

➤ **Neighbourhood First Policy (NFP):** Aims to forge strong neighbourhood relations based on a **consultative, non-reciprocal, and outcome-oriented approach.**

Focuses on delivering benefits like **greater connectivity, improved infrastructure, stronger development cooperation in various sectors, security and broader people-to-people contacts.**

⊕ **5S Principle of neighbourhood engagement: Samman (Respect), Samvad (Dialogue), Shanti (Peace), Samriddhi (Prosperity), and Sanskriti (Culture).**

➤ **Significance of NFP**

⊕ **For India:** Regional stability and improved security, economic growth through improved trade and connectivity, **countering external influence** in the region such as China, enhanced **Soft Power**, etc.

⊕ **For Region:** Shared prosperity, peaceful resolution of outstanding disputes, **strengthened multilateralism** through regional/ sub-regional organizations such as SAARC, BIMSTEC, etc.

➤ **Key recommendations**

⊕ **Ministry of External Affairs should establish a cell to bring convergence** with different ministries on NFP.

⊕ **Periodic review** of bilateral and multilateral/regional relationship framework.

⊕ **Strengthen Joint Project Monitoring Committees and Oversight Mechanisms.**

⊕ **Terrorism and illegal migration:** Monitor demographic changes caused by illegal migration in border areas in coordination with Union Home Ministry.

⊕ **Synergy between NFP and Act East Policy** to improve connectivity, development, and security in India's North East.

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## Union Government Announces Inaugural Edition of National Creators Award

➤ Award aims to celebrate diverse voices and talents shaping India's growth and cultural narrative, driving positive social change, etc., in India's Digital Creator Economy.

➤ **Digital Creator Economy** refers to a segment of the economy driven by individuals who create content, products, or services and monetize them through various digital platforms.

➤ **About Awards**

⊕ Features wide **array of categories** recognizing **excellence and impact across various domains**, including **storytelling, social change advocacy, environmental sustainability, education**, etc.

⊕ **Selection Process:** Combination of jury and public votes.

⊕ **Spearheaded by:** MyGov India.

➤ **Current state of Indian creator Economy**

~80 million Creators and Knowledge Professionals in India.

⊕ ~150000 Professional content creators in India who are able to

⊕ monetize their services effectively.

➤ **Opportunities of Creator economy**

⊕ **For individuals:** Diversification of income streams, creative expression, flexible work model, reach to global audience, etc.

⊕ **For businesses:** Cost-effective and organic marketing, community building, etc.

⊕ **For society and economy:** Cultural expression, social mobilization, skill development and entrepreneurial mindset, etc.

➤ **Challenges:** Authenticity and integrity concerns, mental health and burnout due to excessive competition, gatekeeping and algorithmic biases of platforms, etc.

### Reasons for growth of Creator Economy in India

➤ **Accessibility:** Improved access to smartphones, rise in internet usage, and globalization of content consumption.

➤ **Platform and monetization:** Booming social media landscape providing monetization opportunities.

➤ **Disruption in formal employment:** Adoption of remote and hybrid work gave time and resources to creators.

➤ **COVID-19 Pandemic:** Creativity experienced unrestrained and widespread revival particularly in vernaculars across different verticals

## Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare released report on Review of National Ayush Mission (NAM)

➤ NAM, launched in 2014, aims to provide **Ayush health care services** throughout the country by **strengthening** and **improving** Ayush health care services.

⊕ **Nature:** Centrally Sponsored Scheme

**Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Ayush

⊕ It includes Traditional **AYUSH services** namely **Ayurveda, Yoga and naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homoeopathy.**

➤ Report highlighted that **number of beneficiaries** availing Ayush services through **Ayush Health & Wellness Centres (AHWCs)** increased from 1.50 Crores (2020-21) to 8.42 Crores (2022-23).

AHWCs are part of Ayushman Bharat.

➤ **Challenges faced**

**Implementation: 69% of the integrated Ayush hospitals approved are yet to be completed.**

⊕ Separate Department of Ayush are not opened in some states &UTs.

**Delays in approvals:** Finalising the State Annual Action Plan (SAAP) and its approval process takes longer

⊕ **Multiple roles of an organisation:** Same entity (NAM Directorate) performs various roles of policy formulation, regulation, financing, purchasing, and provisioning.

➤ **Key Recommendations**

Implementing stricter **Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP)** and **Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)** for Ayush products. Persuade **Private insurance companies to include AYUSH treatments** like Panchkarma in their list of approved treatments. **Extend** the period of the scheme beyond FY24 for at least 5 more years.

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➤ **Jute Industry in India** accounts for 70% of the world's jute production

Employs around 3.7 lakh workers directly.

⊕ Around 90% of the production is consumed locally.

⊕ About 73% of country's jute industries are concentrated in West Bengal.

➤ **Challenges faced by Jute Industries**

**Lack of Modernization:** Dependent over obsolete machinery and less integration of advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence.

⊕ **Raw Material:** Area under jute cultivation declined (1.7 Lakh ha between 2013-14 to 2021-22)

⊕ **Low value addition:** Less emphasis on products such as **Jute Geo Textiles.**

⊕ **Non-Compliance:** **Mandatory jute packaging guidelines** are not followed by many industries.

⊕ Also, lack of impetus from states to procure jute products in feasible areas like **geo-textiles. Other:**

⊕ **Shortage of skilled labour** force, closure of existing factories, low export, etc.

➤ **Key Recommendations**

⊕ Promoting **modernization**, equipping industries with **digital moisture metres** to improve the quality. Prepare **comprehensive policy** for reviving the closed mills and setting up new mills.

⊕ **Devise suitable Scheme** in consultation with the **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship** to minimize the shortage of skilled workers

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**Key Government Initiatives**

➤ **National Jute Development Programme-** An Umbrella Scheme for development of Jute Industry.

➤ **National Jute Board (NJB)** has been constituted as per National Jute Board Act, 2008.

➤ **Jute Packaging Materials (Compulsory Use in Packaging Commodities) Act, 1987** enacted for the compulsory use of jute packaging material.

➤ **Jute Mark Logo** was launched (2022) for branding and positioning of Indian Jute globally.

## PM addresses Programme on 200th Birth Anniversary of Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati (1824 - 1883)

### About Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati

- Born at Morvi in Kathiawar (Gujarat) was a philosopher and a social reformer.
- **Original name:** Mula Shankar.
- Was a disciple of **Swami Virajananda**.  
Founder of **Arya Samaj**.

### Key Contributions

**Religious reforms:** Denounced idolatry and ritualistic worship, preached respect and reverence for other human beings.

- ◆ Believed in **infallible authority of Vedas** and gave slogan of 'Back to Vedas'.

**Social reforms:** Claimed caste is not supposed to be hereditary but rather on the basis of individual's talents and disposition.

- ◆ Was **against practice of untouchability** and advocated **Vedic education for all castes**.
- ◆ Opposed **child marriage and forced widowhood** and campaigned for **women's education**.

**Political:** Gave call for 'Swarajya' as 'India for Indians' in 1876 and favoured political system based on **enlightened monarchy**.

**Literary works:** Satyartha Prakash, Veda Bhasya Bhumika, Veda Bhasya, etc.

### Contemporary relevance of Dayananda Saraswati

**Value-based education:** Emphasis on universal truths, humanism, work for common welfare, etc.

**Scientific temper and rational thinking:** He led crusade against superstitions and orthodoxy.

**Social justice:** Eradication of discrimination based on caste, creed, sect, etc.

## Tokenization of Assets

RBI is planning for **tokenization of assets and Government bonds** under its wholesale Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) pilot project.

- CBDC is a digital form of currency notes issued by a central bank.

➤ Tokenization is process of issuing a **digital representation of an asset using Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT) or Blockchain**.

➤ These assets can include **tangible assets** like real estate, financial assets like equities or bonds, and **intangible assets** like intellectual property, identity, etc.

➤ **Benefits:** Increased liquidity, enhanced settlement processes, etc.

## Standing Committee on Agriculture, Animal husbandry and Food processing presented 'Promotion of Climate Resilient Farming' Report

- Report highlighted that **Climate Resilient Farming** is imperative given the susceptibility of Indian Agriculture to climate change.
- **Climate-resilient farming or agriculture** is an approach which includes the **sustainable use of existing natural resources** through crop and **livestock production systems** to achieve long term and higher productivity along with farm incomes under climate variabilities.

### Need of Climate-resilient farming

**Crops and Horticulture:** Yield is expected to decrease.

- ◆ For instance, rainfed rice yields in India will decline by 20% in 2050 and 47% in 2080.
- ◆ Also, Hailstorms occurring during the flowering and fruit set stage result in lesser mango production.

**Livestock:** Rising temperatures may affect livestock physiology and energy expenditure of livestock, **reducing milk, meat, wool, and draught power output**.

**Fisheries sector:** 1°C temperature rise can **disrupt fish survival, migrations, and habitats**, altering stocks with potential **permanent displacement to new areas**.

### Key Recommendations

**National Agriculture Disaster Management Authority (NADMA):** Creation of Single Nodal Agency at National Level to deal with issues of Climate Change.

**KVK2.0 (Krishi Vigyan Kendras):** Transform KVKs with technology such as Artificial Intelligence for better farmer support.

**Others:** Technology such as Big data analytics will optimize irrigation schedules, promotion of **Carbon market in Agriculture**.

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## Great Indian Bustard (GIB)

GIB has not been spotted at Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary in Andhra Pradesh for years.

### About GIB

- **Range:** Endemic to **Indian Sub-continent**, found in central India, western India and eastern Pakistan.
  - ◆ Major population is confined **mostly to Rajasthan and Gujarat**.
- **Habitat:** **Arid and semi-arid grasslands**, open country with thorn scrub, tall grass interspersed with cultivation.
- **IUCN Status:** Critically Endangered.
- Listed in **Schedule I of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972** and in **Appendix I of CITES**.
- Included in **Species Recovery Programme**.



## High Altitude Pseudo Satellites (HAPS)

- National Aerospace Laboratories in Bengaluru successfully completed first test of a solar-powered “pseudo satellite”. **Pseudo satellites or HAPS are unmanned air vehicles** that can fly at altitudes of 18-20 km from the ground and can hold fixed positions. These could be airplanes, airships, balloons, etc.
- **Two types of HAPS**
  - **Lighter-than-air (LTA) HAPS** that rely on buoyancy to lift off and stay afloat.
  - **Heavier than air (HTA) HAPS** with a more conventional take-off method
- **Applications:** Search and rescue missions, disaster relief, surveillance of border areas, etc.



## Open Radio Access Network (ORAN)

- A new niche technological solution for **Open Radio Access Network (ORAN)** base stations has been developed by IITB COMET Foundation (COMET).
- COMET is a hub under the **National Mission for Interdisciplinary Cyber Physical Systems (NM-ICPS)**.
- **About ORAN:**
  - Key part of a **mobile network system** that uses cellular radio connections to link individual devices to other parts of a network. It comprises antennae, which transmits and receives signals to and from our smartphones or other compatible devices.
  - It uses **radio waves**.
  - **Enable operators to mix and match components** from different vendors.
  - ♦ Also, it is cost-effective, secure, and energy efficient.



## Bandipur National Park

- A new proposed railway line passing through Bandipur National Park has evoked protests over its ecological impact.
- **About Bandipur National Park**
  - Located in **Karnataka**.
  - Part of **Western Ghats Mountains Biogeography Zone and Nilgiri Biosphere reserve**.
  - Shares boundary with 3 other National park namely **Nagarahole National Park, Wayanad National Park and Mudumalai National park**.
  - **Forest Type:** Scrub type to moist deciduous
  - **Fauna:** Tigers, Indian Elephants, Leopard, Dhole, Sambar, etc.
  - **Major Rivers:** Kabini River, Moyar, and Nugu River etc.



## SWATI Portal

- **Principal Scientific Advisor** to the Government of India launched “**Science for Women-A Technology & Innovation (SWATI)**” Portal.
- It aims to create a **single online portal representing Indian Women and Girls in STEMM** (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Medicine).
- **Objectives:** Scale up efforts to exponentially include every Indian woman in science and enable reliable long-term research on equality, diversity, and inclusivity.
- Developed, hosted and maintained by **National Institute of Plant Genome Research (NIPGR), New Delhi**.



## Brumation

- During the winter months, American alligators go into a state of brumation, a type of hibernation.
- Hibernation is a period of inactivity that allows animals to survive when food is scarce and the weather is harsh.
- **About Brumation:**
  - Period of dormancy exhibited by **reptiles and amphibians** in colder months.
  - ♦ **Reptiles** are **ectothermic** (their body temperature is dependent on their environment), hence require brumation. In it, reptiles may **retreat to underground burrows or other sheltered areas**.
  - **Other types of hibernation:**
    - ♦ **Diapause:** Dormancy of insects
    - ♦ **Aestivation:** Summer dormancy in invertebrates and fish
    - ♦ **Torpor:** Short-term physiological state of decreased activity.



## Lymphatic Filariasis (Elephantiasis)

- **Ministry of Health and family welfare** has launched first phase of the Bi-annual Nationwide Mass drug Administration (MDA) campaign to eliminate the **Lymphatic Filariasis (LF)**.
- MDA is part of India’s commitment to end LF by **2027**.
- **About Lymphatic Filariasis (LF)**
  - One of the **Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD)**.
  - Impairs the **lymphatic system** and can lead to the **abnormal enlargement of body parts**.
  - **Caused by:** Microscopic parasite **nematodes (roundworms)** of the family Filarioidea
  - **Transmission:** Person-to-Person through Mosquitoes **Symptoms:**
  - **Mostly asymptomatic**, showing no signs of infection.

## Personality in news



### Dr. M S Swaminathan (1925 - 2023)

- Dr. Swaminathan has been conferred with **Bharat Ratna**. **Key contributions**
  - Architect of **India’s Green Revolution** during 1960s.
  - Along with Norman Borlaug, developed **high-yielding varieties of wheat**.
  - Promoted knowledge, skill, and technological **empowerment of women in agriculture**.
  - As head of **National Commission on Farmers (2004-06)**, recommended **Minimum Support Price for farmers based on Comprehensive cost of Production**.
- **Rewards and recognitions:** **First World Food Prize Laureate (1987), S.S. Bhatnagar Award (1961), etc. Values:**
- Leadership, Scientism, Compassion, Dedication to Public Service, etc.

