

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: JANUARY 2025

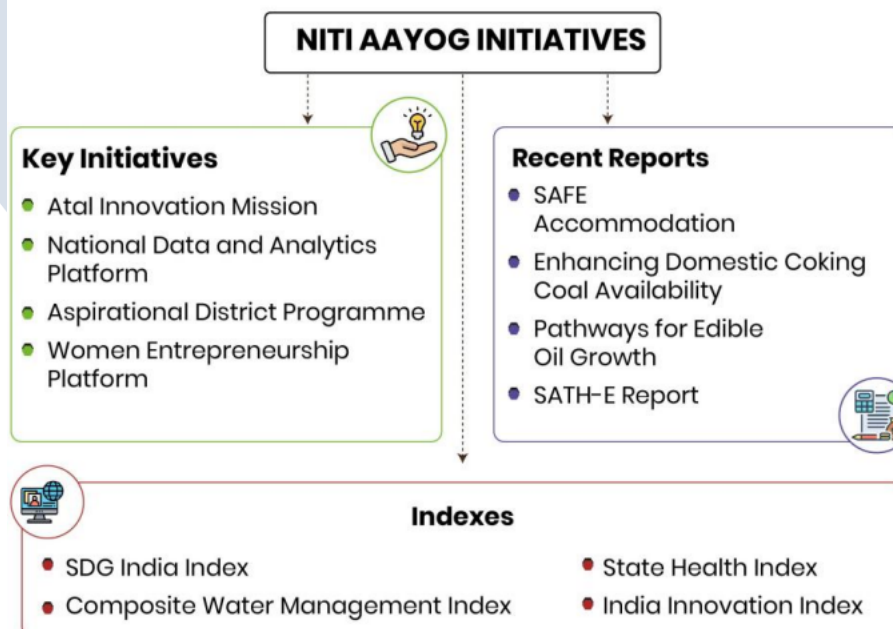
### 10 YEARS OF NITI AAYOG

On January 1, 2025, National Institute for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog celebrated its 10th year of foundation.

#### About NITI Aayog

- NITI Aayog is an **advisory body** (think-tank) to the government, **established through a Union cabinet resolution**, replacing the erstwhile Planning Commission.
  - It is **neither a Constitutional nor a statutory body**.
- **Mandate:** It has a **twin mandate**:
  - To oversee the **adoption and monitoring of the SDGs** in the country; and
  - Promote **competitive and cooperative federalism** among States and UTs.
- **Composition:**
  - **Chairperson:** Prime Minister (PM) of India.
  - **Governing Council:**
    - > **PM** of India;
    - > **Chief Ministers** (CMs) of all the States and UTs with legislature;
    - > **Lt. Governors** of other UTs;
    - > **Ex-Officio Members** (include maximum 4 members of Union Council of Ministers nominated by the PM);
    - > **Vice Chairperson**, NITI Aayog (appointed by the PM);
    - > **Full-Time Members**. NITI Aayog: and

### NITI Aayog Initiatives, Reports, and Indexes





## LOKPAL AND LOKAYUKTA

The Lokpal of India, a statutory anti-corruption body established under Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013 celebrated its first foundation day in January 2025.

### About Lokpal and Lokayukta Act, 2013

- The act mandated the establishment of the Lokpal at the union level and Lokayukta at the state level to deal with complaints relating to corruption against certain public functionaries.
- This act was amended in 2016, enabling the leader of the single largest opposition party in the Lok Sabha to become a member of the selection committee of Lokpal in the absence of a recognized Leader of Opposition.
  - o It also amended Section 44 of the act which dealt with the provisions of furnishing of details of assets and liabilities.

### About Lokpal

- Composition: Consists of a Chairperson and up to 8 Members, with 50% being Judicial Members.
  - o At least 50% of total Members must be from SC, ST, OBC, Minorities, and women.
- Term for members: 5 years or till the age of 70 years.
- Appointment: Appointed by the President after obtaining the recommendations of a Selection Committee consisting ofo Prime Minister (Chairperson)
  - o Speaker of Lok Sabha
  - o Leader of Opposition /Leader of single largest opposition party in Lok Sabha
  - o Chief Justice of India/Judge of the Supreme Court nominated by him/her
  - o One eminent jurist to be nominated by the President



- Jurisdiction of Lokpal: Includes Prime Minister (except on allegations of corruption relating to international relations, security, the public order, atomic energy and space), Ministers, members of Parliament, Groups A, B, C and D officers and officials of Central Government.
- Powers and Functions
  - o Superintendence Over Investigations of Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) concerning matters referred for preliminary inquiry or investigation.
  - o Can authorize agencies to search for and seize documents relevant to an investigation.
  - o Central Vigilance Commission must report to the Lokpal on actions taken on referred complaints, with the Lokpal issuing guidelines for effective disposal.
  - o Powers of a civil court for the purpose of any preliminary inquiry, the Inquiry Wing under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908.

## **ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA (ECI)**

Election Commission of India (ECI) celebrated 75th Years of its establishment and also observed 25th January as National Voters Day.

### **About ECI**

- Genesis: ECI is a permanent Constitutional Body established in on 25th January 1950.
  - o Since 2011, National Voters' Day has been celebrated on January 25 every year to mark the foundation day of the ECI.
- Constitutional Provision: Part XV of the Constitution entailing Articles 324 to 329.
- Statutory provisions: The Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023 regulates their appointment, service conditions, tenure, etc.
- Key role: ECI Administers elections to the
  - o Lok Sabha



- o Rajya Sabha
- o State Legislative Assemblies
- o Offices of the President and Vice President
- **Composition:** It currently consists of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and two Election Commissioners (EC).
  - o Initially, the commission had only a CEC. In 1989, two Election Commissioners were appointed who served until 1st January 1990.
  - o Since 1993, the commission has permanently included two Election Commissioners.

## Key Provisions of the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners Act, 2023

The 2023 Act replaces the 1991 Act and facilitates more autonomy to the ECI by specifying qualification, reforming appointment process, providing security of tenure, etc.

Specification	Details
<b>Qualifications</b>	For CEC or EC the person must <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• be holding or have held a <b>post equivalent to Secretary</b> to the Government of India.</li><li>• possess <b>integrity and experience in managing and conducting elections.</b></li></ul>
<b>Search Committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Composition</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Headed by the <b>Minister of Law and Justice.</b></li><li>o Includes <b>two members</b> (rank of Secretary or higher).</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Functions:</b> Prepares a <b>panel of 5 candidates for selection.</b></li></ul>
<b>Select Committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Composition</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Prime Minister (Chairperson).</li><li>o Leader of Opposition in the House of the People (Member).</li><li>o Union Cabinet Minister to be nominated by the Prime Minister (Member)</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Functions:</b> Recommends the eligible candidates to the President for the appointment of CEC and EC.</li></ul>
<b>Term of Office of CEC and EC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Tenure:</b> 6 years or until 65 years of age, whichever is earlier<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o If an EC becomes the CEC, combined tenure cannot exceed 6 years.</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Reappointment:</b> Re-appointment is <b>not allowed.</b></li></ul>
<b>Salary and Benefits of CEC and EC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Salary is <b>equivalent to that of a Supreme Court Judge.</b></li></ul>
<b>Resignation and Removal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Resignation:</b> CEC or EC, can resign by writing to the President.</li><li>• <b>Removal</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o <b>CEC:</b> Can be removed like a Supreme Court Judge.</li><li>o <b>ECs:</b> Require the recommendation of the CEC for removal.</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Legal Protection to ECE and EC</b>	Protected from <b>civil or criminal proceedings for acts or words spoken in official capacity.</b>



## INTERNET SHUTDOWN

According to data from the Internet Shutdown Tracker maintained by Software Freedom Law Centre, India recorded 60 mobile internet shutdowns in 2024, the lowest in 8 years.M

- As per the Tracker, the reduction comes, as compared to 96 in 2023, due to fewer internet shutdowns imposed in Manipur and Jammu and Kashmir in 2024.

### Provisions for internet shutdowns in India

- Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), 1973: Up to 2017, internet shutdowns were primarily issued under Section 144 of erstwhile CrPC (Section 163 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita).
  - o Section 144 gave District Magistrate the powers to prevent unlawful gathering and direct any person to abstain from a certain activity.
- The Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 (amended in 2017): It allows internet shutdowns under the Temporary Suspension of Telecom Services (Public Emergency & Public Safety) 2017 rules for up to 15 days.
  - o Grounds for shut down: Such shutdown order could be issued on grounds of 'public emergency' or 'public safety'
    - > However, public emergency and public safety are not defined under the act or rules.
  - o Order issuing authority: Such orders could be issued only by union/state home secretary
  - o Review of order: A 3-member review committee headed by cabinet secretary/chief secretary at national/state level has to be constituted within 5 days to review the orders
- Article 19 (2): It allows the government to impose reasonable restrictions on freedom of speech and expression for security of the state, public order, etc.



## RIGHT TO ACCESS TO JUSTICE NOT ABSOLUTE: SUPREME COURT

Acknowledging the right to access to justice as the cornerstone of democracy, SC recently imposed a penalty on a petitioner for filing multiple frivolous litigations that burden the judicial system.

- A frivolous litigation is a lawsuit that lacks any arguable basis either in law or in fact and intends to harass, or delay the judicial process.
- The issue was also taken up by the apex court earlier in the Subrata Roy Sahara Vs Union of India (2014), Dalip Singh v. State of Uttar Pradesh and others (2010), and the K.C. Tharakan Vs State Bank of India & Ors (2023).

### Right to Access to Justice

- Meaning: It is a basic principle of the rule of law and deals with the ability of people to seek and obtain a remedy through formal or informal institutions of justice for grievances.
  - o SC in Anita Kushwaha v. Pushap Sudan (2016) held Access to Justice is a Fundamental Right under Article 14 (Right to Equality) and Article 21 (Right to Life and Personal Liberty).

### Other Provisions/ Mechanism related to Right to Access to Justice

- Constitutional
  - o Preamble covers social, economic and political justice.
  - o Directive Principles of State Policy under Article 39A (Right to free legal aid).
  - o Article 32 (Right to Constitutional Remedies) Article 226 (Power of High Court to Issue Writs).
- Public Interest Litigation: Liberalised the rule of locus standi (where only the aggrieved person can file a case for the enforcement of right), to allow public spirited persons or organizations file a case for the enforcement of right.
- Alternative Dispute Redressal Mechanisms (ADR): Grievance Redressal with lesser formality at lower cost.



## STATE CONSENT FOR CBI

Supreme Court held that CBI does not require sanction of a state government to register a case under a Central legislation like the Prevention of Corruption Act against a Central government employee posted in state concerned.

- This overturned an Andhra Pradesh High Court decision that had dismissed cases against central employees due to lack of state consent.

### About State Consent for CBI

- Law: Section 6 of Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946 requires CBI to get state consent for investigations a crime in a state.
- Two types of consent: General Consent, and Case-specific Consent.

## VIKSIT PANCHAYAT KARMAYOGI' INITIATIVE

Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions launched 'Viksit Panchayat Karmayogi' Initiative on Good Governance Day.

- Good Governance Day is celebrated on 25th December to commemorate the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

### About Viksit Panchayat Karmayogi' Initiative

- Aim: To enhance the capacity and competence of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) by equipping elected representatives and officials with the tools and knowledge required for effective governance and participatory planning.
- It is part of the broader 'Prashasan Gaon Ki Aur' campaign.
- The program promotes decentralized governance and grassroots-level decision-making.

## PAY COMMISSION

The Union government approved the establishment of the Eighth Pay Commission.

### About Pay Commission



- Constitution: by central government
- Since 1947, seven Pay Commissions have been constituted
  - o The 7th pay commission was implemented in 2016 and is set to complete its term in 2026.
  - o Chairman of 7th Pay Commission was: Justice Ashok Kumar Mathur.
- Importance: It plays a vital role in determining salary structures, allowances, and other benefits for government employees.

## USA'S PROTECTIONIST MEASURES

The USA, upholding its 'America First Policy,' has decided to exit from key global institutions like the World Health Organization (WHO), Paris agreement and the International Criminal Court (ICC).

- USA had earlier exited Paris Agreement in 2017, but rejoined in 2021 and initiated process of withdrawal from WHO in 2020, reversed in 2021.
- USA is also engaged in a tariff war and has threatened to impose high tariffs on imports from trade surplus countries to reduce trade deficit of the USA.
  - o In 2023, the US trade deficit was at \$1.05 trillion, with 4 countries (China, Mexico, Canada and EU) accounting for almost 80% of the trade deficit.
- These protectionist measures are being promoted to benefit American economy, upholding the idea of economic Nationalism.

## INDUS WATER TREATY

Recently, the World Bank appointed Neutral Expert on Indus Water Treaty (IWT) has backed India's position on its competence to decide the outcome of a dispute over two hydroelectric projects in India's Jammu and Kashmir.



## About IWT

- Genesis: Signed in 1960 between India and Pakistan mediated by the World Bank.
- Water usage rights:
  - o Eastern Rivers (Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej) for India's unrestricted use.
  - o Western Rivers (Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab) are allocated to Pakistan, with India allowed for specific non-consumptive uses like navigation, floating of timber or other property, flood protection or flood control, fishing or fish culture.
    - ☐ India is, however, permitted to use waters of these rivers for following purposes:
      - ✓ Domestic use;
      - ✓ Non-consumptive use;
      - ✓ Agriculture use;
      - ✓ Generation of hydro-electric power.
    - ☐ This gives India roughly 30% and Pakistan 70% of the water carried by the Indus River System.
- Implementation: Requires both countries to create permanent Commissioners for Indus Waters to serve as the regular channel of communication on all matters relating to the implementation of the Treaty.
- Dispute Resolution Mechanism (Three Level Graded Mechanism)
  - o Permanent Indus Commission (PIC): For questions concerning the interpretation or application of this Treaty or the existence of any fact which might constitute a breach of this Treaty.
  - o Neutral Expert: For technical disputes where the PIC cannot reach a consensus.
    - ☐ Neutral Expert shall be appointed by the World Bank or jointly by the Government of India and the Government of Pakistan.

o Court of Arbitration: 7-member arbitral tribunal for legal adjudication of disputes if unresolved at lower levels.

## PHILADELPHI CORRIDOR

Recent ceasefire terms between Israel and Hamas also stipulate Israel's withdrawal from the Philadelphi Corridor.

### About Philadelphi Corridor

- Corridor was originally established under the 1979 Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty.
- It is a narrow strip of land along the Gaza-Egypt border, ~14 km long and 100 meters wide.
- It serves as a critical border area between the southern Gaza Strip and Egypt's Sinai Peninsula.
- It runs from the Mediterranean to Kerem Shalom crossing with Israel and was designated as a demilitarised border zone after the withdrawal of Israeli settlements and troops from Gaza in 2005.



## PANAMA CANAL

U.S. President-elect Donald Trump threatened to reimpose U.S. control over the Panama Canal.

### About Panama Canal

- It is an 82-km (51-mile) artificial waterway that connects Pacific & Atlantic Oceans through Panama.
- The canal transports ships through Gatun Lake.
  - o It is one of the two most strategic artificial waterways in the world, the other being the Suez Canal.
  - o It shortens the journey of ships between east and west coasts of U.S. by 8,000 miles (around 22 days)



## INDIA SECURES 14.3% OF GLOBAL REMITTANCES: WORLD BANK

According to the World Bank, India secured 14.3% of Global Remittances in 2024, highest share ever.



- Remittances are financial transfers made by individuals working abroad to support their families in their home country.

## Trend in Remittances flow

- Top five recipients in 2024: India at \$129 billion (Compared to \$125 billion in 2023), Mexico, China, Philippines, and Pakistan, driven by recovery in job markets in high-income countries of OECD.
- Remittances to Low- and Middle-Income Countries are projected to surge to \$685 billion in 2024, with 5.8% growth rate.
- China's share of global remittances dropped to 5.3% in 2024, its lowest share in two decades, due to reduced lowskilled emigration stemming from its rising economic prosperity and aging population.

## Factors responsible for High Remittances in India

- Scale of Migration: India has one of the largest diaspora populations in world, with over 18 million Indians living abroad as of 2023 (UN World Migration Report 2024).
- Shift in Destination Trends: Increasingly, Indian migrants are moving to high-income economies like US, UK, and Australia.
- Skilled and Unskilled Labor: Indian migrants range from highly skilled professionals (IT, healthcare) to semi-skilled and unskilled labourers.

## Z MORH TUNNEL (SONAMARG TUNNEL)

Prime Minister has inaugurated Z-Morh tunnel in Ganderbal's Sonamarg area in J&K.

### About Z Morh Tunnel

- Situated at an altitude of 8,650 feet, it is a two-lane road tunnel equipped with parallel 7.5-metre-wide escape passage.



- Spanning 12 km that includes main 6.4 km main tunnel, an egress tunnel, and approach roads.
- Significance:
  - o Enhance all-weather connectivity between Srinagar and Sonamarg enroute to Leh.
  - o Ensure safe and uninterrupted access to Ladakh region.

## **BANIHAL BYPASS**

The Banihal bypass has been completed.

### **About Banihal Pass**

- The pass is 2.35 km road section of NH-44 in Jammu and Kashmir,
  - o NH44, also known as the Old NH 7, is the longest national highway in India.
  - o It stretches 3,745 kilometers, connecting Srinagar in the northern tip of Jammu and Kashmir to Kanyakumari at the southernmost point of India.
- The bypass is particularly important for security forces, enabling rapid movement, and will also reduce the travel time between Kharpora, Banihal, and the Navyuga Tunnel to just seven minutes.

## **ANJI KHAD BRIDGE**

The Indian Railways has unveiled a monumental engineering achievement with the completion of the Anji Khad Bridge, India's first cable-stayed rail bridge.

### **Anji Khad Bridge: Key Details**

- Location: Reasi district, Jammu and Kashmir, part of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) Project.
- Significance:
  - o Enhances connectivity between Katra and the Kashmir Valley.



o Expected to boost tourism and foster economic growth in Jammu and Kashmir.

## INTERPOL

INTERPOL issued its first Silver Notice in a 52-country pilot, including India, and Ministry of Home Affairs also launched BHARATPOL portal to seamlessly connect with INTERPOL.

### About Bharatpol

- Portal: BHARATPOL is an online portal for international police cooperation developed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)
  - o Through this, every agency and police force in India will be able to seamlessly connect with INTERPOL, thereby expediting investigations.

## FRONTIER TECHNOLOGIES IN WARFARE

Raksha Mantri said that “Mastering frontier technologies is need of the hour”.

### Frontier Technologies in Warfare

- **AI based warfare:** AI based tools are designed to assist complex decisions like target selection, collateral damage assessments, providing recommendation etc. e.g. AI-powered drones
- **Electromagnetic warfare:** It is a military capability that exploits electromagnetic energy across the battlespace to create offensive and defensive effects.
- **Space warfare:** Military operations in outer space, utilizing both kinetic (physical) and non-kinetic (electronic, cyber) means to achieve strategic objectives. E.g. Anti-satellite (ASAT) weapons
- **Cyber attacks:** it is deliberate exploitation of computer systems to steal critical data of a country. E.g. cybersecurity breach at Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant.

## BHARGAVASTRA



India has successfully tested its first indigenous micro-missile system, Bhargavastra, designed to counter the threat of swarm drones.

- Swarm drones are multiple unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) working together as a coordinated system.

## Key Features of Bhargavastra

- Detection Capability: Capable of detecting small incoming drones at distances exceeding 6 kilometers.
- Rapid Response: Designed for rapid deployment on mobile platforms.
- Multi-Target Engagement: can simultaneously detect and track & engage up to 64 targets.
- Guided Micro Munitions: Utilizes micro munitions that can be guided towards identified threats.

## INDIGENOUS HYDROGEN TRAIN ENGINE

Indian Railway Minister announced the development of the world's most powerful hydrogen fuel-run train engine with 1,200 horsepower.

- Only four countries (Germany (1st), France, Sweden, and China) in the world have hydrogen-powered trains, capable of producing around 500 to 600 horsepower.
- All hydrogen powered rail vehicles, whether large or small, are categorized as 'hydrail,' whether the fuel is used for the traction motors, auxiliary systems, or both.
- They have considerable advantage over electric trains: Electric trains require expensive and complex infrastructure, including overhead gantries to carry power cables and power substations, which is not required in hydrail.

## About India's Indigenous Hydrogen Train

- Designed by: Research, Design, and Standard Organization (RDSO) in Lucknow.



- Manufactured by: Integral Coach Factory, Chennai manufacturing coaches for the train.
- Background: The Ministry of Railways, Government of India, announced the “Hydrogen for Heritage” project in 2023.
  - o Union Budget 2023–24: Announced and allotted funds for developing 35 hydrogen fuel cell trains.
  - o As part of this venture, existing Diesel-Electric Multiple Unit (DEMU) rakes will be retrofitted with green hydrogen fuel cells.
- Trial Route: Jind-Sonapat in Haryana.

## About Hydrogen and its ecosystem

- Hydrogen is the simplest and most abundant element in the universe, consisting of just one proton and one electron.
- Molecular Structure: Diatomic, meaning it contains two atoms.
- Chemical Properties: Highly reactive and combines with almost all elements to form binary compounds called hydrides, can undergo oxidation as well as reduction can lose an electron to form  $H^+$  (proton) or gain an electron to form  $H^-$  (hydride ion).
  - o Known for forming acids when combined with non-metals like chlorine, sulfur etc.
  - o Isotopes: Protium, Deuterium, Tritium.

## YALA GLACIER IN HIMALAYAS PROJECTED TO VANISH BY 2040S

The Yala glacier (Nepal) retreated by 680m and witnessed significant reduction in area (36%) between 1974 and 2021.

- It is the only glacier in entire Himalayas to be included in the Global Glacier Casualty List (GGCL) which highlights accelerating impact of climate change on Himalayan glaciers/cryosphere.
  - o The cryosphere is the frozen part of the Earth, including snow, ice, and frozen ground.



## CHHATTISGARH FIRST STATE TO ADOPT GREEN GDP

Chhattisgarh has introduced an innovative plan that connects ecosystem services of its forests with the Green GDP.

- The move highlights the direct link between significant environmental contributions of forests like clean air, water conservation, biodiversity and the state's economic progress.
  - o Forest accounts for Chhattisgarh's 44% of land cover playing a crucial role in mitigating climate change.
  - o Also, forest products like tendu leaves, lac, honey, and medicinal plants contribute significantly to the rural economy.

### About Green GDP

- Genesis: 'Green GDP' was coined in the late 1980s with aspiration to modify GDP better to reflect the impacts of economic activities on the environment.
- Definition: Green GDP refers to environmentally adjusted gross domestic product (GDP).

## MANUFACTURED SAND (M-SAND)

Recently, Rajasthan government introduced the M-Sand, 2024 policy for sustainable construction and infrastructure.

### About M - Sand

- About: It is produced by crushing rocks or quarry stones, serving as a substitute for river sand in concrete construction.
- Advantages:
  - o Better Workability: It does not contain organic and soluble compounds that affect the setting time and properties of cement.
  - o Higher Strength: It does not have the presence of impurities such as clay, dust and silt coating.



o Eco-Friendly: Prevents dredging of river beds leading to environmental disaster like ground water depletion, water scarcity, etc.

## INDIA'S COASTLINE RECALCULATED

India's coastline has been recalculated from 7,516 km in 1970 to 11,098 km in 2023-24, reflecting a 48% increase over the past 53 years.

- Upward revision is attributed to a new methodology to measure India's maritime established by National Maritime Security Coordinator.
  - o It measures complex coastal formations like bays, estuaries, and inlets, unlike older methods that used straight-line distances.
- West Bengal recorded highest percentage increase (357%) while Kerala (5%) reported the smallest increase.
  - o Puducherry's coastline contracted by 4.9 km.
- Gujarat retains its position as the state with the longest coastline followed by Tamil Nadu which overtaken Andhra Pradesh (now 3rd).

## India

**Ladakh**

- 4G and 5G services deployed to Siachen Glacier.
- Shivaji statue on the banks of Pangong Lake was installed.

**Uttarakhand**

- State Cabinet approved the manual for Uniform Civil Code (UCC).

**Haryana**

- Archaeologists found a mud-brick stadium and marketplace from the Mature Harappan phase at Rakhigarhi.

**Rajasthan**

- Ranthambore Tiger Reserve faces submergence risk due to Parbati-Ka-lisindh-Chambal Project.

**Bihar**

- High arsenic levels (linked to groundwater contamination) detected in staple foods like rice and wheat.

**Jharkhand**

- Forest department initiated study to revive bison population in Palamu Tiger Reserve.

**Karnataka**

- State Forest department initiated talks to relocate Sheribikanahalli hamlet located within Chincholi Wildlife Sanctuary.

**Tamil Nadu**

- Auction of Nayakkarpatti Tungsten Mineral Block cancelled to conserve Arittapatti Biodiversity Site.
- International solar conference marks 125th anniversary of Kodaikanal Solar Observatory.

**Jammu and Kashmir**

- Kashmir Chinars digitally protected through geo-tagging and QR codes.

**Himachal Pradesh**

- Areas around Shikari Devi Wildlife Sanctuary designated as Eco-Sensitive Zones.
- Boda Tyohar (Magho ko Tyohar) festival, the biggest annual celebration for Hatti tribes in Himachal Pradesh, was celebrated.

**Arunachal Pradesh**

- Pangsau Pass International Festival celebrated border trade and cultural exchange.

**Assam**

- Wildlife Board approved oil and gas exploration in Hollongapar Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary's eco-sensitive zone.
- The Army rescued workers trapped in a flooded rat-hole coal mine in Umrangso, Assam, near the Meghalaya border.

**Tripura**

- State undertaking language mapping project for developing the Kokborok language.

**West Bengal**

- Lakhs of devotees took a dip at Gangasagar Mela during Makar Sankranti.

**Odisha**

- ASI discovered ancient Buddhist artefacts at Ratnagiri.

**Telangana**

- Musi River (originating from Telanagna) historic buildings listed on World Monuments Watch 2025.

**Andhra Pradesh**

- Centre approved Third Launch Pad project at ISRO's Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.

## World

**California, USA**

- Wildfires blaze across Los Angeles occurred.

**Gulf of Mexico**

- There is a proposal to rename it "Gulf of America."

**Cuba**

- India extended humanitarian assistance after Hurricane Rafael.

**Trinidad & Tobago**

- Declared a state of emergency due to violence.

**Cabo Verde**

- World Bank report highlights \$140M annual investment needed to tackle climate and development challenges.

**Suez Canal**

- Egypt completed a trial of the canal's new extension, now 193 km long.

**Philadelpi Corridor**

- Ceasefire terms stipulate Israel's withdrawal from Philadelpi Corridor.

**Georgia**

- Certified as malaria-free by WHO.

**Azerbaijan**

- Russian President apologized to Azerbaijan for a plane crash in Kazakhstan that killed 38 people.

**Lao PDR**

- Indian embassy rescued 67 citizens from cyber scam centers in GTSEZ.

**Indonesia**

- President honored as Chief Guest at India's 76th Republic Day. Mount Ibu Erupted 1,000 times this month.

**Diego Garcia**

- 15 Indian fishermen detained near Diego Garcia island.

**Darfur, Sudan**

- ICC called on UN to address worsening atrocities in the region.

**Lake Victoria**

- Genetic survey of cyanobacteria conducted in the Winam Gulf.

**Lake Naivasha, Kenya**

- Invasive water hyacinth threatens fishers' livelihoods.

**Somalia**

- UN Security Council authorized a new peacekeeping mission.