

Daily Current Affairs

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SERVICES

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Rajasthan

Discovery of rare earth elements in Barmer, Jaisalmer and Balotra

➔ Why in News?

- Recently, in response to a question asked by the Barmer-Jaisalmer MP in the Lok Sabha, the Ministry of Mines informed that abundant reserves of strategically and technically important nuclear energy and rare earth elements are available in Barmer, Jaisalmer and Balotra.



➔ Main Point

- According to the Ministry of Mines, the Geological Survey of India (GSI) and the Atomic Minerals Directorate (AMD) have conducted a total of 47 detailed geological surveys in these areas so far.
- In these surveys, Siwana tehsil of Balotra has been described as an important area of rare earth elements.

Proven reserves:

- The rare and strategic minerals present in Siwana (Balotra) include thorium (81.8 million tonnes), neodymium (67.6 million tonnes), tantalum (6.8 million tonnes) and zirconium (52.5 million tonnes).
- Apart from this, very important minerals like niobium, rhenium, radium and rubidium have also been found in this area.
- Country's first hard rock block: A deposit of rare elements has been found in hard rock granite in Bhatikheda block of Siwana tehsil. This will be the first block in the country to find rare minerals on such a large scale in hard rock.

Strategic importance:

- These minerals play an important role in nuclear energy, electronics, defense, space research, high-tech manufacturing and manufacturing of electric vehicles.
- **Note:** Currently, about 90 percent of the world's rare earth elements are produced in China. The discovery of these minerals in India is a big step towards self-reliance from a strategic point of view.

❖ Facts for Prelims:

- ◆ In January 2025, the Union Cabinet approved the 'National Critical Mineral Mission' (NCMM) with a total outlay of ₹ 34,300 crore for seven years.
- ◆ The objective of this mission is to strengthen India's self-reliance in the field of critical minerals.

Jaipur included in top 10 best cities in the world

➔ Why in News?

- Recently, Jaipur ranked among the top 10 best cities in the world in the 2025 Readers Survey conducted by tourism magazine Travel & Leisure.



➔ Main Point

- Jaipur has been ranked 5th in the category of Iconic Global Destination.
- Jaipur scored a score of 91.33 in this ranking, reflecting its rich heritage, royal palaces and vibrant cultural experiences.

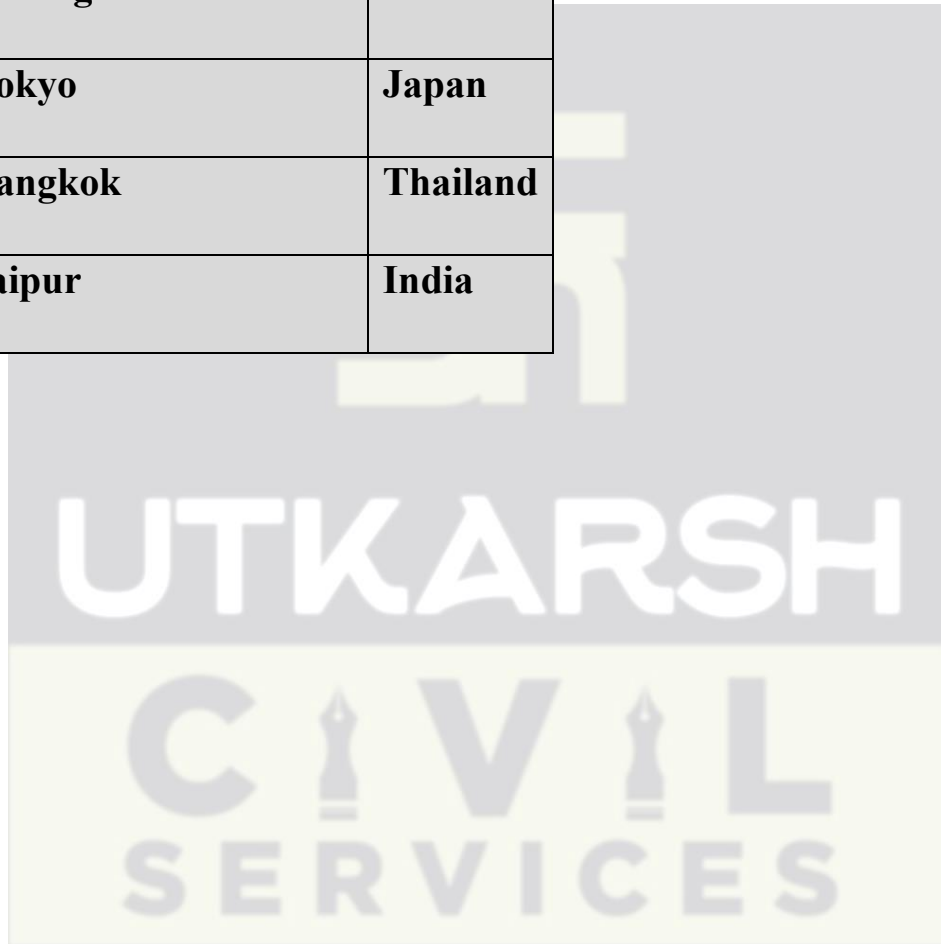
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Top 5 cities included in the ranking:

Rank	Cities	Country
1st	San Miguel de Allende	Mexico
2nd	Chiang Mai	Thailand
3rd	Tokyo	Japan
4th	Bangkok	Thailand
5th	Jaipur	India



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Munshi Premchand National Fiction Award - 2025

➔ Why in News?

- Kota resident storyteller Vijay Joshi was recently awarded the prestigious 'Munshi Premchand National Story Award - 2025'.



➔ Main Point

- The Munshi Premchand National Story Award is given every year by Bhavya Publication Institute located in Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh).
- This award was given to him for his remarkable work in Hindi fiction and incomparable contribution to the overall story literature.

Works of Vijay Joshi:

- **Novels (2):** Cheekhate Chaubare, Riste Hue Rishte.
- **Hindi Story Collections (6):** Khamosh Galiyare, Kenvas Ke Pare, Kuhase Ka Safar, Bindhe Hue Rishte, Sulagata Maun and Vaikunthagami.
- **Children's Story Collection (1):** Badal Gaya Minku.

Committees for Khelo India University Games 2025

➔ Why in News?

- Recently, the formation of committees was announced for the 'Khelo India University Games 2025' to be held in Jaipur in November, 2025.

➔ Main Point

Organizing and Coordination Committee:

- **Member Number** - 19
- **Chairman** - Chief Minister of Rajasthan.
- **Vice-Chairman** - Union Sports Minister.
- **Members** - Senior officials of Rajasthan Government, officials of Indian Olympic Association (IOA), Association of Indian Universities (AIU) and Sports Authority of India (SAI).

Executive Committee: (for monitoring and supervision)

- **Member Number** - 29
- **Chairman** - Chief Secretary of Rajasthan.
- **Vice-Chairman** - Sports Secretary of Government of India.

Khelo India University Games 2025

- The fifth edition of these games will be held in Jaipur in November, 2025.
- Athletes of under-25 age group will participate in these games.
- **Note:** The Under-18 Khelo India Youth Games was held in Bihar in May, 2025.



National

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport

➔ Why in News?

- In July 2025, Travel & Leisure magazine ranked Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) 9th in its list of 10 favourite international airports of 2025 with 84.23 points.



➔ Main Point

- Airports were evaluated on the basis of accessibility, check-in experience, security, dining options, shopping and overall design.
- It is the only Indian airport to feature in this prestigious list for the third consecutive year.

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■ Top 5 International Airports in 2025:

Rank	Airport	Country
1	Istanbul Airport	Türkiye
2	Changi Airport	Singapore
3	Hamad International Airport	Qatar
4	Zayed International Airport	United Arab Emirates
5	Dubai International Airport	United Arab Emirates
9	Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport	India

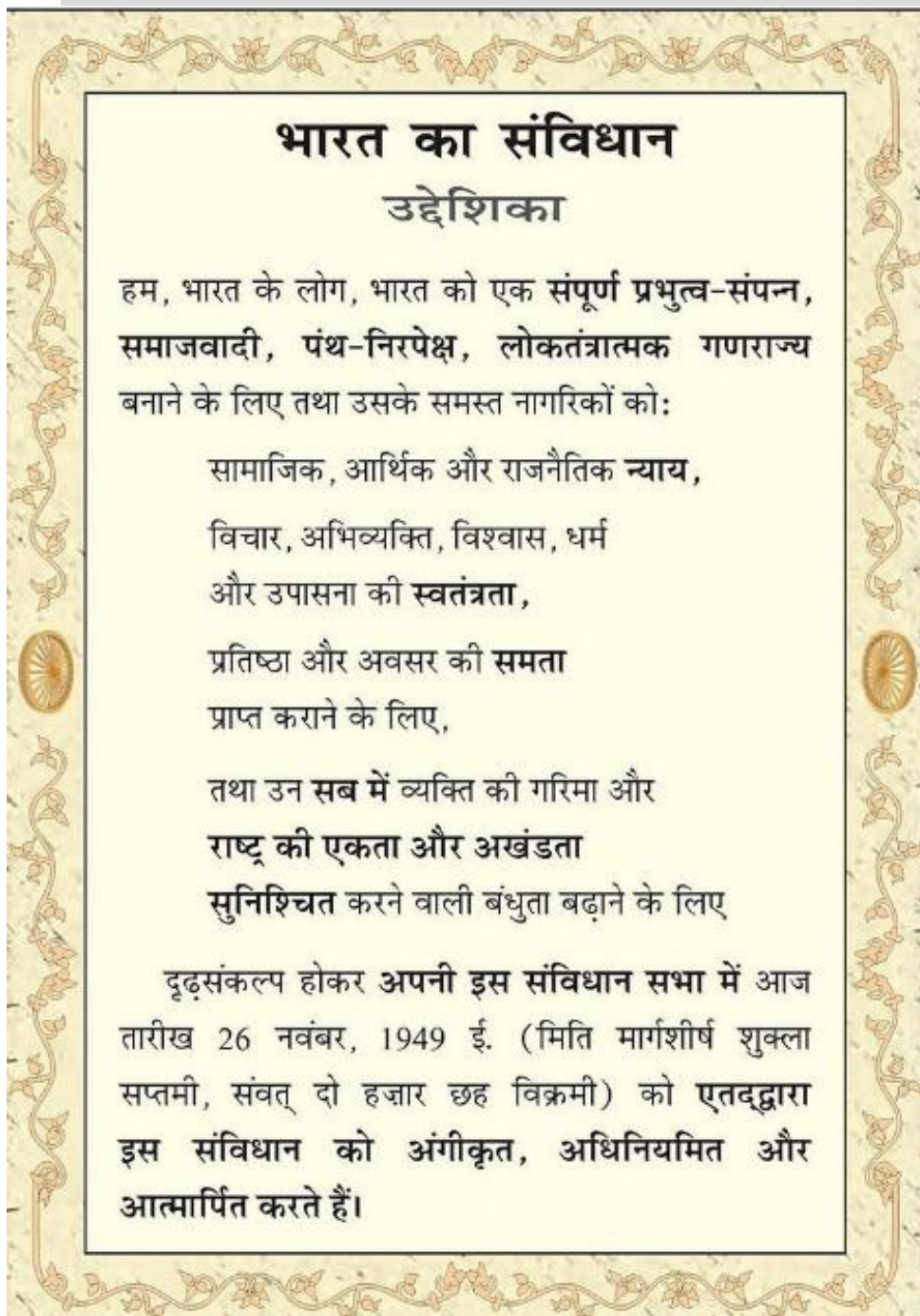


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'Socialism' and 'Secularism'

➔ Why in News?

- Recently, the Central Government has informed the Rajya Sabha that there is no intention to remove the words 'socialism' and 'secularism' from the Preamble of the Constitution.



➡ Main Point

- In the past few days, there was a debate in the Rajya Sabha regarding the words 'socialist' and 'secularism' included in the Preamble of the Constitution.
- Critics argue that these words were included without wide consultation and are not in sync with the underlying secular civilizational ethos of India.

Preamble of the Constitution:

- The Preamble is the introductory statement of the Indian Constitution.
- It reflects the values, objectives and guiding principles of the Constitution.
- It is a reflection of the aspirations of the Indian people and is the key to understanding the spirit of the Constitution.
- Its basis is the 'Objective Resolution', which was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on January 22, 1947. Berubari Case of 1960:
- This case focused on the legal status of the Preamble of the Constitution.
- The Supreme Court said that the Preamble is the "key to the mind of the makers" of the Constitution.
- But the court also clarified that the Preamble is not a part of the Constitution.
- Therefore, the Preamble cannot be enforced in a court of law.

Keshavananda Bharati vs State of Kerala, 1973:

- This case was based on the limits of constitutional amendment and the status of the Preamble.
- For the first time, the largest constitutional bench of 13 judges heard the case in the Supreme Court.
- The court ruled that from now on the Preamble will be considered a part of the Constitution.
- It was also clarified that the Preamble can be amended under Article 368.
- But this amendment cannot affect the 'Basic Structure' of the Constitution.

42nd Constitutional Amendment-1976:

- The words 'Socialist', 'Secular' and 'Integrity' were added to the Preamble by the 42nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1976.

International

India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)

➔ Why in News?

- Recently, India and Britain signed the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA).



➔ Main Point

- Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) is a dimension of the free trade agreement.
- India and Britain are the fourth and sixth largest global economies respectively.
- The current bilateral trade of the two countries is \$ 56 billion, which is targeted to double by the year 2030.

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Features of Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA):

- Under CETA, India will get duty-free access on 99 percent of exports to Britain.
- This will benefit labor-intensive sectors like textiles, leather, footwear, marine products, gems and jewelry, sports goods and toys.
- Along with this, emerging sectors like engineering products, auto components and organic chemicals will also get opportunities.
- IT, fintech, legal, educational and digital services will get wider market access.
- Indian professionals like engineers, chefs, architects, yoga instructors, musicians will benefit from simplified visa process.
- It will facilitate Indian talent mobility.
- The agreement will promote 'Make in India' and connect MSMEs, startups, artisans, farmers to the global market.
- The agreement covers provisions promoting innovation, sustainable practices, and reducing non-tariff barriers.
- Women and young entrepreneurs will get access to global value chains.

Different types of trade agreements:

Preferential trade agreement:

- It is a trade group that provides preferential access to certain products of partner countries.
- It is done by reducing tariffs, but not by eliminating them completely; requires a minimum level of commitment to reduce trade barriers.

- **Examples:** Mercosur Preferential Trade Agreement, Asia Pacific Trade Agreement.
- A preferential scheme granted by industrialized nations to developing countries.
- It involves reduction of most favoured nation (MFN) tariffs or duty-free entry of eligible products exported by beneficiary countries into the markets of donor countries.

Free Trade Agreement:

- It is a trade bloc that eliminates tariffs, import quotas and preferences on most (if not all) goods and services traded between member countries.
- **Examples:** SAFTA (South Asian PTA to FTA), ASEAN FTA.

Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA)/Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA):

- These are more comprehensive agreements than free trade areas, covering goods, services, investment and other identified areas of economic cooperation.
- When countries agree to go beyond FTAs and have greater economic integration, extending to capital and human resources, and expanding trade and investment.
- CECA comes first in which tariffs are eliminated, CEPA comes later and involves trade in services and investment.

Customs Union:

- An agreement between member countries of a customs union that removes trade barriers between them and adopts common external trade barriers.

Common Market:

- A type of customs union in which members remove internal trade barriers, adopt common policies, allow members to move resources freely among themselves.

Economic Union:

- It is a type of trade bloc that consists of a common market and a customs union.
- Members eliminate trade barriers among themselves, adopt common external trade barriers, allow free import and export of resources, adopt a set of economic policies, and use a single currency.
- **Example:** European Union.

Prasat Ta Muen (Preah Vihear) Temple

➔ Why in News?

- Recently, a military conflict broke out between Thailand and Cambodia over the rights to the 900-year-old Prasat Ta Muen (Shiva Temple) located in the Dangrek Hills on the border of Thailand and Cambodia.



➔ Main Point

- This temple falls in the geographical area of Thailand, but Cambodia considers it its heritage.
- In the year 1904, the French colonial administration named the confluence of the borders of Thailand, Cambodia and Laos as the Emerald Triangle, taking the Dangrek Mountains as the basis for border marking under the 'Franco-Siamese Treaty'.
- In the year 1907, French surveyors showed Prasat Ta Muen temple in Cambodia.

Prasat Ta Muen (Shiva Temple):

- **UNESCO World Heritage:** In the year 2008, Cambodia got Prasat Ta Muen/Preah Vihar Temple declared as a UNESCO World Heritage, due to which Thailand opposed it.
- **Construction:** 12th century by Udayadityavarman II, ruler of the Khmer Empire.
- **Features:**
 - The temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva.
 - The rectangular temple is built mainly of laterite (a type of durable red clay) and sandstone.
 - It has a square main prasat, made of sandstone and laterite. To the right of this is the library surrounded by laterite walls.

Science and Technology

Indigenous pollution control vessel 'Samudra Prachet'

➔ Why in News?

- On July 23, 2025, defence public sector unit Goa Shipyard Limited launched the second indigenously designed and built Pollution Control Vessel (PCV) 'Samudra Prachet' for the Indian Coast Guard.



➔ Main Point

- The vessel has two side-sweeping arms capable of collecting oil spills while moving, as well as a modern radar system to detect oil slicks.
- The ship is designed to extract oil across the entire viscosity spectrum, pump out contaminated water, analyse and segregate pollutants and store the extracted oil in dedicated onboard tanks.
- The vessel will play a key role in enhancing India's capabilities to respond to oil spills in its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

Other Important Points:

- The first Pollution Control Vessel (PCV) 'Samudra Pratap' was launched in August 2024.

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Environment and Ecology

Global Biodiversity Alliance Summit 2025

➔ Why in News?

- The 'Global Biodiversity Alliance Summit 2025' was organized in Georgetown, the capital of Guyana, from 23 to 25 July 2025.



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➡ Main Point

- At the 'Global Biodiversity Alliance Summit 2025', the Indian High Commission showcased technologies developed by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) and the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).
- The exhibition showcased new technologies in resource mapping, climate adaptation, agriculture and other related topics.
- **World Climate and Biodiversity Summit 2025:** The fifth edition of this conference will be held in New York on 25 September 2025.

❖ Facts for Prelims:

International Biodiversity Day:

- ◆ **Event:** Celebrated every year on 22 May.
- ◆ **Theme of 2025:** "Harmony with Nature and Sustainable Development".

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15th meeting of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

➔ Why in News?

- The 15th meeting (COP-15) of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is being held at Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe from 23 to 31 July 2025.



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➡ Main Point

- The Indian delegation at the Convention was led by Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupendra Yadav.
- At the High-Level Ministerial Session of COP 15 on 'Strengthening policy and legal frameworks by mainstreaming wetland conservation', the Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change shared the following information:
 - In the last decade, India has expanded the list of Ramsar wetlands by 250 percent and India, with 91 Ramsar sites (1.36 million hectares), is the largest network in Asia and the third largest globally.
 - Two Indian cities Udaipur and Indore have been recognised as Wetland Cities for the first time.
 - In addition, Mission Life, Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam, Mission Sahitya and Save Wetland campaigns mobilized more than 2 million citizens.

Burnihat and Delhi are the most polluted cities in the world

➔ Why in News?

- Recently, a report released by the Centre for Energy and Clean Air Research (CREA) published the list of most air polluted cities in India in the first half of the year 2025 (January–June).



➔ Main Point

- According to this report, Burnihat located on the Assam-Meghalaya border is the most polluted city in the country and the second most polluted city is Delhi.
- Apart from these, Sasaram, Patna, Rajgir (Bihar) and Talcher, Rourkela (Odisha) are also included in the top 10 polluted cities.

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Top 5 most polluted cities (as of January-June 2025):

Serial Number	City	State
1.	Burnihat	Meghalaya
2.	Delhi	National Capital Region
3.	Hajipur	Bihar
4.	Ghaziabad	Uttar Pradesh
5.	Gurgaon	Haryana

Cleanest city in India:

- **Aizawl (Mizoram):** Average PM 2.5 – 8 ug/m³ (though safe level according to WHO is 5 ug/m³)

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Awards

Meri Panchayat app wins WSIS 2025 Award

➔ Why in News?

- Recently, the Government of India's 'Meri Panchayat' mobile application won the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Award 2025.



➔ Main Point

- The 'Meri Panchayat' mobile app has been developed by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in collaboration with the National Informatics Centre (NIC).
- The award was given during the WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025 in Geneva, Switzerland.
- The event was organized to commemorate the completion of 20 years of the WSIS conference.
- The aim of the 'Meri Panchayat' mobile application is to promote transparent and participatory digital governance in gram panchayats.

Personalities

Nitin Gupta

➔ Why in News?

- Recently, Nitin Gupta was appointed as the head of the National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA).



➔ Main Point

- He is a 1986 batch officer of the Indian Revenue Service (IRS).
- He has extensive experience of working on complex subjects ranging from policy making to investigation.
- He served as the Chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) from June 27, 2022 to June 30, 2024.
- During this period, the digital monitoring system of the department was extensively developed.
- During his tenure, the e-verification system got direction and expansion.

Important Day

income tax day 2025

➔ Why in News?

- Income Tax Day is celebrated every year on 24 July.

➔ Main Point

- This day is celebrated in memory of the income tax system implemented by Sir James Wilson in the British era in the year 1860.

Income Tax System:

- Income tax was introduced on 24 July 1860 for war expenses.
- In the year 1922, the Income Tax Act laid the foundation for a formal tax structure and appointment of officers.
- In the year 1924, a statutory body was established under the Central Board of Revenue Act.
- With the introduction of computerization in the year 1981, tax administration moved in the digital direction.
- In the year 2009, return processing from CPC (Centralized Processing Center) became faster and effective.



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Income Tax:

- It is a tax imposed on the annual income of an individual or business earned in a financial year.
- Income tax is the economic backbone of the modern nation.
- It is used to finance education, health, defence and infrastructure.
- It reduces economic inequality by redistributing wealth.
- It increases trust and accountability between the government and citizens.
- It supports public investment, employment and social schemes.
- It strengthens democracy and makes inclusive growth possible.



News in Shorts

S. No.	News
1.	<p>The first state in the country to start mining tourism: Jharkhand</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ On July 21, 2025, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Coal India subsidiary Central Coalfields Limited (CCL) and Jharkhand Tourism Development Corporation for five years to connect tourists with the culture and heritage of the mines.◆ Thus, Jharkhand will become the first state in the country to start mining tourism from August 5, 2025.◆ About 40 percent of the country's minerals are concentrated in Jharkhand.

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2.

India to host Asia Cup 2025



- ◆ Recently, the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) has awarded the hosting rights of Asia Cup 2025 to BCCI.

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