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RAJASTHAN



Two New Snake Species Discovered in Rajasthan

Why in News?

- Recently, two extremely rare snake species were discovered in the dry deciduous forests of Pratapgarh district.



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Key Points:

- **New Species:** ‘Indian Smooth Snake (*Wallophis brachyura*)’ and ‘Slender Coral Snake (*Calliophis melanurus*)’.
- With these two new discoveries, the total number of known snake species in the state has reached 45.
- **Publication:** These species discovered in the state have been published in the ‘Journal of Threatened Taxa’.
- **Note:** The Indian Smooth Snake (*Wallophis brachyura*) is found only in India.

Facts for Prelims:

Rajasthan's First Snake Park:

- Rajasthan's first snake park has been constructed in Kota at a cost of ₹7.42 crore.
- This park will house and conserve 29 species of Indian and foreign snakes such as the Indian Cobra, Russell's Viper, Indian Python, Ball Python, and Milk Snake, allowing tourists to observe the diverse world of snakes up close.

Three Distinct Varieties of Dates: ST-1, ST-2, and ST-3

Why in News?

- Recently, the Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Protection Authority granted patents to three distinct varieties of dates, ST-1, ST-2, and ST-3, developed in Rajasthan.





Key Points:

- These three varieties of dates were developed by Dr. Prabhulal Saini, the former Agriculture Minister of Rajasthan.
- These varieties were developed in Aanwa, Tonk district.
- After filing the application on September 16, 2021, the purity and unique characteristics of these varieties were verified. Now, after the registration of these varieties, they will receive legal protection for the next 18 years, starting from December 4, 2025.
- This recognition has been granted under the Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Protection Act, 2001, after which Dr. Prabhulal Saini will have the exclusive right to produce, sell, market, distribute, and also import and export these varieties of dates.
- **Note:** In 2025, the Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Protection Authority also granted recognition to 'Abu Saunf-440' as a farmer's variety. This is the first time that a fennel variety from Rajasthan has been recognized by the Central Authority.

Other Important Points:

Farmers' Rights Protection Authority:

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

Swadesh Darshan Scheme – 2.0: Development of Keshavrai Temple

Why in News?

- Recently, the Union Ministry of Tourism initiated the development work of the Keshavrai Temple in Keshoraipatan, Bundi, under the ‘Swadesh Darshan Scheme 2.0’.



Key Points:

- It is noteworthy that the development of a total of four religious sites in Rajasthan is proposed under the ‘Swadesh Darshan Scheme – 2.0’.

4 Religious Sites:

- Bundi:** Keshoraipatan (Keshavrai) Temple.
- Sikar:** Khatu Shyamji Temple.
- Bikaner:** Karni Mata Temple.
- Bhilwara:** Malaseri Dungri, the birthplace of folk deity Devnarayan Ji.



Facts for Prelims:

Swadesh Darshan Scheme:

- **Launched by:** Ministry of Tourism in 2015.
- **This is a 100 percent centrally funded scheme.**
- **Under this scheme, the Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance to state governments, union territory administrations, or central agencies for the development of tourism infrastructure in the country.**
- **Swadesh Darshan 2.0:** The Ministry of Tourism has revamped the Swadesh Darshan scheme as Swadesh Darshan 2.0 (SD2.0) for the development of sustainable and responsible tourism destinations, covering tourism and allied infrastructure, tourism services, human capital development, destination management and promotion, supported by policy and institutional reforms.

NEWS IN SHORTS

S. No.

News

1.

Medical Education Department's Digital Communication Platform 'e-Health Dialogue'



- The Rajasthan Medical Education Department has launched a digital communication platform, 'e-Health Dialogue', with the aim of improving good governance, transparency, and administrative efficiency.
- This platform will serve as a dedicated, effective, and interactive e-meeting ecosystem for all stakeholders associated with medical education and health services.
- Through this, departmental coordination will be strengthened from the grassroots level to the highest level.
- This digital communication platform will be held every 'Tuesday and Thursday' through video conferencing.

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2.

'Nai Chetna 4.0' Gender Campaign



- The Rajasthan Rural Livelihoods Development Council (Rajeevika) conducted the 'Nai Chetna 4.0' gender campaign in the state from November 25 to December 23, 2025.
- **Launched On:** This campaign was launched at the national level on November 25, 2025.
- **Concerned Ministries:** The 'Nai Chetna 4.0' gender campaign was jointly organized by the Central Ministry of Rural Development and the Central Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- This campaign was launched under the 'Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)'.
- **Objective:** The objective of the campaign is to spread awareness about gender-based violence through community-based action, promote safe mobility for women, recognition of their economic contribution, and shared responsibility in household chores. Empowering women is also a part of this.

3.

AIIMS Jodhpur Ranks Second in the Country in 'Kayakalp Incentive Scheme 2024-25'



- Under the 'Kayakalp Incentive Scheme 2024-25' announced by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Jodhpur secured the second position nationwide in the Group-B category.
- AIIMS Jodhpur was awarded an incentive amount of one crore rupees for this achievement.
- Additionally, AIIMS was awarded the Kayakalp Award 2024–25 for excellence in sanitation, infection control, and patient-centric services.

4.

Neenv Campaign: Shiv, Barmer

- Recently, the 'Neenv Campaign' has been launched by Shiv MLA Ravindra Singh Bhati for students of the border areas of Western Rajasthan.

5.

Rajasthan wins Bronze Medal at the 69th SGFI Basketball Tournament

- Rajasthan won the bronze medal at the 69th School Games Federation of India (SGFI) National School Games Basketball Tournament held in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh.

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6.

Udaipur receives 'Best Wedding Destination' Award at Outlook Traveller Awards 2025

- Recently, the city of Udaipur was awarded the 'Best Wedding Destination' award at the Outlook Traveller Awards 2025.
- Udaipur is known for its royal heritage and lakes.

7.

'Property CIBIL' Startup

- Recently, Jaipur-based startup Property CIBIL (Propil) has appointed former Indian cricket team captain Sourav Ganguly as its new brand ambassador.
- The Property CIBIL startup is founded by Bhuvanesh Gupta, which addresses the challenge of transparency and legal complexities in real estate in the country and protects buyers from potential scams by evaluating property credibility.



8.

'Sarpanch Shakti Training Program'

- Recently, the Quality Council of India (QCI) organized a four-day 'Sarpanch Shakti Training Program' in New Delhi.
- 50 women Sarpanches from 17 states of India participated in this program. Rajasthan was represented by Neeru Yadav, Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat Lambi Ahir (Jhunjhunu).
- The main objective of this program was to empower Sarpanches across the country and promote digital governance and quality practices in villages.



9.

Mr., Mrs. and Miss Phalodi-2025



- In the second edition of the 'Kurjan Mahotsav' held in Phalodi, Abhishek Shiva Chhangani won the title of 'Mr. Phalodi', Vaishali Thanvi won the title of 'Mrs. Phalodi', and Vaidehi Bhardwaj won the title of 'Miss Phalodi'.
- The Rajasthan Tourism Department organized the 'Kurjan Mahotsav' on December 26 and 27, 2025, in Phalodi district, with the aim of promoting tourism in the district and giving global recognition to its culture and art.
- The first edition of the Kurjan Mahotsav was held on March 17, 2025, in Khichan (a Ramsar site).

10.

'Wonder Guys: The Last Treasure of Sparkington'

- Recently, Governor Haribhau Bagde released the book 'Wonder Guys: The Last Treasure of Sparkington' by young author Rupal Aditya.
- This book is a celebration of adventure, imagination, and the spirit of discovery that resides in every young mind.

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Dulhasti Stage-II Project

Why in News?

- The Union Ministry of Environment has granted approval for the 260 MW Dulhasti Stage-II project on the Chenab River in Jammu and Kashmir.

Key Points:

Key facts about the project:

- This project will utilize the surplus water diverted from the Marusudar River through the Pakal Dul project.

Other projects on the Chenab River:

- Dulhasti-I (Kishtwar), Baglihar (Ramban) and Salal (Reasi).
- Under construction: Ratle, Kirthai and Kwar projects.

Chenab River:

- **Origin:** From the Confluence of the Chandra and Bhaga rivers in Himachal Pradesh.
- **Tributaries/Confluence:** Jhelum and Sutlej rivers.
- **Flow:** Between the Lesser Himalayas and the Shivalik Range.



Nitrate Contamination

Why in News?

- According to the Central Ground Water Board, in 2023, more than 20 percent of the groundwater samples collected in Delhi showed nitrate levels exceeding the permissible limit.

Key Points:

Nitrate Contamination

- Permissible limit of nitrate in water: 45 mg/L
- Sources:** Nitrogen-based fertilizers in agriculture and animal waste.
- Effects:** Methemoglobinemia (Blue Baby Syndrome) in infants, in which hemoglobin becomes unable to effectively carry oxygen.
- Increased algal blooms/eutrophication in water bodies, leading to the formation of Dead Water Zones/aquatic biological deserts.

⌚ SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY 🌡

INS Vagsheer

► Why in News?

- The President of India completed a voyage on INS Vagsheer from the Karwar naval base on the western coast (Karnataka).
- Key Points:
- President Droupadi Murmu is the second President to travel in a submarine, after President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam.
- This is the first time a President has traveled on a Kalvari-class submarine.
- Earlier, in November 2024, the President participated in an operational demonstration conducted by the Indian Navy on the indigenous aircraft carrier INS Vikrant.
- In February 2006, then-President APJ Abdul Kalam traveled in a submarine from Visakhapatnam.

Other Important Points:

- **INS Vagsheer:** The sixth and final submarine of the indigenous Kalvari class (Project 75), it is one of the quietest diesel-electric submarines globally, capable of anti-surface and anti-submarine warfare, surveillance, and special operations.
- **Formally commissioned into the Navy:** January 15, 2025 (along with INS Surat and INS Nilgiri).
- **Naming:** Named after the predatory sandfish of the Indian Ocean.
- **Motto:** 'Valour, Supremacy, Victory'
- **Construction:** Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai.

- **Features:** Advanced stealth features, hydrodynamic shape, low noise emission and better silencing equipment, submerged displacement capacity of 1775 tons, 67.5 meters in length, equipped with modern torpedoes and anti-ship missiles.

Additional Information:

Project-75:

- **Objective:** To build 18 conventional submarines and 6 nuclear-powered submarines for the Indian Navy.
- **Construction:** Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai.
- **Collaboration:** M/s Naval Group, France.
- **6 Submarines:**

S. No.	Submarine	Inducted into Navy
1.	INS Kalvari	December, 2017
2.	INS Khanderi	September, 2019
3.	INS Karanj	March, 2021
4.	INS Vela	November, 2021
5.	INS Vagir	January, 2023
6.	INS Vagsheer	January, 2025



ECONOMIC SCENARIO



India's Agricultural Sector in 2025

Why in News?

- The year 2025 proved to be a transformative milestone for India's agricultural sector, reflecting the cumulative impact of policy continuity, institutional reforms, and strategic investments implemented over the past decade.

Key Points:

India's Agricultural Sector: Key Highlights (2025)

- Agriculture and allied activities remain the backbone of the rural economy, contributing approximately 16% to India's GDP and supporting the livelihoods of over 46% of the population.
- The Union Budget 2025-26 allocated ₹1.52 lakh crore for agriculture and allied sectors, with a strong focus on research, infrastructure, and farmer welfare.

Record Production and Food Security

- India achieved its highest-ever food grain production of 357.73 million tonnes in 2024-25, an 8% increase compared to the previous year and 106 million tonnes more than in 2015-16.
 - **Rice:** 150.184 million tonnes
 - **Wheat:** 117.945 million tonnes
 - **Pulses and Oilseeds:** Significant gains supported by targeted campaigns and procurement assurances
 - **Millets (Shree Anna):** Continued growth in climate-resilient grains
- **Strengthening Farmers' Income**
 - **MSP Policy:** This remained a cornerstone of income assurance, guaranteeing a minimum 50% return on the cost of production.

- **Direct Income Transfer and Credit Expansion:** The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi and the Kisan Credit Card scheme further broadened access to institutional finance.

Risk Management and Irrigation Expansion

- **Crop Insurance and Risk Coverage:** The Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) mitigated risks.
- **Water Efficiency and Irrigation:** Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY).

Infrastructure and Market Ecosystem

- **Investment in Agricultural Infrastructure:** Over 1 lakh projects approved through the Agricultural Infrastructure Fund, including custom hiring centers, warehouses, and cold storage units.
- **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samriddhi Kendras** strengthened village-level access to quality inputs and advisory services.
- **Market Reforms and Farmer Institutions:** Market reforms through the e-NAM platform and the establishment of FPOs enabled collective marketing, input procurement, and value addition.

Growth in Allied Sectors

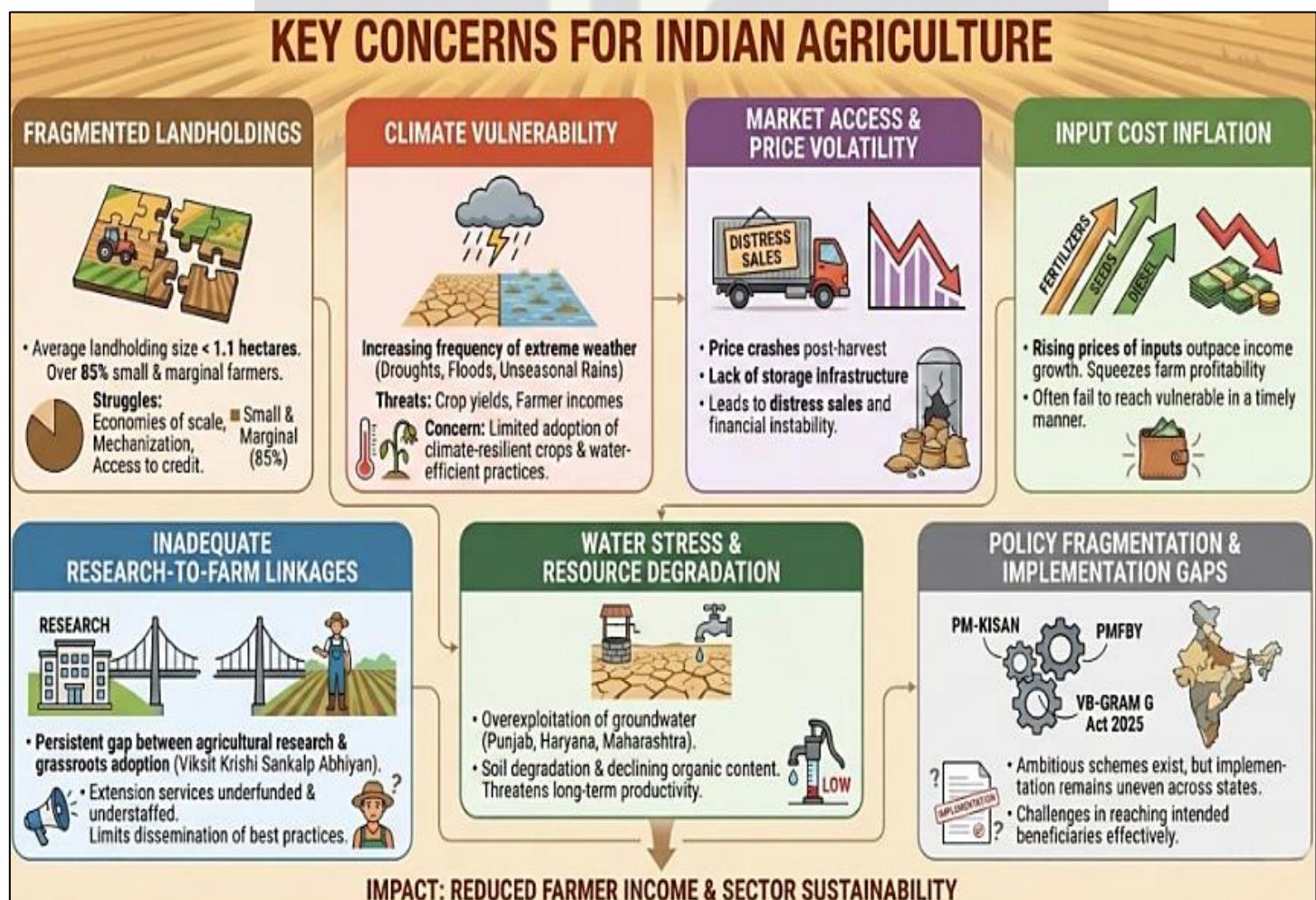
- **Milk Production:** 239.30 million tonnes in 2023-24 with the support of the National Gokul Mission and dairy development programs.
- **Fisheries:** 195 lakh tonnes in 2024-25 due to rapid growth in inland fisheries.
- **Horticulture:** Record expansion in fruit and vegetable production.
- **Food Processing:** Exports exceeded US\$ 49.4 billion by July 2025.

Sustainability and Climate Resilience

- Initiatives such as organic farming, Soil Health Card (SHC) scheme, ethanol blending program, PM-KUSUM scheme, etc., continued.

Human Capital and Skill Development

- **Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs)**
- **Building a robust rural skill development ecosystem.**
- **Integration of skills in horticulture, animal husbandry, mechanization, and processing to boost employability and innovation in the agri-value chain.**
- **Women farmers, farmer organizations (FOs), and rural entrepreneurs have become crucial drivers of transformation in local agricultural economies.**



Related Initiatives

- **Modified Interest Subvention Scheme (MISS):** This scheme is available to farmers who avail short-term crop loans up to ₹3.00 lakh at an interest rate of 7% per annum for one year.



- **Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF):** To mobilize medium to long-term debt financing facility for investment in viable projects for post-harvest management.
- An interest subvention of 3% per annum is available on all loans provided under this financing facility, up to a limit of ₹2 crore.
- **National Beekeeping and Honey Mission (NBHM):** Launched as part of the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, aiming for a 'Sweet Revolution'.
- **Namo Drone Didi:** Providing drones to 15,000 selected women self-help groups (for fertilizers and pesticides).
- **National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF):** To develop 15,000 clusters covering 7.5 lakh hectares and establish 10,000 need-based bio-input resource centers.
- **Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA):** To provide price support for pulses, oilseeds, and copra.
- **Agri Fund for Start-ups and Rural Enterprises (AgriSure):** To promote innovation and entrepreneurship in the agriculture and rural ecosystem.
- **Per Drop More Crop (PDMC):** To enhance water use efficiency at the farm level through micro-irrigation technologies, namely drip and sprinkler irrigation systems.
- **Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY):** To promote organic farming in the country.
- **Soil Health and Fertility (SH&F):** To promote balanced and integrated nutrient management through the Soil Health Card (SHC) initiative.
- **Rainfed Area Development (RAD):** A component under the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA), focusing on integrated farming systems.



- **Sub-Mission on Agroforestry:** Under the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) with the motto of 'Har Medh Par Pedh'.
- **Crop Diversification Programme (CDP):** Shifting farmers away from water-intensive crops like paddy to more sustainable and profitable alternatives such as pulses, oilseeds, and coarse grains.
- **Sub-Mission on Agricultural Extension (SMAE):** Making the extension system farmer-driven and farmer-accountable by disseminating technology to farmers through new institutional arrangements such as the Agricultural Technology Management Agency.
- **National Mission on Edible Oils (NMO)-Palm Oil:** Promoting palm oil cultivation with a special focus on the North-Eastern states and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- **Digital Agriculture Mission:** Improving the existing National e-Governance Plan in agriculture by developing a digital public infrastructure for agriculture.
- **National Bamboo Mission:** Implemented through State Bamboo Missions/State Bamboo Development Agencies (SBDA).

Startups in India

Why in News?

- 18 Indian startups are featured in Forbes Asia's '100 Startups to Watch' list for 2025. Meanwhile, the number of startups in the country has reached 200,000.
- The Union Home and Cooperation Minister addressed the 'Youth Business Mahasammelan-2025' organized by the Vishwa Umiya Foundation in Ahmedabad (Gujarat).

Key Points:

- 48% of startups have at least one female director or partner.
- In 2025, the healthcare and life sciences sector saw the highest number of startups, with 53.
- 50 startups were recognized in IT, 8 in Defence, and 5 in Artificial Intelligence.
- Under the Fund of Funds for Startups, more than ₹25,320 crore has been invested in over 1350 startups so far.

Other Important Points:

- **Startup:** A startup, as defined by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), refers to a company that meets the following criteria:
 1. **Company Age:** The period of existence and operation of the company from the date of incorporation should not exceed 10 years.
 2. **Company Type:** It should be incorporated as a Private Limited Company or a registered partnership firm.
 3. **Turnover:** Its annual turnover should not exceed ₹100 crore in any financial year.



4. **Original Entity:** The entity should not have been formed by splitting up or reconstructing a business already in existence.
5. **Innovative and Scalable:** It should be working towards the development or improvement of a product, process, or service.

- **Unicorn:** Term coined by: Aileen Lee.
- **'Unicorn startups are privately held companies valued at over \$1 billion, characterized by rapid growth, disruptive innovation, venture capital funding, and strong investment from angel investors.**
- **Startup Ecosystem:** This includes incubators, startup accelerators, venture capitalists, private investors, foundations, entrepreneurs, universities, the government, corporations, mentors, and the media.
- **Achievements of the Startup India Scheme:** The 9th anniversary was celebrated on January 16, 2025 (launched on January 16, 2016).
 1. **Growth in Startups:** The number of DPIIT-recognized startups increased from 500 (in 2016) to 2.6 lakh (in 2025).
 2. **Startup Ecosystem:** India has become the third largest startup ecosystem after the US and China, with over 200 unicorns.
 3. **Job Creation:** Startups across the country have created 2.1 million jobs in just a few years. (1.8 million permanent jobs)



INDEXES AND REPORTS



From Intent to Impact Report

Why in News?

- NITI Aayog released a report on best practices for gender equality in the workplace.

Key Points:

- Initiative:** A joint initiative of NITI Aayog and CII. It provides a strategic roadmap to ensure gender equality in the workplace.

Objectives:

- Inclusion of women in the workforce is essential to make India a \$30 trillion economy by 2047.
- To achieve the SDG-5 goal of gender equality.
- To ensure decent work and economic growth under SDG-8.

Gender Equality: Structural and Social Barriers:

- Bias in recruitment, stereotypical thinking in specialized jobs, such as in the STEM sector where female workforce participation is only 27 percent.
- Approximately 75 percent of women are likely to lose their jobs due to maternity.
- Lack of systematic leadership development opportunities.
- Globally, 76 percent of unpaid care work is performed by women, which limits their participation in economic development.



PERSONALITY



Shaheed Udham Singh (1899-1940)

Why in News?

- The 126th birth anniversary of Shaheed Udham Singh was celebrated on December 26.

Key Points:

- **Born:** Sangrur district of undivided Punjab, India.
- **Contribution:** Avenged the Jallianwala Bagh massacre by assassinating Michael O'Dwyer in 1940. Michael O'Dwyer was the Lieutenant Governor of Punjab in 1919.
- **Alternative Name:** Ram Mohammed Singh Azad
- **Organizations:** He was an active member of the Ghadar Party and the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA).

SPORTS

87th Senior National Badminton Championship, 2025

Why in News?

- Recently, the 87th Senior National Badminton Championship, 2025 was held in Vijayawada (Andhra Pradesh).

Key Points:

Women's Singles:

Winner	Runner-up
Surya Karishma Tamiri	Tanvi Patri

Women's Doubles:

Winner	Runner-up
Shikha Gautam and Ashwini Bhatt	Priya Devi Konjengbam and Shruti Mishra

Men's Singles:

Winner	Runner-up
Ritvik Sanjeevi S.	Bharat Raghav

Men's Doubles:

Winner	Runner-up
Hariharan and Ruban Kumar	Mithlesh Krishnan and Prejan

Mixed Doubles:

Winner	Runner-up
Satvik Reddy and Radhika Sharma	Ashish Surya and Amrita P.



World Rapid Chess, 2025

Why in News?

- Indian young Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi won a bronze medal at the World Rapid Chess Championship.

Key Points:

- He is the second Indian male player to win a medal in this prestigious tournament.
- **Note -** Viswanathan Anand was the first Indian player to win a medal in this tournament.

Men's Category:

- **Arjun Erigaisi:** Secured third place with 9.5 points.
- **Magnus Carlsen:** Secured first place, winning the Rapid Championship title for the sixth time. This is Carlsen's 19th World Title.

Women's Category:

- In the women's category, Aleksandra Goryachkina of Russia defeated Zhu Jiner of China to win the title.
- **Konneru Humpy:** Won a bronze medal. This is her 5th medal in this championship (2 gold + 1 silver + 2 bronze medals).

NEWS IN SHORTS

S. No.	News
1.	<p>Nick Kyrgios</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Australian male player Nick Kyrgios defeated World No. 1 female tennis player Aryna Sabalenka in a 'Battle of the Sexes' match.
2.	<p>MoU between NTH and DRDO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The National Test House (NTH) under the Department of Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Defence Materials and Stores Research and Development Establishment (DMSRDE), a laboratory of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) under the Ministry of Defence, to strengthen cooperation in the areas of research, testing, and training.■ National Test House: Established in 1912, NTH provides testing, inspection, and quality assurance services for a wide range of industrial and consumer products according to national and international standards.■ Defence Materials and Stores Research and Development Establishment (DMSRDE): Established in 1929 in Kanpur, DMSRDE works on the research and development of non-metallic materials such as polymers, composites, elastomers, ceramics, technical textiles, fuels, lubricants, and other special materials for defence applications.



3.

Bracewell (Cricket): Retirement

- Former New Zealand cricketer Bracewell has retired from all formats of the Cricket.
- He played a crucial role in New Zealand's Test victory against Australia in Hobart in 2011.

4.

Hugh Morris (Cricket): Demise

- Former England cricketer Hugh Morris won 3 Test matches in 1991 and captained the England A team on tours to South Africa, the West Indies, and Sri Lanka.
- Morris also served as the Chief Executive Officer of the England and Wales Cricket Board.

5.

Chokhone Krichena

- Chokhone Krichena, popularly known as Pushpadevi from Manipur, was mentioned in the 'Mann Ki Baat' program.
- In 2021, Chokhone Krichena left his family's traditional farming in the hilly regions and started 'Dianye Private Limited', a floriculture company specializing in the cultivation and marketing of ornamental flowers.