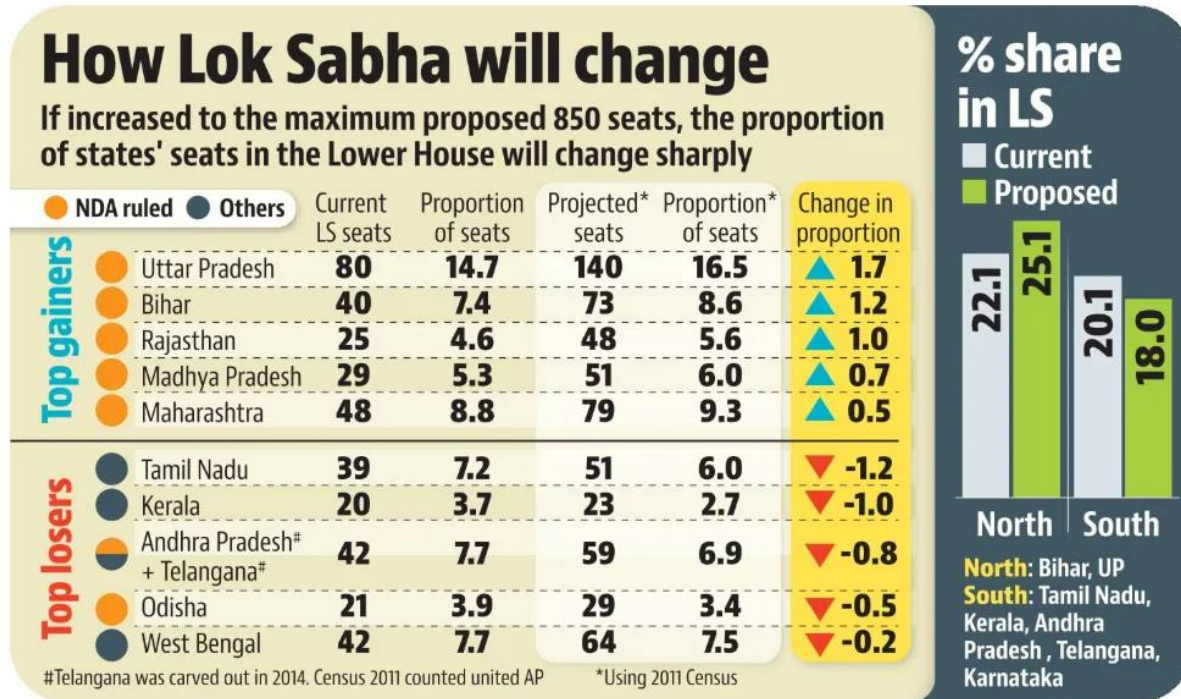
### 3. Delimitation and Women's Reservation in Legislatures

The issue of **delimitation and women's reservation** has become central to India's electoral reforms, particularly after the passage of the **Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (106th Constitutional Amendment**



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**Act, 2023).** This law mandates **33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies**, including a sub-quota within SC/ST reserved seats.



### What is Delimitation?

Delimitation refers to the **redrawing of electoral constituency boundaries** to ensure equal representation based on population. It operationalizes the principle of **“one person, one vote, one value.”**

It is mandated under **Article 82 (Parliament)** and **Article 170 (State Assemblies)**, and is carried out by an independent **Delimitation Commission**, whose decisions have the force of law.

However, delimitation has been **frozen since 1976 (42nd Amendment)** to avoid penalizing states that successfully controlled population growth. This freeze has been extended until after the **first Census post-2026**, making the upcoming delimitation politically sensitive.

### Link with Women’s Reservation

A critical feature of the Women’s Reservation Act is that its implementation is **conditional upon delimitation after a Census**. This means:

- Reservation will come into effect **only after fresh constituency boundaries are drawn**
- Seats reserved for women will be **rotated after each delimitation cycle**
- The reservation has a **15-year sunset clause** (extendable by Parliament)

This linkage has delayed implementation, as the Census itself has been postponed, pushing the timeline potentially beyond 2029.

### Key Issues and Debates



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- **Delay vs Urgency:** Critics argue that linking reservation to delimitation unnecessarily delays women's political empowerment
- **North–South Divide:** Population-based delimitation may increase seats in northern states, raising concerns among southern states about reduced representation
- **Political Implications:** Redrawing constituencies can alter electoral outcomes, making it politically contentious

### Conclusion

Delimitation and women's reservation are deeply interconnected reforms. While delimitation ensures **fair representation**, women's reservation aims at **inclusive representation**. The real challenge lies in balancing **federal equity, political interests, and gender justice**—without delaying the much-needed increase in women's participation in governance.

### 4. Removal of Judges

- Governed by **Articles 124 & 218** of Constitution
- Removal through **impeachment by Parliament** (not explicitly termed in Constitution)
- Motion requires **100 LS / 50 RS members' signatures**



- Investigated by **3-member committee (judicial + jurist)**
- Needs **special majority in both Houses + President's order**
- Ground: **proved misbehaviour or incapacity**
- **No judge removed till date**

### 5. Appointment of Chairperson of NCBC

#### Why in News?

**Sadhvi Niranjana Jyoti** has recently assumed charge as the **Chairperson of the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC)**, along with the appointment of a new member.



## About NCBC

The **National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC)** is a **constitutional body** that works for the protection and welfare of **Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBCs)**.

It was originally a statutory body (1993) but was granted **constitutional status through the 102nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 2018**, under **Article 338B**.

## Appointment of Chairperson

- The **Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and members are appointed by the President of India** by warrant under his hand and seal.
- Their **tenure, service conditions, salary, and allowances are also determined by the President**.
- The Chairperson is usually a **person of eminence with experience in matters related to backward classes**, ensuring credibility among SEBC communities.

## Composition of NCBC

- 1 Chairperson
- 1 Vice-Chairperson
- 3 Members (at least one woman; some members from backward classes)

## Functions of NCBC

- **Investigates and monitors safeguards** for backward classes under the Constitution and laws
- **Inquires into complaints** regarding deprivation of rights
- **Advises the government** on socio-economic development of backward classes
- Submits **annual reports to the President**

It also has **powers of a civil court** while investigating matters.

## Recent Constitutional Developments

- **Article 342A** empowers the President to notify SEBCs
- **105th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2021** restored the power of states to maintain their own OBC lists

## Significance

The appointment of the Chairperson is important as NCBC plays a key role in:

- Ensuring **social justice and affirmative action**



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- Protecting rights of backward classes
- Influencing **reservation policies and welfare measures**

### Conclusion

The NCBC has evolved into a **powerful constitutional watchdog** for backward classes. The appointment of its Chairperson is crucial for ensuring **effective implementation of safeguards and inclusive development policies**.

### 6. Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026 – Defeated in Lok Sabha

The **Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026** was introduced to **fast-track the implementation of women’s reservation in legislatures** and reform India’s electoral representation framework. However, the Bill was **defeated in the Lok Sabha on 17 April 2026**, marking a rare legislative setback for the government.

#### Objective of the Bill

The Bill aimed to operationalise the **33% reservation for women** provided under the **106th Constitutional Amendment (2023)** without waiting for the next Census and delimitation cycle.

It sought to enable implementation by **2029**, instead of the delayed timeline (post-2030s).

#### Key Provisions

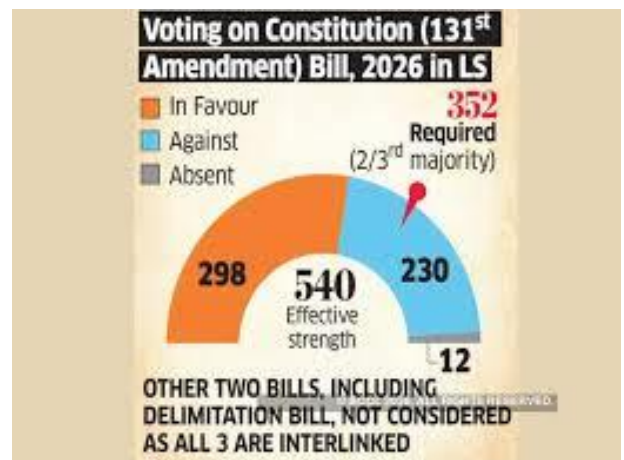
- **Increase in Lok Sabha strength:** From **543 to around 850 seats** (815 states + 35 UTs)
- **Amendment to Article 82:** Remove the condition linking delimitation to the **post-2026 Census**, allowing earlier delimitation using **2011 Census data**
- **Amendment to Article 334A:** Enable **immediate implementation of women’s reservation after delimitation**
- Restore **population-based representation** to uphold “one person, one vote, one value”

#### Why was the Bill Defeated?

Under **Article 368**, a Constitutional Amendment requires a **special majority**—majority of total membership plus **two-thirds of members present and voting**.

- The Bill secured only **~298 votes in favour vs 230 against**, falling short of the required threshold (~352)
- Lack of **political consensus**, especially on delimitation and seat redistribution
- Opposition concerns over **federal imbalance (North–South divide)** and linkage with Census

#### Key Issues & Debate





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- **Delimitation Controversy:** Using 2011 Census may advantage high-population states
- **Linking Reservation with Delimitation:** Critics argued it delays actual implementation
- **Expansion of Lok Sabha:** Concerns about governance efficiency and political balance
- **Federal Concerns:** Southern states fear loss of proportional influence

### Aftermath

- Withdrawal of related Bills:
  - **Delimitation Bill, 2026**
  - **Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026**
- Highlighted the **interdependence between delimitation and women's reservation**
- Exposed deep **political divisions on electoral reforms**

### Significance

The defeat underscores that **constitutional reforms require broad consensus**, especially when they affect representation and federal balance. It also reveals a major contradiction: while there is **wide agreement on women's reservation**, disagreement persists on **how and when to implement it**.

### Conclusion

The failure of the 131st Amendment Bill reflects the **complex intersection of gender justice, federal politics, and electoral reforms**. Without resolving concerns around delimitation and representation, **women's reservation may continue to face implementation delays despite legislative intent**.

## 7. Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Rules, 2026

India's **Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Rules, 2026** operationalise the broader framework created under the 2025 law, aiming to **balance innovation with strict control over harmful gaming practices**, especially real-money gaming.

### Core Objective

The rules seek to create a **regulated digital gaming ecosystem** that promotes safe gaming (e-sports, social games) while **curbing betting, gambling, and financial fraud risks**.

### Key Features

#### 1. Classification of Online Games

- **E-sports** → Recognised as legitimate competitive sports
- **Online Social Games** → Skill-based, entertainment-oriented
- **Online Money Games** → Games involving financial stakes (strictly prohibited)

#### 2. Ban on Real-Money Gaming





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- Complete prohibition on **offering, advertising, or facilitating money-based games**
- **Banks and financial institutions barred** from processing related transactions
- Government empowered to **block illegal platforms under IT Act, 2000**

### 3. Regulatory Framework

- Establishment of a **central regulatory authority** to:
  - Classify games
  - Oversee compliance
  - Resolve disputes
- Powers include **investigation, search, seizure, and enforcement actions**

### 4. User Protection Measures

- Focus on **age restrictions, user safety, and responsible gaming practices**
- Emphasis on preventing **addiction, financial exploitation, and fraud**

### 5. Penal Provisions

- Offering banned games → **Up to 3 years imprisonment + heavy fines**
- Advertising illegal platforms → **Punishable offence**
- Offences classified as **cognisable and non-bailable**

### Significance

- Provides **regulatory clarity** in a rapidly growing digital sector
- Protects **youth and vulnerable users**
- Supports growth of **e-sports and innovation economy**

### Concerns

- Blanket ban on money gaming may impact **industry revenues and employment**
- Federal issues, as **betting/gambling falls under State List**
- Risk of **over-regulation and enforcement challenges**

### Conclusion

The 2026 rules mark a **strict, security-oriented shift in India's gaming policy**—promoting safe digital entertainment while taking a **zero-tolerance approach toward online betting and gambling**.

## 8. Amaravati as Permanent Capital of Andhra Pradesh

### Introduction

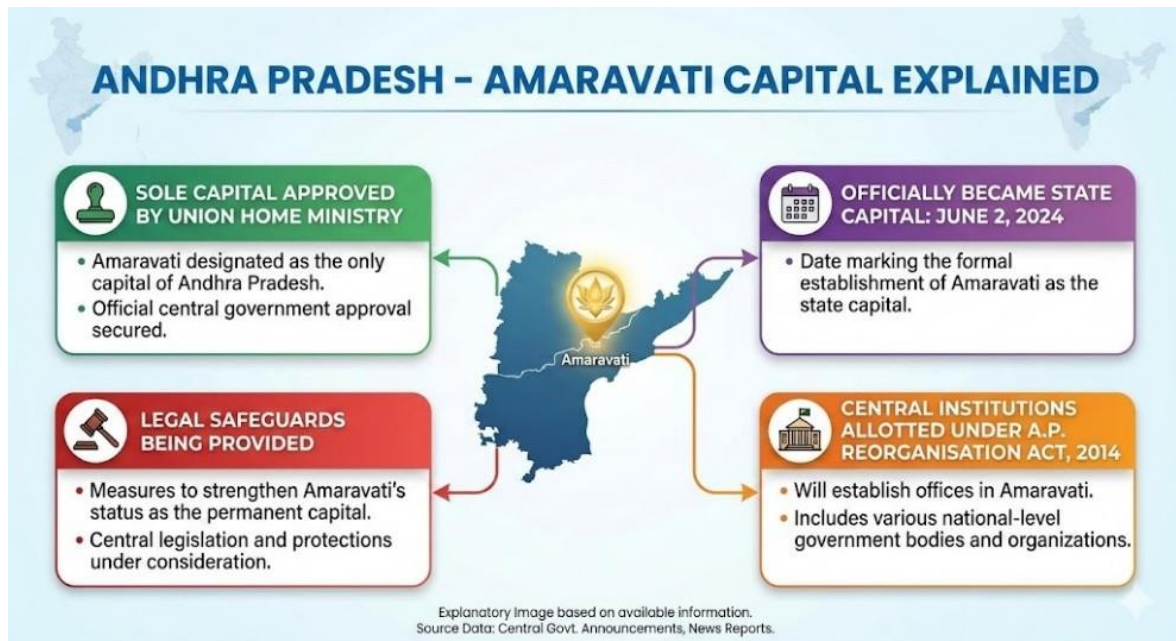
The **Lok Sabha passed the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2026**, officially designating **Amaravati as the sole and permanent capital of Andhra Pradesh**. This move aims to provide long-term **legal and administrative clarity** to the state's capital issue.

### Background



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After the **bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh in 2014**, Hyderabad was made the **common capital of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh for 10 years** under the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014.



However, the Act did not explicitly name a permanent capital for Andhra Pradesh, leading to **policy uncertainty and political debates**, including the later proposal of a **three-capital model (Visakhapatnam, Amaravati, Kurnool)**.

### Key Features of the Amendment

#### 1. Statutory Recognition of Amaravati

The amendment modifies **Section 5 of the 2014 Act**, explicitly declaring **Amaravati as the capital**, replacing the earlier vague provision of a "new capital."

#### 2. Sole and Permanent Capital

It establishes Amaravati as the **only capital**, effectively ending the earlier **three-capital proposal** and ensuring stability in governance.

#### 3. Retrospective Effect

The law provides **retrospective recognition from 2 June 2024**, marking the end of the 10-year common capital arrangement with Telangana.

#### 4. Parliamentary Intervention

This is the **first instance in independent India** where Parliament has passed a specific law to declare a **state's permanent capital**, setting a constitutional precedent.

### Significance

- Administrative Clarity:** Ends long-standing ambiguity over capital location.



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- **Investor Confidence:** Provides certainty for infrastructure and economic development.
- **Federal Cooperation:** Reflects coordination between state resolution and central legislation.
- **Political Stability:** Prevents future policy reversals due to change in governments.

### Issues and Concerns

- Earlier controversies over **land pooling and farmer protests** related to Amaravati development.
- Debate over **central intervention in state matters**, raising federalism concerns.
- Regional imbalance concerns due to concentration of development in one area.

### Conclusion

The recognition of Amaravati as the permanent capital marks a **decisive resolution of a decade-long uncertainty** following Andhra Pradesh's bifurcation. While it strengthens governance and planning, its success will depend on **balanced regional development and effective implementation**.

## 9. Article 324 and ECI's Transfer of Officials

### Introduction

The recent transfer of senior officials by the **Election Commission of India (ECI)** in election-bound states has triggered a debate on the **scope of its powers under Article 324 of the Constitution**.

### What does Article 324 Provide?

Article 324 vests the ECI with the **"superintendence, direction, and control" of elections** to Parliament, State Legislatures, and offices of President and Vice-President.

- Article 324(6): The **President or Governor must provide staff** to the ECI when requested.
- It is often interpreted as giving **broad (plenary) powers** to ensure free and fair elections.

### Judicial Interpretation

- In **Mohinder Singh Gill v. CEC (1978)**, the Supreme Court held that Article 324 is a **reservoir of powers** for ensuring free and fair elections.
- However, these powers are **not absolute** and can be exercised **only where no law exists**.
- The ECI must act in accordance with **existing laws, rule of law, and natural justice**.



## Election Commission of India

### Introduction

Democracy fundamentally depends on the ability of citizens to choose their representatives through free, fair, and periodic elections. Recognising the centrality of elections in a democratic system, the framers of the Constitution established an independent constitutional authority known as the Election Commission of India (ECI).



**NERA DESH, MERA GARV – CHUNAV KA PARV**  
DESH KA GARV, VOTE KA PARV  
[www.eci.gov.in](http://www.eci.gov.in)



### Article 324 of Constitution of India

*“The superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of the electoral rolls for, and the conduct of all elections to Parliament and the Legislature of every State and elections to the offices of President and Vice-President shall be vested in the Election Commission.”*

### Constitutional Basis: Article 324

Article 324 constitutes the constitutional backbone of India’s electoral governance. It grants the Election Commission broad authority in relation to:

1. Preparation of electoral rolls
2. Superintendence and conduct of elections
3. Regulation of political parties and candidates

### ► Enforcement of electoral standards:

Ensures other electoral Article 324 as a “reservoir of powers”, allowing the Commission to act even in areas where the law is silent, provided the objective is to ensure free and fair elections.

► **The Supreme Court** has repeatedly affirmed that free and fair elections are part of the basic structure of the Constitution, making the Election Commission a guardian of democratic legitimacy.

### ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

India's Constitutional Authority for Free, Fair and Peaceful Elections and the Guardian of Democracy

#### CONSTITUTIONAL ROLE

Upholds Democracy & the Constitution by ensuring free, fair, and **PEACEFUL ELECTIONS.**



#### CORE FUNCTIONS

Conducts elections to Parliament, State Legislatures, President and Vice-President.



#### KEY POWERS

Independent in power, free from executive control.

#### ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT

Organises & supervises voter lists, polls, and processes.



#### REGULATION

Regulates political parties and candidates as per law.



### Conservation of the Election Commission

The conservation of the Election Commission is defined under Article 324.



For details about our work and tools, please visit: [www.eci.gov.in](http://www.eci.gov.in) | [www.nvsp.in](http://www.nvsp.in) or scan for more!

### ECI's Justification for Transfer of Officials

- The ECI argues that transferring officials ensures **neutrality of administration during elections.**



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- It uses Article 324 as a **residual power** to take necessary administrative actions for free and fair polls.

### Concerns and Issues

#### 1. Lack of Statutory Backing

- Neither the **Representation of the People Act, 1950/1951** explicitly empowers the ECI to transfer officials.

#### 2. Conflict with Existing Laws

- Under the **All India Services Act and State List**, transfer of officials is the **prerogative of State governments**.

#### 3. Federalism Concerns

- Unilateral transfers may **undermine the federal structure** by bypassing elected state governments.

#### 4. Arbitrary Use of Power

- Absence of clear guidelines raises concerns about **subjective or arbitrary decision-making**.

#### 5. Impact on Administration

- Sudden transfers before elections may **disrupt administrative continuity and preparedness**.

### Conclusion

Article 324 gives the ECI **wide but not unlimited powers**. While ensuring free and fair elections is essential, the Commission must operate **within legal limits and constitutional balance**, respecting federal principles. A **clear legal framework or judicial clarification** is needed to resolve this ambiguity.

### 10 . Workers' Unrest and Labour Reforms

Recent incidents of workers' unrest across industrial hubs in India have brought renewed attention to the **challenges in labour reforms**, especially after the consolidation of 29 labour laws into four labour codes. While these reforms aim to modernize labour governance, they have also triggered concerns among workers regarding job security, wages, and working conditions.

#### Background: Labour Reforms

India's labour reforms focus on simplifying regulations through four codes—**Code on Wages (2019), Industrial Relations Code (2020), Social Security Code (2020), and Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code (2020)**. These aim to ensure **minimum wages, social security, and ease of doing business**.

#### Causes of Workers' Unrest





## Implications

Workers' unrest reflects a **trust deficit between labour and industry**, which can disrupt production and economic growth. It also indicates that reforms, though structurally sound, may lack **inclusive design and effective implementation**.

## Way Forward

- Ensure **balanced reforms** protecting both industry and labour
- Strengthen **enforcement mechanisms and grievance redressal systems**
- Expand **social security coverage**, especially for gig and informal workers
- Promote **social dialogue between government, employers, and trade unions**

## Conclusion

Workers' unrest is not merely resistance to reform but a signal of **gaps in implementation and inclusivity**. Sustainable labour reforms must combine **economic efficiency with social justice** to ensure long-term industrial harmony.

## 11. AI Governance and Economic Group (AIGEG)

The Government of India has constituted the **AI Governance and Economic Group (AIGEG)** as a **high-level inter-ministerial body** to lead the country's national strategy on artificial intelligence governance.

### Key Features

- **Chairperson:** Minister of Electronics & IT
- **Composition:** Around **10 members**, including key officials like Principal Scientific Advisor, Chief Economic Advisor, and NITI Aayog representatives
- Supported by a **Technology and Policy Expert Committee (TPEC)** for technical inputs

### Purpose & Role

- Acts as the **central institutional mechanism** for AI governance in India
- Ensures **coordination across ministries and sectors** (whole-of-government approach)
- Aligns **policy formulation, implementation, and oversight** of AI systems
- Supports **evidence-based decision-making** in a rapidly evolving AI ecosystem

### Context

The formation of AIGEG builds on:

- **India's AI Governance Guidelines (2026)**
- Recommendations of the **Economic Survey**, which emphasized the need for a central authority to manage AI's economic and social impact


### India's AI Governance Strategy




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Guided by NITI Aayog's "AI for All" vision, focusing on:

- Inclusive development and democratization of AI
- Integration with **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)**
- Seven guiding principles: **trust, accountability, equity, safety, transparency, people-centricity, and sustainability**




## AI GOVERNANCE AND ECONOMIC GROUP (AIGEG)



A high-level inter-ministerial body constituted by the Government of India to lead the country's national strategy on AI governance.

### KEY FEATURES

- CHAIRPERSON**  
Minister of Electronics & IT
- COMPOSITION**  
Around 10 members, including key officials like Principal Scientific Advisor, Chief Economic Advisor, and NITI Aayog representatives
- Supported by a Technology and Policy Expert Committee (TPEC) for technical inputs




**AIGEG**  
AI GOVERNANCE AND ECONOMIC GROUP  
Whole-of-Government Approach

### PURPOSE & ROLE


- Acts as the central institutional mechanism for AI governance in India
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### CONTEXT

The formation of AIGEG builds on:




India's AI Governance Guidelines (2026)




Recommendations of the Economic Survey, which emphasized the need for a central authority to manage AI's economic and social impact

### INDIA'S AI GOVERNANCE STRATEGY


Guided by NITI Aayog's "AI for All" vision, focusing on:



Inclusive development and democratization of AI





Integration with Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)





Supporting national priorities


Seven guiding principles


  
TRUST


  
ACCOUNTABILITY

  
EQUITY

  
SAFETY


  
TRANSPARENCY

  
PEOPLE-CENTRICITY

  
SUSTAINABILITY


### SIGNIFICANCE

- Ensures balanced approach between innovation and regulation
- Addresses risks like bias, misuse, job displacement, and data privacy
- Strengthens India's position in global AI governance leadership



### CONCLUSION

AIGEG marks a shift towards a coordinated, institutional, and strategic approach to AI governance, ensuring that AI development in India remains inclusive, responsible, and aligned with national priorities.



**AIGEG: Building a Trusted, Inclusive and Future-Ready AI Ecosystem for India**

### Significance

- Ensures **balanced approach** between innovation and regulation
- Addresses risks like **bias, misuse, job displacement, and data privacy**
- Strengthens India's position in **global AI governance leadership**



### Conclusion

AI GEG marks a shift towards a **coordinated, institutional, and strategic approach** to AI governance, ensuring that AI development in India remains **inclusive, responsible, and aligned with national priorities**.

### 12. Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme (ECMS)

- Launched by the **Ministry of Electronics & IT (2025)** with ~₹40,000 crore outlay to build a **robust electronics component ecosystem**.
- Aims to **reduce import dependence and integrate India into Global Value Chains (GVCs)** by attracting domestic and global investment.
- Provides **turnover-linked, capex-linked, and hybrid incentives** for components like PCBs, camera/display modules, and supply-chain equipment.

### 13. Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin (PMAY-G)

- Launched in 2016 (restructured from Indira Awaas Yojana), aims to provide **“Housing for All” in rural areas** by assisting houseless and kutcha house families.
- Targets **2.95 crore houses (Phase I)** and additional **2 crore houses (2024–29)** with DBT, geo-tagging, and e-governance monitoring.
- Cost sharing: **60:40 (Centre–State)** in plains and **90:10** in NE/Himalayan states.

### 14. Fiscal Deficit

#### Introduction

Fiscal deficit refers to the **gap between the government’s total expenditure and its total receipts (excluding borrowings)** in a financial year. It indicates the **amount the government needs to borrow** to meet its expenses.

#### What Does Fiscal Deficit Indicate?

It shows that the government is **spending beyond its income**, reflecting its borrowing requirements. A higher fiscal deficit implies **greater reliance on debt**, which can impact macroeconomic stability and future fiscal health.

#### Formula

Fiscal Deficit = Total Expenditure – Total Receipts (excluding borrowings)

#### Components of Fiscal Deficit

It arises due to:



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- Revenue Expenditure such as salaries, subsidies, and interest payments
- Capital Expenditure such as infrastructure and asset creation
- Lower Revenue Receipts due to weak tax collection or economic slowdown

### Types of Deficit Related to Fiscal Deficit

- Revenue Deficit is the excess of revenue expenditure over revenue receipts
- Primary Deficit is fiscal deficit minus interest payments, showing current borrowing needs

### Causes of Fiscal Deficit

- High government spending on welfare, subsidies, and infrastructure
- Low tax revenue or economic slowdown
- External shocks like pandemics or global crises

### Implications

Positive:

It can stimulate economic growth by increasing public investment

Negative:

High deficit leads to **inflation, rising interest rates, and increasing public debt burden**

### Fiscal Deficit and National Debt

Persistent fiscal deficits accumulate over time into **national debt**, increasing interest obligations and reducing fiscal space for development.

### Fiscal Responsibility Framework

The **FRBM Act, 2003** aims to maintain fiscal discipline and targets a fiscal deficit of around **3% of GDP** for long-term stability.

### Conclusion

Fiscal deficit is a key indicator of a government's financial health. While moderate deficits can support growth, **excessive deficits can lead to debt stress and economic instability**, making fiscal discipline essential.

## 15. SEED Scheme for DNT Communities

The **Scheme for Economic Empowerment of De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (SEED)** is a flagship initiative of the **Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment**, launched in **February 2022**, to address the historical marginalisation of these communities.



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### Who are DNTs?

DNTs (De-notified Tribes) were earlier labelled as “criminal tribes” under the **Criminal Tribes Act, 1871**, which was repealed after independence. They remain among the **most socio-economically deprived groups**, often lacking land, identity documents, and access to welfare schemes.

### Key Objectives

The scheme aims to provide **holistic development and economic empowerment** through targeted interventions:

- Improve **education and employability**
- Ensure **health security**
- Promote **livelihood opportunities**
- Provide **housing support**

### Core Components

1. **Educational Empowerment** – Free coaching for competitive exams (UPSC, SSC, NEET, etc.)
2. **Health Insurance** – Coverage under **Ayushman Bharat (PM-JAY)**
3. **Livelihood Support** – Formation of SHGs and income-generation activities
4. **Housing Assistance** – Linkage with **PMAY (Gramin/Urban)**

### Implementation

- Implemented by the **Development and Welfare Board for DNTs (DWBDNC)**
- Uses **online portal + Aadhaar-based DBT** for transparency
- Targets low-income families (≈ ₹2.5 lakh annual income criteria)

### Significance

- Addresses **historical injustice and social stigma**
- Promotes **financial inclusion and social mobility**
- Integrates DNTs into **mainstream welfare architecture**

### Challenges

- Lack of **proper identification and data on DNTs**
- Delays in issuing **community certificates**
- Low awareness and **implementation gaps**

### Conclusion

SEED is a crucial step toward **inclusive development**, but without proper identification, awareness, and execution, its impact will remain limited.



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### 16. Anti-Defection Law and Merger Clause: Constitutional Validity

The **Anti-Defection Law**, incorporated through the **52nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1985**, inserted the **Tenth Schedule** into the Constitution to curb political defections and ensure stability in governments.

2

## ANTI-DEFECTION LAW IN DETAIL

Constitutional Provision

Part X, Tenth Schedule of the Indian Constitution  
(Inserted by 52nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1985)

<p><b>Objective</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To curb political defections and ensure stability in government.</li> </ul> <p><b>Who is covered?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members of Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies and Legislative Councils.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Disqualification on Grounds of Defection</b></p> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p><b>Voluntarily giving up membership of the political party.</b></p> </div> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p><b>Voting or abstaining from voting in the House contrary to any direction (whip) issued by the political party.</b></p> </div> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p><b>Independent members joining any political party after election.</b></p> </div> <div> <p><b>Nominated members joining any political party after 6 months from becoming a member.</b></p> </div>
<p><b>Exemptions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Merger: If 2/3rd of the members of a legislative party merge with another party.</li> <li>Presiding Officer (Speaker/Chairman/Deputy Speaker): Not applicable to their election.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Decision Making Authority</b></p> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decided by the Presiding Officer (Speaker/Chairman).</li> <li>Orders are final and not subject to judicial review (as per the law).</li> </ul>
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <p><b>Purpose</b> To ensure party discipline, prevent 'Aaya Ram, Gaya Ram' politics and maintain the sanctity of mandates.</p> </div>	

### Merger Clause under the Tenth Schedule

The most controversial provision is **Paragraph 4 (Merger Clause)**:

- Disqualification does **not apply** if a political party merges with another
- Requires **at least two-thirds of legislators** of the party to support the merger
- Applies to both those who merge and those who choose to stay with the original party

Originally, even **one-third splits were protected**, but this was removed by the **91st Constitutional Amendment Act, 2003**, leaving only the two-thirds merger exception.

### Constitutional Validity: Why it is Upheld



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### 1. Legislative Stability

- Prevents frequent defections (“Aaya Ram, Gaya Ram” politics)
- Ensures continuity of elected governments

### 2. Collective Political Realignment

- Recognises that large-scale shifts may reflect **genuine political change**, not opportunism

### 3. Judicial Endorsement

- In *Kihoto Hollohan (1992)*, the Supreme Court upheld the **constitutional validity of the Tenth Schedule**, subjecting Speaker’s decisions to judicial review

## Key Constitutional Issues & Criticism

### 1. Legal Loophole (Mass Defection Allowed)

- The merger clause effectively **legalises large-scale defections**
- Individual defection is punished, but group defection is protected
- This contradicts the law’s original objective

### 2. Ambiguity in “Merger” Definition

- Law unclear whether merger must occur at:
  - **Legislature party level**, or
  - **Original political party level**
- Leads to manipulation and litigation

### 3. Undermining Representative Democracy

- Encourages **engineered defections** to meet the two-thirds threshold
- Weakens the **voter’s mandate and party ideology**

### 4. Role of Speaker (Bias Concern)

- Speaker decides disqualification cases
- Often accused of **partisan delays and selective decisions**

## Recent Context

Recent political developments show how the **two-thirds rule is used to avoid disqualification**, reviving debate on whether the law is **preventing or facilitating defections**.

## Way Forward

- Clarify definition of “**merger**” (**party vs legislature**)
- Establish an **independent tribunal** instead of Speaker
- Impose **time limits for decisions**
- Restrict whip usage to **critical votes only**

## Conclusion



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The merger clause is **constitutionally valid but normatively flawed**. While it aims to balance stability with political flexibility, in practice it has become a **tool to legitimise mass defections**, undermining the spirit of parliamentary democracy. The challenge is not legality—but **design failure and misuse**.

### 17. National Panchayati Raj Day 2026

National Panchayati Raj Day is observed annually on **24 April** to commemorate the **implementation of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992**, which came into force on **24 April 1993**, granting constitutional status to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).

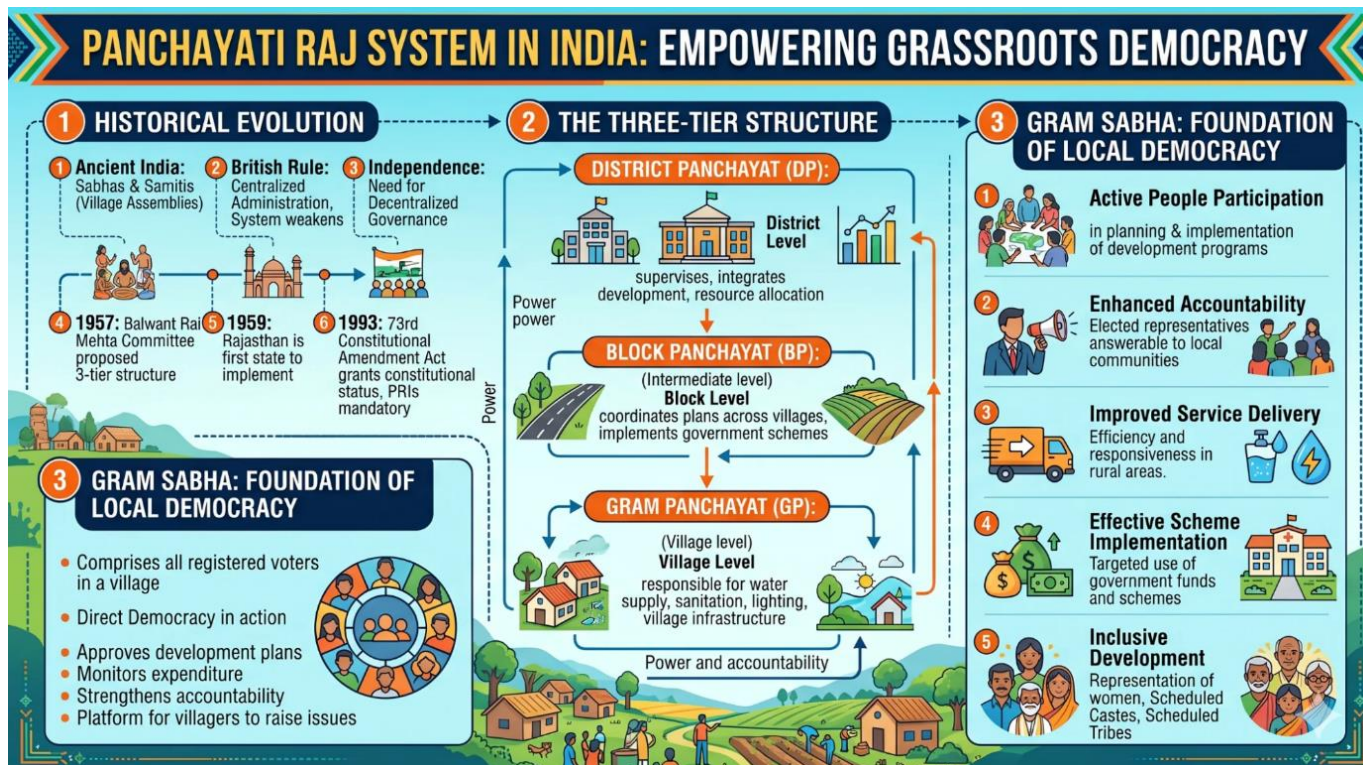
### Background and Constitutional Basis

The **73rd Amendment** introduced **Part IX (Articles 243–243O)** and the **Eleventh Schedule**, assigning **29 subjects** to Panchayats for decentralized governance.

It institutionalised a **three-tier system**:

- Gram Panchayat (village level)
- Panchayat Samiti (block level)
- Zila Parishad (district level)

The day was first officially declared in **2010** to promote awareness about grassroots democracy.



### Significance

National Panchayati Raj Day highlights the importance of **democratic decentralization and local self-governance**.



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- Strengthens **grassroots democracy** by enabling citizen participation
- Promotes **inclusive development and service delivery** in rural areas
- Ensures **reservation for women, SCs, and STs**, enhancing social justice
- Improves **transparency and accountability** through local decision-making

PRIs play a critical role in implementing schemes related to **health, education, sanitation, and rural infrastructure**, making them central to India's development process.

### Celebrations and 2026 Context

The day is celebrated nationwide by the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj** through:

- **National Panchayat Awards** recognizing best-performing local bodies
- **Workshops, seminars, and digital governance initiatives**
- Interaction between **grassroots representatives and national leadership**

In 2026, the celebration marks over **three decades of constitutional Panchayati Raj**, emphasizing **digital transformation, local planning, and participatory governance**.

### Conclusion

National Panchayati Raj Day is not just a commemorative event—it reinforces the idea that **true democracy begins at the grassroots**. Strengthening PRIs is essential for achieving **inclusive growth, rural empowerment, and effective governance in India**.

### 18. Startup India Fund of Funds (SIFoF) 2.0 Scheme

- Announced by **DPIIT (Ministry of Commerce & Industry)**
- Corpus: **₹10,000 crore**
- Implemented by **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)**
- Invests via **SEBI-registered Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs)**
- Focus: **deep tech, innovation, early-growth startups**
- Aim: **crowd-in private investment & strengthen startup ecosystem**

### 19. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)

- FSSAI is a statutory body under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.
- It sets science-based food standards and regulates manufacture, storage, distribution, sale, and import of food; however, it does not regulate animal feed.

### 20. Skills Outcomes Fund (SOF)

- A **first-of-its-kind initiative by the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE)** to promote **outcomes-based financing in skilling**.



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- Links funding to **verified employment outcomes (job placement & retention)** instead of just training completion.
- Anchored by **NSDC**, it uses a **blended finance model (public + private capital)** to create sustainable livelihoods for youth.

## INTERNATIONAL :

### 1. WTO's 14th Ministerial Conference (MC14)

#### Introduction

The **14th Ministerial Conference (MC14)** of the World Trade Organization (WTO) was held from **26–29 March 2026 in Yaoundé, Cameroon**. It is the **highest decision-making body of the WTO**, where trade ministers of member countries meet to take key decisions on global trade rules.

#### Objectives of MC14

The conference aimed to address **challenges in the multilateral trading system** and chart the future course of WTO reforms. Key focus areas included:

- Strengthening the **rules-based global trading system**
- Addressing concerns of **developing countries**
- Advancing discussions on **trade reforms and emerging issues**

#### Key Issues Discussed

##### 1. WTO Reforms

- Emphasis on reforming the WTO to make it **more transparent, efficient, and responsive**.
- Revival of the **dispute settlement mechanism (Appellate Body)** remained a major concern.

##### 2. Agriculture and Food Security

- Demand for a **permanent solution on public stockholding** for food security, especially by developing countries like India.

##### 3. Fisheries Subsidies

- Continued negotiations on curbing **overfishing and harmful subsidies**, while protecting small-scale fishers.

##### 4. E-commerce Moratorium

- Debate on whether to **continue the moratorium on customs duties on electronic transmissions**, a contentious issue between developed and developing nations.



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### 5. Digital Trade and New Rules

- Some members moved towards **plurilateral agreements on digital trade**, highlighting divisions within the WTO framework.

### 6. Development Issues

- Focus on improving integration of **small and vulnerable economies** into global trade.

### India's Position

India emphasized:

- Protection of **food security and farmers' interests**
- Need for **policy space for developing countries**
- Support for **multilateral decision-making** rather than selective agreements

### Challenges and Outcomes

- Negotiations faced **deep divisions among member countries**, especially on agriculture, digital trade, and subsidies.
- Limited consensus reflects the **crisis of multilateralism** and growing preference for **plurilateral arrangements**.
- The conference mainly resulted in **continuation of discussions and commitment to future reforms**, rather than major breakthroughs.

### Conclusion

MC14 highlighted that the WTO is at a **critical juncture**, struggling with institutional paralysis and divergent national interests. While it reaffirmed commitment to multilateralism, the lack of concrete outcomes shows the need for **comprehensive reforms to make the WTO relevant in a rapidly changing global trade environment**.

### 2. Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)

- Founded in **1911**, HQ: London
- Promotes **parliamentary democracy & good governance**
- Has **180 legislatures across 9 regions**
- Publishes journal: "**The Parliamentarian**"

### 3. WADA (World Anti-Doping Agency)

- Established in 1999 under Lausanne Declaration
- HQ: Montreal, Canada
- Aim: Ensure doping-free sports globally



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- Governance: equal partnership (governments + sports bodies)
- Key tools: World Anti-Doping Code, GAIIN network

### 4. World Economic Outlook (WEO)

- Published by International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- Provides global economic projections & policy analysis
- Covers growth, inflation, trade, financial stability trends
- Released biannually (April & October)
- Used for policy guidance by governments & institutions

### 5. International Air Transport Association (IATA)

- Global body for **airline regulation & coordination**
- HQ: **Montreal, Canada**
- Develops **aviation standards & safety protocols**

## PLACES IN NEWS:

### 1. Place in News: Türkiye

#### Why in News?

India and **Türkiye** held the **12th round of Foreign Office Consultations (FoC)** to improve bilateral relations that were strained earlier due to geopolitical tensions.

#### Location and Political Features

- Türkiye is a **transcontinental country**, located in both **Western Asia (major part)** and **Southeastern Europe (minor part – Balkan Peninsula)**.
- It shares borders with:
  - **Greece and Bulgaria (northwest)**
  - **Georgia (northeast)**
  - **Armenia and Iran (east)**
  - **Iraq and Syria (south)**
- It is surrounded by three seas:
  - **Black Sea (north)**
  - **Aegean Sea (west)**
  - **Mediterranean Sea (south)**





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### Key Geographical Features

#### 1. Physiography

- Dominated by the **Anatolian Plateau**
- Mountain ranges include **Taurus Mountains and Pontic Mountains**
- Highest peak: **Mount Ararat** (also a volcanic peak)

#### 2. Rivers

- Important rivers: **Tigris and Euphrates**, along with **Kızılırmak and Sakarya**

#### 3. Lakes

- **Lake Van**: Largest lake in Türkiye and **world's largest alkaline lake**

#### 4. Strategic Straits

- **Bosphorus Strait**: Connects Black Sea → Sea of Marmara
- **Dardanelles Strait**: Connects Aegean Sea → Sea of Marmara
- These straits make Türkiye a **critical maritime chokepoint** between Europe and Asia

### Strategic Importance

- Acts as a **bridge between Europe and Asia** (geo-strategic location)
- Controls key **sea routes linking Black Sea to Mediterranean**
- Important player in **West Asia, NATO, and global geopolitics**

### Conclusion

Türkiye's importance lies not just in geography but in its **strategic positioning, control over crucial straits, and role in regional geopolitics,**

#### 2. Andaman Sea

- Part of **Indian Ocean (eastern side)**
- Bordered by **India, Myanmar, Thailand**
- Connected to **Bay of Bengal via Andaman-Nicobar region**

#### 3. Red Sea

- A **fjord-type marginal sea**
- Connects:



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→ **Gulf of Aden (via Bab-el-Mandeb Strait)**

→ **Mediterranean Sea (via Suez Canal)**



### • **Bordering countries:**

- West: Egypt, Sudan, Eritrea
- East: Saudi Arabia, Yemen
- North-East: Israel, Jordan (via Gulf of Aqaba)

### • **Characteristics:**

- **Very low rainfall, no major river inflow**

### 4. **Place in News: Lebanon**

- Lebanon, a country in the **Levant region of West Asia**, is in news due to a recent **10-day ceasefire agreement with Israel** amid ongoing conflict. Its capital is Beirut. It shares land borders with **Syria (north & east)** and **Israel (south)**, and has a coastline along the **Mediterranean Sea**.



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- Key geographical features include the **Bekaa Valley (fertile region)**, **Lebanon Mountains**, and rivers like **Litani and Orontes**.

The highest peak is **Qurnet al-Sawda**.

### 5. Caspian Sea

- World's **largest inland water body**
- Surrounded by **5 countries (Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Iran, Azerbaijan)**
- Rich in **oil & natural gas reserves**

### 6. Canary Islands

- Located in the **Atlantic Ocean**, off the **northwest coast of Africa**
- An **autonomous community of Spain**



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- Volcanic origin → includes **active volcanoes (e.g., La Palma)**
- Important for **astronomical observatories and tourism**

### 7. Luzon Island

- Largest island of the **Philippines**
- Located in **Western Pacific / South China Sea region**
- Recently in news due to **military drills in nearby waters**
- Strategically important for **Indo-Pacific geopolitics**