

Daily Current Affairs

 Date : 17 October, 2025



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RAJASTHAN



Rajasthan in the State Mining Readiness Index (SMRI)



Why in News?

- Rajasthan ranked second in the country in Category A in the recently released State Mining Readiness Index (SMRI).



Key Points:

- The Ministry of Mines has released the State Mining Readiness Index (SMRI) in line with the announcement made in the Union Budget 2025-26.
- The index has been prepared in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Mineralogy, Dhanbad.
- The index includes indicators such as auction performance, prompt mine operations, exploration, and sustainable mining related to non-coal minerals, highlighting the performance of states in the mining sector.

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Category-wise ranking of states in SMRI:

Category	Top 3 States
A	1. Madhya Pradesh 2. Rajasthan 3. Gujarat
B	1. Goa 2. Uttar Pradesh 3. Assam
C	1. Punjab 2. Uttarakhand 3. Tripura

Other important points:

- Rajasthan is the first state in the country to auction pre-embedded blocks.
- **The country's first hard rock block:** Reserves of rare elements have been discovered in hard rock granite in the Bhatikheda block of Siwana tehsil. This will be the first block in the country to have such a large-scale discovery of rare minerals in hard rock.

Facts for Prelims (Economic Survey – 2024-25)

Mining Sector in Rajasthan:

- Rajasthan is one of India's richest states in terms of mineral resources, with reserves of 81 types of minerals, of which 58 are mined.
- Rajasthan is the sole producer of lead and zinc ores, selenite, and wollastonite, and also leads the country in the production of silver, calcite, and gypsum.
- Rajasthan tops the national production of ball clay, phosphorite, ochre, steatite, feldspar, and fire clay.

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- Rajasthan is a major producer of dimensional stones such as marble, sandstone, and granite, as well as cement-grade and steel-grade limestone.
- A revenue target of ₹9,500 crore has been set for the Department of Mines and Geology for the year 2024-25.

Rajasthan Mineral Policy, 2024:

- **Released** – December 4, 2024.
- The objective of the Rajasthan Mineral Policy 2024 is to promote sustainable, transparent, and responsible mineral development by leveraging the state's abundant mineral resources for economic development while ensuring environmental protection and community welfare.

Key Highlights:

- **Economic Development and Investment:** Promote mineral-based industries, attract investment, and increase the sector's contribution to the state's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP).
- **Employment Generation:** Provide direct and indirect employment opportunities to over 10 million people by 2047.
- **Sustainability and ESG Compliance:** Implement zero-waste mining, environmentally friendly technologies, and waste management strategies.
- **Technology Integration:** Ensure transparency by adopting advanced exploration techniques, AI-based monitoring, and digital governance.
- **Illegal Mining Mitigation:** Prevent illegal activities using GPS-based tracking, geo-fencing, and real-time monitoring.

Key Initiatives:

- Increasing mineral extraction from 58 to 70 hectares by 2047.
- Auction of 50 key mineral blocks with pre-determined approvals.
- Expanding the mining concession area to 2 percent of the state's total land area by 2047.
- Promoting strategic and critical minerals (e.g., lithium, rare earth elements) to support clean energy.
- Establishing a state mining company for value addition and research in mineral resources.

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Statewide Eradication Campaign for Prosopis Juliflora



Why in News?

- The Rajasthan government is preparing a comprehensive action plan to completely eradicate Prosopis Juliflora from the state.



Key Points:

- Prosopis Juliflora is an invasive plant species, known in India as Prosopis Juliflora, Gorakh Tamarind, or Sami (Thor). It is found primarily in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra.
- This plant species poses a serious threat to rural lands, pastures, and the environment. Its deep roots (up to 30 feet) and high water absorption capacity (up to 15 meters) are causing groundwater levels to decline and soil fertility to decrease. This is also leading to the destruction of native plant species.



Other important points:

- **Lantana grass:** This is another invasive plant species found in Rajasthan, commonly known as Lantana camara. This plant is widespread in Central India, South India, the Himalayan foothills, and the Aravalli region of Rajasthan.
- **Forest cover of Rajasthan:** According to the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) – 2023, the state's forest cover is 16,548.21 square kilometers (4.84 percent of the total geographical area) and tree cover is 10,841.12 square kilometers. Therefore, the total forest and tree cover of the state is 27,389.33 square kilometers, which is 8 percent of the state's total geographical area.

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Facts for Prelims:

Rajasthan Forestry and Biodiversity Development Project (RFBDP)

- **Support:** Supported by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD).
- **Project Duration:** 2023-24 to 2030-31 (8 years)
- **Total Project Cost:** ₹1,693.91 crore, of which ₹1,185.28 crore will be contributed as loan by AFD and ₹508.63 crore will be borne by the State of Rajasthan.
- **Objective:** To conserve biodiversity and enhance deciduous forest resources in the eastern region of the state.
- **The project is being implemented in 13 districts of Rajasthan:** Alwar, Baran, Bhilwara, Bharatpur, Bundi, Dausa, Dholpur, Jaipur, Jhalawar, Karauli, Kota, Sawai Madhopur, and Tonk.

Rajasthan Climate Change Response and Ecosystem Services Enhancement:

- The project is funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).
- **Project cost:** ₹1,774.30 crore, which includes ₹1,493.20 crore as JICA loan share and ₹281.10 crore as state share.
- The project is effective from October 2024 and will be implemented till March 2035.
- **The scheme is being implemented in 19 districts of Rajasthan;** Ajmer, Barmer, Banswara, Bikaner, Churu, Chittorgarh, Dungarpur, Jaipur, Jaisalmer, Jalore, Jhunjhunu, Jodhpur, Nagaur, Pali, Pratapgarh, Sikar, Sirohi, Rajsamand and Udaipur.

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Abu Fennel-440: Recognized as a Farmer's Variety



Why in News?

- Recently, the Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Protection Authority recognized 'Abu Fennel-440' as a farmer's variety.



Key Points:

- This is the first time a fennel variety from Rajasthan has been recognized by a central authority.
- Its registration was applied for by the South Asian Biotechnology Centre, Jodhpur, and the CAZRI Regional Research Centre in April 2024.
- Abu Fennel-440 is a unique fennel variety, primarily cultivated on approximately 9,000 hectares in the fertile Terai region of Mount Abu in Sirohi.
- It boasts high productivity, disease resistance, improved adaptability, and a distinctive aroma, with over 80 umbels per plant.

Other important points:

Farmers' Rights Protection Authority:

- Full name:** Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Protection Authority.
- Establishment:** Came into existence in 2005 under the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act, 2001.
- Ministry concerned:** Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.
- Main objective:** To provide and protect intellectual property rights for the development of crop varieties to farmers and plant breeders, enabling them to obtain exclusive rights for production and marketing for 15-18 years.
- This authority registers farmer varieties and rewards farmers engaged in the conservation of plant genetic resources.

NEWS IN SHORTS

S. No.	News
1.	Your Capital, Your Rights Campaign ■ Recently, Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Bhagirath Choudhary participated in the 'Your Capital, Your Rights Campaign' in Ajmer. ■ The 'Your Capital, Your Rights Campaign' is being run by the Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance, to facilitate the prompt settlement and return of unclaimed financial capital of banks, insurance companies, pension accounts, and investment schemes across the country.
2.	India-USA Collaboration in Rhinology ■ The All India Rhinology Society (AIRS) and the American Rhinological Society (ARS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on October 12, 2025, in Indianapolis, USA, to advance global collaboration in the field of rhinology. ■ The MoU was signed by Prof. Mohnish Grover (Jaipur) and Prof. Rohit Sharma (Bareilly) on behalf of India, while Prof. Kevin Welch and Prof. Do-Yeon Cho signed on behalf of the United States. ■ Dr. Grover, a senior professor at SMS Medical College, Jaipur, represented India at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery, held in Indianapolis.

3.

Sanganeri Print: Pilot Project in Railways

- Recently, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav launched a service offering blanket covers with traditional Sanganeri prints at Khatipura Railway Station in Jaipur.
- This pilot project was launched in the air-conditioned (AC) coaches of the Jaipur-Ahmedabad (Asarwa) Express.
- Sanganeri hand-block printed textiles are known for their beautiful multicolored floral designs.
- Rajasthan's famous Sanganeri print was granted a Geographical Indication (GI) status in 2009.



4.

Dr. Yash Goyal Passes Away

- Dr. Yash Goyal, a renowned satirist, journalist, and litterateur from Rajasthan, recently passed away in Jaipur.
- He began journalism in Jodhpur in 1978.
- His famous satirical work "Namumkin Neta" was awarded the Kanhaiyalal Sahal Award by the Rajasthan Sahitya Akademi.
- **Satire collections:** Chromosome, Minister's Glasses, Chair's Devdas.
- **Story collections:** Utara Hua Coat, Paper Hands.

5.

Himalayan Bears in Nahargarh Biological Park

- Under the Animal Exchange Program, Himalayan bears will be brought to Nahargarh Biological Park from Jammu.
- Nahargarh Biological Park currently has five native sloth bears. These include male bear Shambhu, female bear Jhumri, and their three cubs, Kaveri, Gauri, and Gopal.



INTERNATIONAL



Conference of Chiefs of United Nations Peacekeeping Forces, 2025



Key Points:

- Organized by the Indian Army from 14 to 16 October 2025.
- The conference concluded with a unanimous commitment that UN peacekeeping must adapt to new realities through:
 1. Inclusive decision-making with a strong voice from troop-contributing countries.
 2. Ensuring the safety and security of peacekeepers through realistic commands.
 3. Leveraging indigenous and cost-effective technologies for mission success.
 4. Improved interoperability and training frameworks to prepare troops for complex situations.
 5. Sustainable partnerships based on trust, cooperation, and shared responsibility.
- **Note: India's rank:** Among the top 3 troop contributors to UN peacekeeping operations.

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WHO: South-East Asia Committee



Key Points:

- Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Anupriya Singh Patel, represented India at the Ministerial Roundtable of the 78th Session of the World Health Organization Regional Committee for South-East Asia, held in Colombo from October 13-15, 2025.
- During the Ministerial Meeting, the discussions focused on the theme "Healthy Ageing through Strong Primary Health Care."
- **United Nations Decade for Healthy Ageing; 2021-2030**
- **WHO; World Health Organization:**

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WHO Specialized UN Agency
Responsible for global public health.

Members
194

192

All UN Members → **First UN Agency**
(Except Liechtenstein) where all members
subscribed

2 Cook Islands & Niue

Establishment
7th Apr 1948
(World Health Day)



Headquarters
Geneva, Switzerland

Objectives

Universal Health Coverage
Expand global access



Focus on Disease
Prevention, control,
and elimination.



Global Health Leadership
Set standards, provide technical support.



Achievements

- ✓ **Disease Eradication**
e.g. Smallpox eradication.
- ✓ **Healthy Lifestyles**
Promotion campaigns.
- ✓ **Health Systems**
Strengthened globally.
- ✓ **Tobacco Reduction**
Anti-tobacco initiatives.
- ✓ **Mental Health**
Advancements in mental health
- ✓ **Immunization Programs**
Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI).



Challenges



Autonomy Issues

Forced to align with
"key donor" (US, China) driven
goals due to heavy dependence
on voluntary contributions



Financial Constraints

Limited ~\$2bn budget, smaller
than many university hospitals.



No Sanction Power

No Power to sanction members
for violating public health rules



Organisational Lethargy

Inefficiency due to weak leadership



Limited role of member countries

Dominated by independent experts

PHEIC

Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) is an extraordinary event which is determined to constitute a public health risk to other States through the international spread of disease and to potentially require a coordinated international response

2016

Zika Virus in the Americas



2009

Swine Flu (H1N1)



2019

Ebola in Congo



2014

Polio resurgence



2020

COVID-19



2014

Ebola in West Africa



2024

Monkeypox



Governance

World Health Assembly (WHA)

Decision-making body,
meets annually in Geneva

Functions

Setting policies, Appointing Director-General

Director-General

1. Elected by WHA
by a secret ballot
2. Can be re-appointed Once.
3. Serves 5 years

Finances

Funding Sources (2)



Assessed Contributions

Based on GDP percentage
of member states.



Voluntary Contributions

From member states and
other partners.

Co-Chair of the Regional Committee for UN Global Geospatial Information Management: India



Why in News?

- India has been elected as the Co-Chair of the Regional Committee for UN Global Geospatial Information Management – UN-GGIM-AP for Asia and the Pacific.



Key Points:

- Co-Chair:** 3 years (until 2028)
- The elections were held during the 14th Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM-AP in Goyang-si, Republic of Korea, from August 24 to 26, 2025, hosted by the National Geographic Information Institute.
- UN-GGIM-AP is one of the five Regional Committees of the United Nations Expert Committee on Global Geospatial Information Management.
- It represents the national geospatial information agencies of 56 countries in Asia and the Pacific.

🕒 SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY 🕒

Pre-AI Impact Summit, 2025



Why in News?

- The Uttarakhand government, in collaboration with the India AI Mission of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY), Government of India, is organizing the Uttarakhand AI Impact Summit 2025 in Dehradun on October 17, 2025.



Key Points:

- This event is a pre-summit event for the India-AI Impact Summit 2026, to be held at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, from February 19-20, 2026.

India-AI Impact Summit 2026:

- The India-AI Impact Summit 2026 is the first global AI forum to be held in the developing world (Global South), reflecting India's growing leadership in shaping the global AI agenda.

- **Event:** Organized by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, the India-AI Impact Summit 2026 will be held in New Delhi from February 19-20, 2026.
- **Objective:** The event will bring together policymakers, industry leaders, startups, and academia to advance the Digital Uttarakhand vision through innovation, governance, and entrepreneurship aligned with the Digital India vision.
- **Vision:** Based on the national vision of "AI for All," the summit seeks to harness the power of artificial intelligence for social inclusion, innovation, and improved public service delivery ahead of next year's Global AI Summit.
- **Three Principles:** The summit will be based on three guiding principles:
 1. **People:** AI should serve humanity in all its diversity, respect cultural identities, protect dignity, and ensure no one is left out. Focus areas include human development in an AI-enabled world, multilingual and accessible systems, and safe and reliable deployment.
 2. **Planet:** AI development and deployment should be resource-efficient and also accelerate climate resilience, environmental protection, and scientific discovery. AI should be integrated with the world's natural systems and resources and global sustainability goals.
 3. **Progress:** Equitable distribution of the benefits of AI should be ensured, access to datasets, compute, and models should be democratized, and AI should be implemented in healthcare, education, governance, and agriculture.

- **Seven Cycles:** The formulas are implemented through seven cycles. These are areas of multilateral cooperation designed to deliver concrete results:
 1. **Human Capital** – Focus on employment, skills development, and workforce transformation. Develop global frameworks for literacy, reskilling, and equitable access to future skills.
 2. **Inclusion for Social Empowerment** – Promote AI that reflects languages, cultures, and identities; Ensure access for persons with disabilities; prevent gender and data biases.
 3. **Safe and Trusted AI** - Provide democratic access to security testing, transparency, and audit tools; build interoperable governance and assurance mechanisms.
 4. **Flexibility, Innovation, and Efficiency** - Promote resource-efficient AI that is lightweight and adaptable to local realities, reducing inequalities and environmental costs.
 5. **Science** - Expand the responsible use of AI to accelerate research and discovery; strengthen ecosystems and partnerships in developing countries; promote open, interdisciplinary research.
 6. **Democratization of AI Resources** - Create pathways for equitable access to data, compute, models, and critical infrastructure, while enabling diverse AI solutions that reflect global realities.
 7. **AI for Economic Development and Social Well-Being** - Identify and expand AI applications in areas of public interest; create platforms for knowledge and resource sharing; and enable cross-border collaboration.

Military Combat Parachute System (MCPS)



Why in News?

- The Military Combat Parachute System (MCPS), indigenously developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), has successfully conducted a combat freefall jump test from an altitude of 32,000 feet.



Key Points:

- With this achievement, the MCPS has become the only parachute system in operational use by the Indian Armed Forces capable of deployment at altitudes exceeding 25,000 feet.
- **Developed by:** DRDO laboratories: Aerial Delivery Research and Development Establishment (Agra) and Defence Bioengineering and Electromedical Laboratory (Bengaluru).
- **Advanced Tactical Features:** Low descent rate and improved steering capabilities, enabling paratroopers to safely jump from aircraft, deploy parachutes at predetermined altitudes, perform precise navigation, and land in targeted areas.
- The system is compatible with Indian satellite-based navigation and can operate independently against any potential adversary; it is also immune to external interference or decommissioning attempts.
- Its maintenance and repair process is simpler and faster than imported equipment, ensuring maximum service life.



SCHEMES



'Per Drop More Crop' Policy



Why in News?

- To encourage optimal water use and increase farmers' income, the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has implemented a new policy under the 'Per Drop More Crop' scheme.



- सिंचाई में निवेश में एकरूपता लाना.
- 'हर खेत को पानी' के तहत कृषि योग्य क्षेत्र का विस्तार करने के लिए, खेतों में ही जल को इस्तेमाल करने की दक्षता को बढ़ाना ताकि पानी के अपव्यय को कम किया जा सके.
- सही सिंचाई और पानी को बचाने की तकनीक को अपनाना.





Key Points:

- **The objective of the initiative:** To support farmers in adopting micro-irrigation, optimize water use, and ultimately increase productivity and income.
- Under the revised guidelines, states and union territories can now plan micro-level water management activities—such as pond construction and water harvesting systems—based on local needs.
- Previously, funding for such activities was limited to 20 percent of the total allocation for each state/union territory, and 40 percent for the northeastern states, Himalayan states, and the union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. Now, states/union territories have been given the flexibility to spend beyond this limit based on their specific needs.

Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana:

- **Launch:** 2015 (Centrally Sponsored Scheme).
- **Duration:** Until 2026.
- **Share:** Central-State share - 75:25 percent, North-Eastern Region and Hill States share - 90:10 percent.

Related Ministries:

- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Water Resources
- Ministry of River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation
- Ministry of Rural Development
- **Three main components:** Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP; 1996), Har Khet Ko Pani (HKKP), and Watershed Development.
- **Its sub-components include:** Command Area Development (CAD), Surface Minor Irrigation (SMI), Repair, Renovation, and Restoration of Water Bodies (RRR), and Groundwater Development.

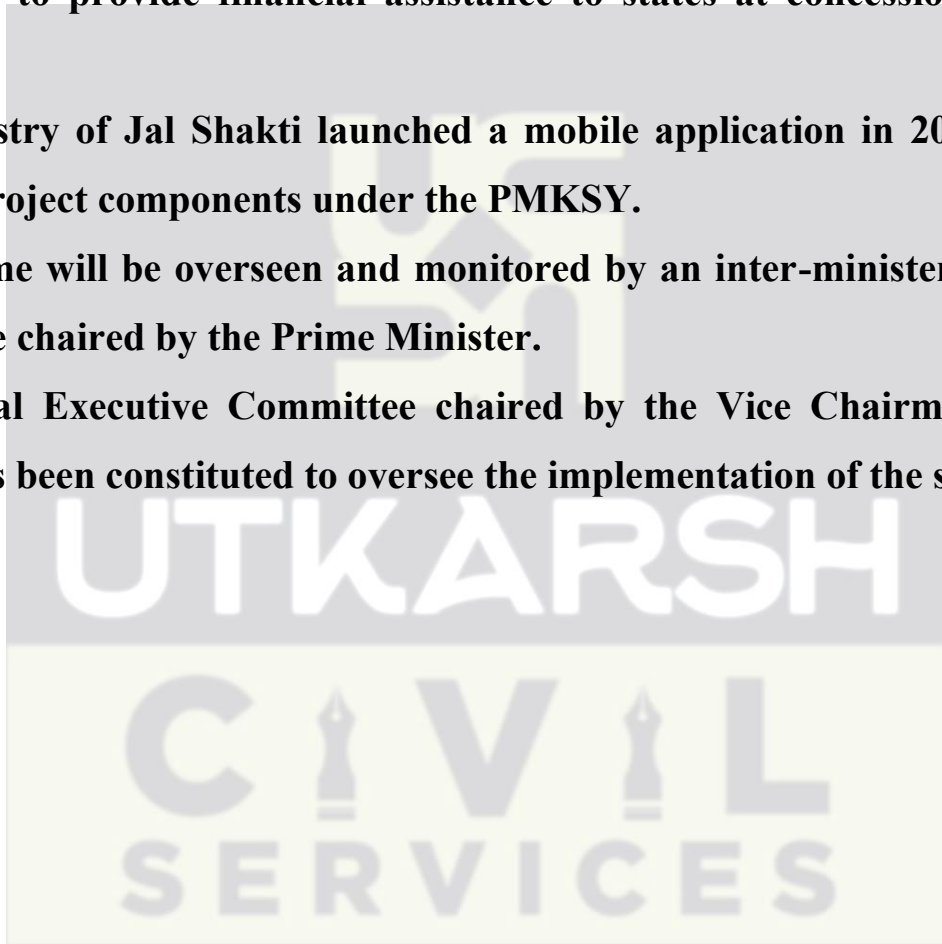
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Features:

1. A Long Term Irrigation Fund (LTIF) has been established under the aegis of NABARD to finance incomplete and medium irrigation projects.
2. A dedicated Micro Irrigation Fund (MIF) has also been established by NABARD to provide financial assistance to states at concessional interest rates.
3. The Ministry of Jal Shakti launched a mobile application in 2020 for geo-tagging project components under the PMKSY.
4. The scheme will be overseen and monitored by an inter-ministerial steering committee chaired by the Prime Minister.
5. A National Executive Committee chaired by the Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog has been constituted to oversee the implementation of the scheme.



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POLITY

National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) 32nd Foundation Day



Why in News?

- The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) organized a function and national conference on 'Human Rights of Prison Inmates' to commemorate its 32nd Foundation Day at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार आयोग (NHRC)

NHRC के अनुसार, मानवाधिकार व्यक्ति के जीवन, स्वतंत्रता, समानता और गरिमा से संबंधित अधिकार हैं जिनकी सुनिश्चितता संविधान द्वारा की गई है या अंतर्राष्ट्रीय अनुबंधों में सन्निहित है, जो भारत में न्यायालयों द्वारा लागू किये जाने योग्य हैं।

- भारत में मानवाधिकारों का प्रहरी
- **स्थापना:** वर्ष 1993 (मानवाधिकारों की सार्वभौम घोषणा के अनुरूप)
- **अधिनियम:** मानवाधिकार संरक्षण अधिनियम (PHRA), 1993

राज्य मानवाधिकार आयोग

- PHR अधिनियम, 1993 के तहत स्थापित
- **सदस्यों की नियुक्ति:** राज्यपाल द्वारा
- **सदस्यों का निष्कासन:** राष्ट्रपति द्वारा

मानवाधिकार दिवस: 10 दिसंबर

कार्य

- ③ मानवाधिकार उल्लंघन संबंधी शिकायतों की जाँच करना
- ③ मामलों का स्वतः संज्ञान
- ③ मानवाधिकार कार्यान्वयन की समीक्षा और अनुशंसा करना
- ③ मानवाधिकार जागरूकता फैलाना
- ③ मानवाधिकार मुद्दों पर अध्ययन करना, रिपोर्ट प्रकाशित करना

शक्तियाँ

- ③ व्यक्तियों को समन देना, गवाहों की जाँच करना और साक्ष्य प्राप्त करना
- ③ यह सुनिश्चित करने के लिये जेलों और अन्य संस्थानों का निरीक्षण करना कि यहाँ स्थितियाँ मानवीय हैं
- ③ मानवाधिकारों से संबंधित न्यायालयी कार्यवाही में हस्तक्षेप करना

NHRC के सदस्य

संघटन

- ③ 5 पूर्णकालिक सदस्य और 7 मानद सदस्य
- ③ **अध्यक्ष:** सेवानिवृत्त CJI/SC के न्यायाधीश
- ③ **प्रशासनिक प्रमुख:** महासचिव

नियुक्ति

- ③ **6 सदस्यीय समिति** (प्रधानमंत्री, लोकसभा अध्यक्ष, राज्यसभा उपाध्यक्ष, केंद्रीय गृहमंत्री और संसद के दोनों सदनों के विपक्ष के नेता) की सिफारिशों पर राष्ट्रपति द्वारा नियुक्त सभी सदस्य

राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार संस्थानों का वैश्विक

गठबंधन (GANHRI) में स्थिति:

- NHRC को वर्ष 1999 से 'A' श्रेणी का दर्जा प्राप्त है
- 'A' श्रेणी की स्थिति: वर्ष 2006, 2011 और 2017 में बरकरार रही
- 'A' स्थिति का निलंबन: वर्ष 2023 और वर्ष 2024

कार्यकाल

- ③ 3 वर्ष / 70 वर्ष की आयु तक (जो भी पहले हो)

निष्कासन

- ③ राष्ट्रपति अध्यक्ष या किसी सदस्य को निष्कासित कर सकता है
- ③ **आधार:** दुर्व्यवहार या अक्षमता के आरोप सिद्ध होने पर



Key Points:

- The Commission was established on October 12, 1993 (under the provisions of the Protection of Human Rights Act (PHRA), 1993) in accordance with the Paris Principles.
- The HRA Act was amended by the Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Act, 2006 and the Human Rights (Amendment) Act, 2019.
- It was established in accordance with the Paris Principles, which were adopted for the promotion and protection of human rights.
- **Composition:** One Chairperson + five full-time members + seven honorary members.
- **Note:** The Chairperson is a former Chief Justice of India or a Supreme Court Judge.

Appointment:

- The Chairperson and members are appointed by the President based on the recommendations of a six-member committee.
- The Committee consists of the Prime Minister, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, the Leader of the Opposition in both Houses of Parliament, and the Union Home Minister.
- **Tenure:** The Chairperson and members hold office for a term of three years or until they attain the age of 70, whichever is earlier.

Role and Functions:

1. The Commission has the powers of a civil court in addition to conducting judicial proceedings.
2. The authority to utilize the services of central or state government officials or investigative agencies to investigate human rights violations.

3. The authority to investigate cases within one year of the occurrence of the incident.
4. Its work is primarily recommendatory in nature.

Shortcomings	Steps to Strengthen
Non-binding nature of recommendations, which have more moral rather than legal impact.	Improve comprehensiveness and effectiveness, e.g., in areas like Artificial Intelligence, Deepfakes, Climate Change, etc.
Inability to punish violators	Provide enforcement powers; empower NHRC with punitive authority to implement its recommendations.
Limited role in matters related to armed forces	Reform the structure; the current structure lacks diversity. Appoint members from civil society, activists, and experts to ensure a holistic perspective.
NHRC cannot consider human rights violations reported after one year	Develop an independent cadre
Lack of resources, vacant positions, staff shortage Lack of autonomy, active interference	Strengthen and encourage State Human Rights Commissions, public awareness, and international cooperation



INDEXES AND REPORTS



Henley Passport Index, 2025

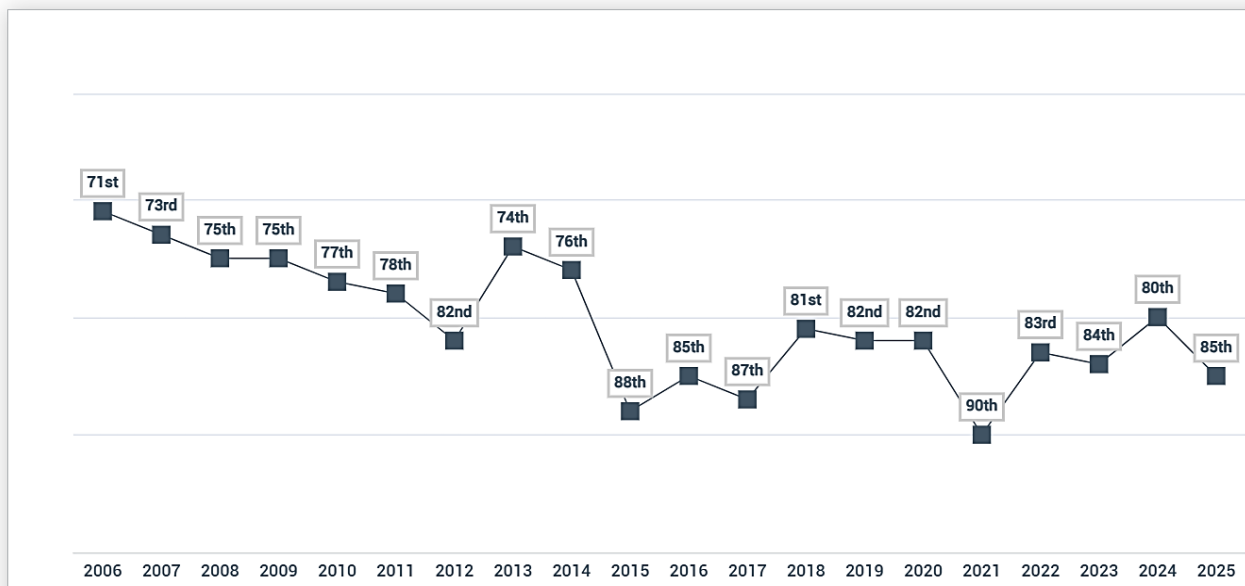


Why in News?

- India's passport has dropped to 85th place in the 2025 Henley Passport Index. This represents a drop in the Indian passport's ranking compared to the previous index (80th).



India's Historical Ranking on the Henley Passport Index



Key Points:

- The Henley Passport Index is a global ranking that measures how many countries a country's citizens can travel to without a visa using their passport.
- Issuer:** Henley & Partners.
- Data Source:** International Air Transport Association (IATA).
- The index is updated quarterly.
- Origin:** The index was launched in 2005 as the 'Henley & Partners Visa Restrictions Index' and was renamed the 'Henley Passport Index' in 2018.

Daily Current Affairs

 Date : 17 October, 2025



Global Rankings for 2025:

Rank	Country	Number of Visa-Free Destinations
1st	Singapore	193
2nd	South Korea	190
3rd	Japan	189
4th	Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain, Switzerland	188
5th	Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Netherlands	187
6th	Hungary, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Sweden	186
7th	Australia, Czechia, Malta, Poland	185
8th	Croatia, Estonia, Slovakia, Slovenia, UAE, UK	184
9th	Canada	183
10th	Latvia	182
Last	Afghanistan	24

Key Highlights

- The United States dropped out of the top 10 for the first time, falling to 12th place, tied with Malaysia, which has visa-free entry to 180 countries.
- The United Kingdom, which held the top spot in 2015, fell to 8th place in 2025—its lowest ranking ever.
- China continued its steady progress, rising from 94th in 2015 to 64th in 2025, and added visa-free entry to 37 additional countries over the past decade.
- The UAE jumped from 10th to 8th, indicating growing global engagement.

-:25:-

Daily Current Affairs

 Date : 17 October, 2025



India's Performance:

- India's passport fell to 85th place in 2025, down from 80th in 2024.
- India's lowest ranking was in 2021 (90th place) and its highest in 2006 (71st place).
- This fluctuation reflects changing visa policies, global security conditions, and diplomatic negotiations.
- Indian citizens have visa-free entry to 12 countries. These include Bhutan, Nepal, Indonesia, Mauritius, and Trinidad and Tobago.
- Visa-on-arrival is available in 27 other countries. These include Sri Lanka, Maldives, Jordan, Qatar, Bolivia, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Myanmar, Tanzania, and Mongolia.

India's Neighboring Countries:

Rank	Country
92	Bhutan
100	Bangladesh
101	Nepal
103	Pakistan

Other Key Points:

Government Initiatives:

- **Passport Seva 2.0:** Introduced to enhance user experience with improved digital interface and tracking features.
- **e-Passport:** India has launched chip-enabled e-passports to enhance security and streamline immigration.
- **Features include:**
 1. Biometric data storage
 2. Machine-Readable Zone (MRZ)
 3. Protection against counterfeiting and misuse

-:26:-

MILITARY EXERCISES

Exercise "Samudra Shakti" 2025



Key Points:

- **Joint Bilateral Exercise:** Indian and Indonesian Navies
- **Event:** From 14 to 17 October 2025, in Visakhapatnam.
- **Edition:** Fifth
- **Hosted in 2025:** Indian Navy
- **Objective:** To enhance interoperability between the two navies, strengthen mutual understanding, and share best practices.
- **Participation:** Units participating in the exercise include INS Kavaratti, an anti-submarine warfare corvette of the Eastern Fleet under the aegis of the Eastern Naval Command (ENC), and Indonesian Navy Ship KRIJON Lai, a corvette (with an integral helicopter).



Phases:

1. **Harbour Phase:** This includes cross-deck visits, joint yoga sessions, friendly sports events, and exchange of professional subject matter experts (SMEEs).
2. **Sea Phase:** Includes helicopter operations, air defence exercises, weapon firing drills, visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS) exercises.

SPORTS

Khelo India University Games, 2025: Rajasthan

Why in News?

- The fifth edition of the Khelo India University Games (KIUG) will be held in seven cities of Rajasthan from November 24 to December 5, 2025.



Key Points:

- Competition will be held in 23 medal sports and one demonstration sport (kho-kho).
- Beach volleyball, canoeing and kayaking, cycling, and kho-kho will be included for the first time in the 5th Khelo India University Games.
- **University Games**; seven cities – Jaipur, Ajmer, Udaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Kota, and Bharatpur.

Daily Current Affairs

 Date : 17 October, 2025



- **KIUG 2025 will feature 23 medal sports and one demonstration sport. Medal-winning sports include archery, athletics, badminton, basketball, boxing, fencing, football, hockey, judo, kabaddi, mallakhamb, rugby, shooting, swimming, table tennis, tennis, volleyball, weightlifting, wrestling, yoga, cycling, beach volleyball, canoeing, and kayaking.**

Other important points:

Khelo India Games:

- **The Khelo India scheme is the flagship Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.**
- **Chandigarh University emerged champions in the last Khelo India University Games held in Northeast India. Lovely Professional University and Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, finished second and third, respectively.**
- **Includes two editions of the India Para Games, one edition of the Khelo India Beach Games, and one edition of the Khelo India Water Sports Festival.**

✂ NEWS IN SHORTS ⚡

S. No.	News
1.	World Spine Day: October 16 ■ Purpose: To promote awareness about spine health. ■ The theme for the year 2025 is - Healthy Spine - Healthy Future. ■ By the year 2050, 843 million people are expected to suffer from spinal diseases. Spinal Cord: ■ The spinal cord is a part of the central nervous system (CNS). It is located within the vertebral canal of the vertebral column. ■ During development, there is a disparity between the growth of the spinal cord and the vertebral column. Spinal cord growth ends at the age of 4, while vertebral column growth ends between the ages of 14-18. ■ The spinal cord is an extension of the brainstem. It extends from the foramen magnum at the base of the skull to the L1/L2 vertebrae, where it ends as the conus medullaris (medullary cone). ■ A thin thread called the filum terminale originates from the tip of the conus medullaris and extends to the first coccygeal vertebra (Co1) and stabilizes the spinal cord. ■ Like the vertebral column, the spinal cord is also divided into sections: cervical, thoracic, lumbar, sacral, and coccygeal. 

2.

Raavu Balasaraswati Devi

- Actress and singer Rao Balasaraswati Devi, known as the first playback singer of Telugu cinema, has passed away at the age of 97.
- Rao was the first light music singer on All India Radio.
- She made her cinematic playback singing debut with the 1943 film Bhagya Lakshmi.
- Rao acted in several classic films including Bhakta Kuchela (1936), Balayogini (1937) and Thiruneelakantar (1939).



3.

ICC Player of the Month, 2025: September



Category	Person	Contribution
Female	Smriti Mandhana	Scored 314 runs in 7 matches of Asia Cup 2025 with an outstanding strike rate of 200. She was the highest run-scorer of the tournament and was also awarded Player of the Tournament.
Male	Abhishek Sharma	Currently ranked No. 1 in ICC T20 batting rankings. Was named the Best Player of Asia Cup 2025. Scored 58 and 117 runs in the first two matches of the home ODI series against Australia, and 125 runs in the third match.