

# Daily Current Affairs

Date : 23 December, 2025



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### Aravalli Hills: Essential for Ecological Protection and Sustainable Development



#### Why in News?

- In its judgment on November 20, 2025, the Supreme Court accepted the recommendation of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change that only those landforms/hills that are 100 meters or more above the local elevation will be considered as 'Aravalli Hills'.



#### Key Points:

- According to this definition, the smaller hills and slopes less than 100 meters in height of the 692-kilometer-long mountain range, which extends from the national capital Delhi to Haryana, Rajasthan, and Gujarat, will no longer be considered 'Aravalli'. According to experts, this new height-based definition could exclude approximately 90 percent of the Aravalli region from the scope of 'Aravalli'.

- In protest against the court's decision, the 'Save Aravalli Campaign' was launched by local communities and environmental organizations across Rajasthan.

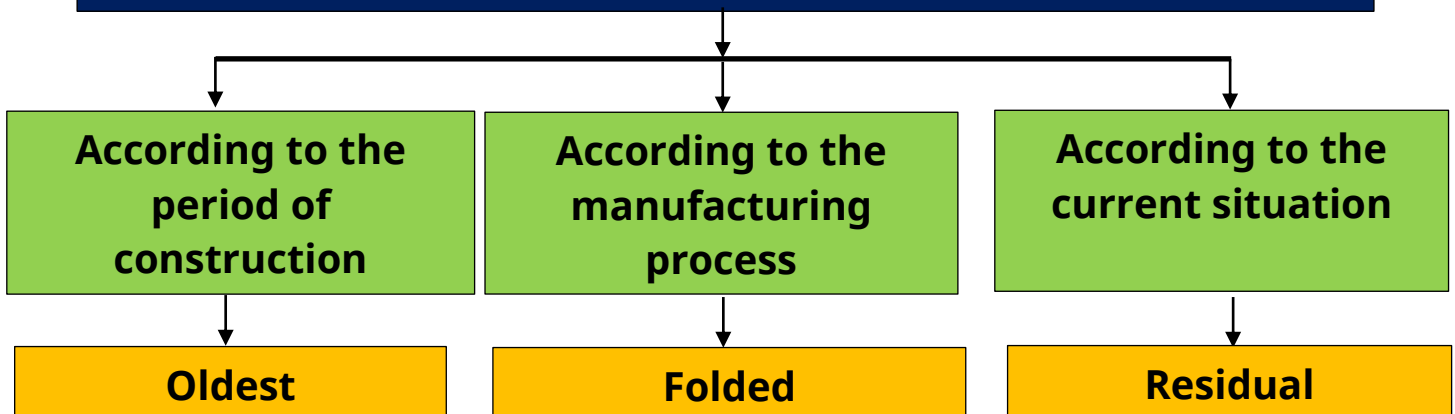
## Definition of Aravalli in Rajasthan:

- Only in Rajasthan has a formal definition been established to regulate mining in the Aravalli range. This definition was based on the state government's 2002 committee report, which was based on the 'Richard Murphy Landform Classification'.
- It identified all landforms rising 100 meters above the local elevation as mountains, and based on that, imposed restrictions on mining on the mountains and their surrounding slopes.
- Rajasthan has been following this definition since January 9, 2006.
- This definition explains the Aravalli range as all landforms that are within a 500-meter radius of two adjacent hills that are 100 meters or more in height. All landforms within this 500-meter zone, regardless of their height and slope, are excluded for the purpose of granting mining leases.

## About the Aravalli mountain range:

- The Aravalli hills and mountain ranges are one of the oldest geological structures in India.
- The Aravalli range is also referred to as Meru, Adavala, and 'Paripatra' in the Vishnu Purana.

**The Aravalli Range was formed by the convergence of the Eurasian Plate and the Indo-Australian Plate. The Aravalli is one of the oldest, folded, and relict mountain ranges.**



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**The Aravalli range extends continuously from Khed Brahma (Gujarat) to Raisina Hills (Delhi).**

**Total length - 692 km.**

**Length in Rajasthan - 550 km (80 percent of the total length)**

**Average height - 930 meters**

Northern Aravalli	Central Aravalli	Southern Aravalli
■ Extensive between Jhunjhunu and Jaipur.	■ Extensive between Jaipur and Rajsamand.	■ Extensive between Rajsamand and Sirohi.
<b>Highest Peak:</b> ■ Raghunathgarh (1055 m) (Sikar)	■ Also called Merwara Aravalli. ■ <b>Extension</b> – Ajmer, Beawar, Tonk. <b>Highest Peak:</b> ■ Todgarh (934 m) ■ Taragarh (873 m) ■ Nag Pahad (795 m)	■ Guru Shikhar (the highest peak of Rajasthan) ■ Southern Aravalli is again divided into two parts: (i) Abu Aravalli (Sirohi and Pali) (ii) Mewar Aravalli (Udaipur, Rajsamand, and Salumber)

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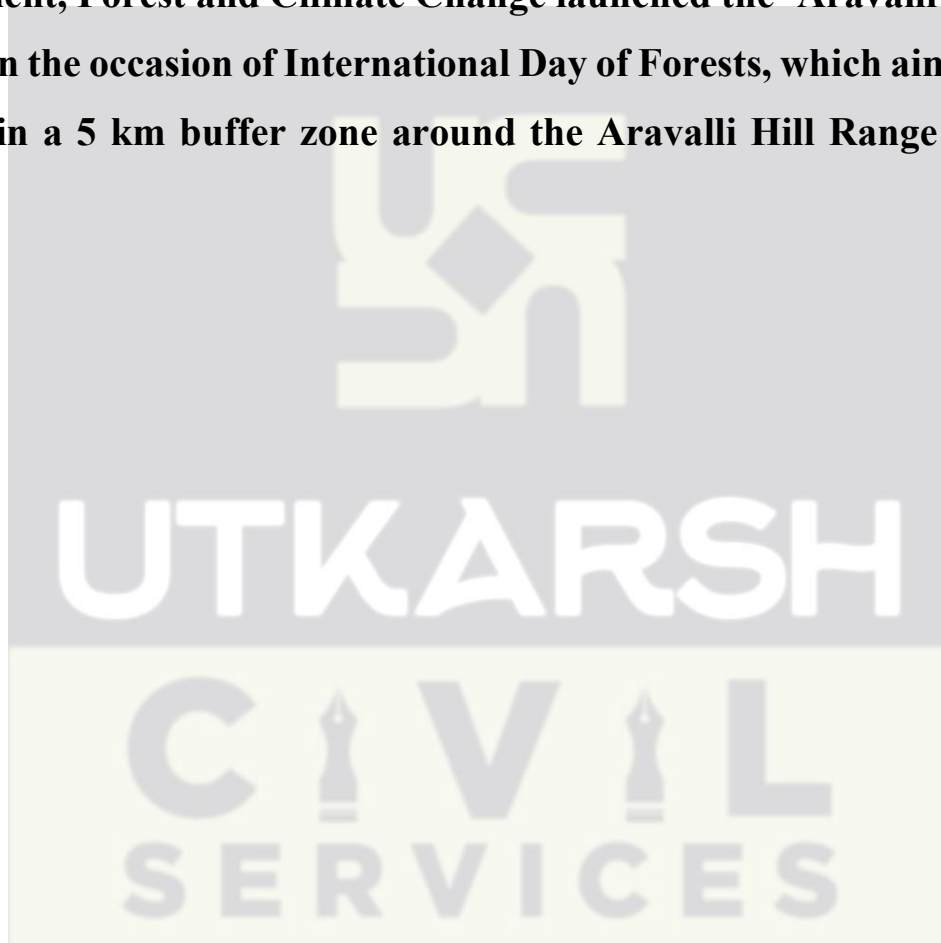
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## Other important points:

- The Rajasthan government has approved ₹250 crore for the 'Green Aravalli Development Project' in the state budget for 2025-26.
- **Aravalli Green Wall Project:** In March 2023, the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change launched the 'Aravalli Green Wall Project' on the occasion of International Day of Forests, which aims to expand greenery in a 5 km buffer zone around the Aravalli Hill Range across four states.



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## 'Sectoral Group of Secretaries' Implemented in Rajasthan



### Why in News?

- In accordance with the guidelines issued by Rajasthan Chief Secretary V. Srinivas, the 'Sectoral Group of Secretaries' has been implemented in the state.



### Key Points:

- It is noteworthy that this concept has proven to be a highly successful model in establishing good governance in the central administration. The State's Department of Administrative Reforms and Coordination has issued orders for the formation of 7 'Sectoral Groups of Secretaries'.
- **Objective:** To ensure better coordination and effective governance among various departments.
- **Administrative Department of the 'Sectoral Group of Secretaries':** Planning Department, Government of Rajasthan.
- This model is being adopted in the state to achieve the goals of 'Viksit Rajasthan@2047' by developing strategies, medium-term and long-term action plans and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), resolving inter-departmental issues, reviewing budget announcements and the Rajasthan Sankalp Patra-2023, flagship schemes, and the rationalization and merger of schemes with similar objectives.
- **The Group of Secretaries has been primarily divided into 7 groups, each led by the Secretary of the concerned department:**
  - **Group 1:** Rural Development and Agriculture.
  - **Group 2:** Infrastructure and Industry & Commerce.
  - **Group 3:** Resources.

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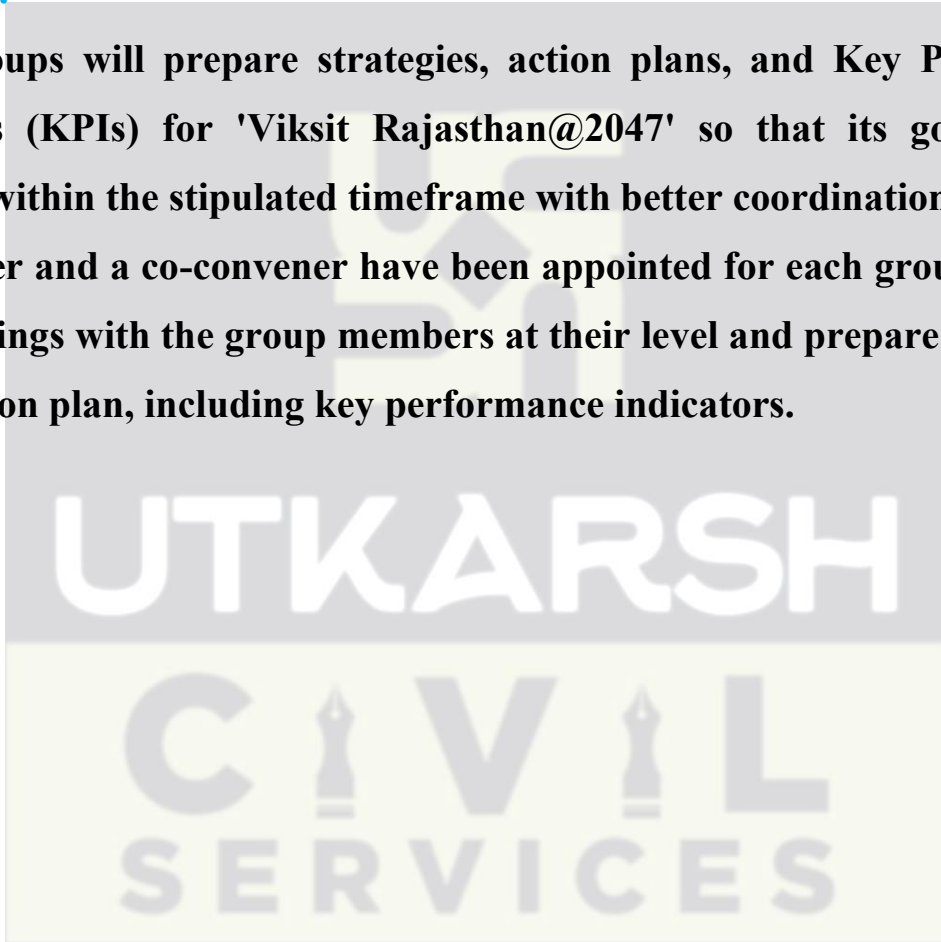
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- **Group 4:** Social Welfare.
- **Group 5:** Finance and Economy.
- **Group 6:** Governance and Technology.
- **Group 7:** Departments related to Security.

## Functions:

- These groups will prepare strategies, action plans, and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 'Viksit Rajasthan@2047' so that its goals can be achieved within the stipulated timeframe with better coordination.
- A convener and a co-convener have been appointed for each group, who will hold meetings with the group members at their level and prepare a summary of the action plan, including key performance indicators.



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## NEWS IN SHORTS ⚡

S. No.	News
1.	<p><b>Center of Excellence for the Conservation and Promotion of Indigenous Cattle Breeds</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ On December 22, 2025, on the occasion of the completion of two years of the state government, Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma announced the establishment of a Center of Excellence for the conservation and promotion of indigenous cattle breeds at the Animal Research Center in Dag, during the 'Women Empowerment Conference' held in Jhalawar.</li><li>■ This center will undertake the conservation, upgrading, and improvement of Malvi and Gir cattle breeds, along with other local breeds, and will also provide state-of-the-art facilities such as modern dairy, breeding, and artificial insemination.</li><li>■ The state government will spend approximately Rs. 15 crore on this project.</li></ul>
2.	<p><b>'Marwar Festival 2025' in Odisha</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The 'Marwar Festival 2025' was organized in Sambalpur, Odisha from December 18 to 22, 2025.</li><li>■ Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla participated in the closing ceremony of this festival.</li><li>■ <b>Organizers:</b> Marwari Yuva Manch and Rajasthan Foundation.</li><li>■ As a cultural confluence under the theme 'Ek Bharat-Shreshtha Bharat' (One India-Great India), this festival brings together the traditions of Odisha, Rajasthan, and Haryana.</li><li>■ This festival is a unique confluence of cultural unity, folk traditions, and Indian pride.</li></ul>



3.

## **SMS Hospital in 'Oxford Book of World Records'**

- Recently, the Skill Lab and Rotary Club of the Trauma Center at Sawai Man Singh Hospital in Jaipur were included in the 'Oxford Book of World Records' for training 1908 people in Basic Life Support in a single day.
- **Note:** Sawai Man Singh Hospital has also been awarded the 'Best Institution Award 2025' by the Neurotrauma Society of India for its outstanding performance in neurotrauma and trauma care.

4.

## **Major Festivals Organized by the Rajasthan Tourism Department**

- Ranakpur Jawai Dam Festival 2025 (Ranakpur Jain Temple, Pali): December 21 and 22, 2025.
- In this festival, Narsingh Chauhan of Jodhpur was awarded the 'Mooch Shri' award.
- **Banas Festival 2025 (Tonk):** December 24, 2025.
- **Sambhar Festival 2025 (Sambhar Lake):** December 27 to 31, 2025.
- **Winter Festival 2025 (Mount Abu):** December 29 to 31, 2025.

5.

## **Dr. Sandeep Bakshi**

- Dr. Sandeep Bakshi, Chancellor of Jaipur National University (JNU), was honored in the 'University Chancellors 2025' category by India's leading leadership magazine 'CEO Insights'.
- This honor is given to those educationists of the country who bring positive changes in the field of education through their visionary leadership and innovative thinking.

6.

## **First 'Village Health Service Journey': Barmer**

- Recently, the 'First Village Health Service Journey' was organized in the border area of Barmer with the aim of providing essential services, through the joint coordination of the Border Security Force, Seemajan Kalyan Samiti, and the National Medicos Organization.

7.

## **Nirmal Verma honored with 'Cinematic Impact Award for Animal Welfare'**

- Recently, Nirmal Verma, a wildlife documentary filmmaker from Sikar, was honored with the Cinematic Impact Award for Animal Welfare for his film 'The Keeper of the Last Herd'.
- **Ceremony:** The award was presented at the First CineKind Awards ceremony held in Kolkata, which was jointly organized by the Film Federation of India and People for Animals.

8.

## **Elite Miss Rajasthan 2025 Winner: Debosmita**

- **Event:** Mansarovar (Jaipur).
- **Winner:** Debosmita.
- **First Runner-up:** Lakshmi Vijay.

9.

## **Herbivore Enclosure in Shahabad Talhati Conservation Reserve**

- The Forest Department is developing a herbivore (vegetarian wildlife) enclosure in the Shahabad Talhati Conservation Reserve in Baran district. This enclosure will increase the prey base for panthers.
- Shahabad Talhati is famous for its dense forests in the state. An enclosure is being built in 19 hectares of this conservation reserve, which spans approximately 17,884 hectares. Deer, sambar, chital, and other herbivorous wild animals will be brought from other places and released into this enclosure.

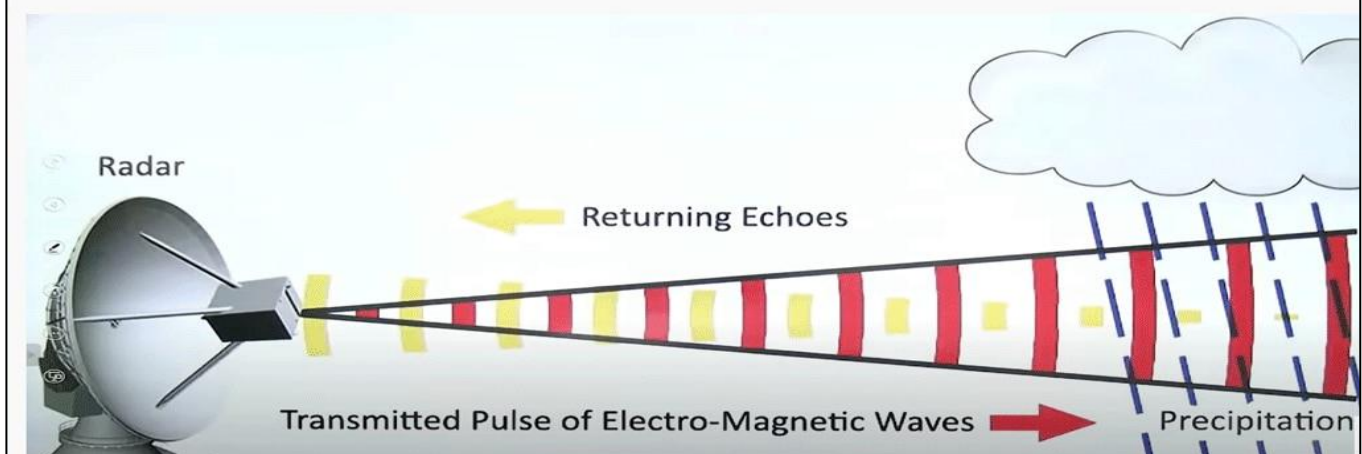


### Doppler Weather Radar (DWR)



#### Why in News?

- Currently, 47 Doppler weather radars are operational in India. Through these, approximately 87% of the country's total area is covered by radar.



#### Key Points:

##### Doppler Weather Radar (DWR)

- These are ground-based radar systems used by meteorological organizations to forecast rainfall, thunderstorms, cyclones, etc.
- These radars provide information about the location of the target weather system as well as its movement.
- In India, Doppler weather radars of various frequencies (S-band, C-band, and X-band) are commonly used by the India Meteorological Department.

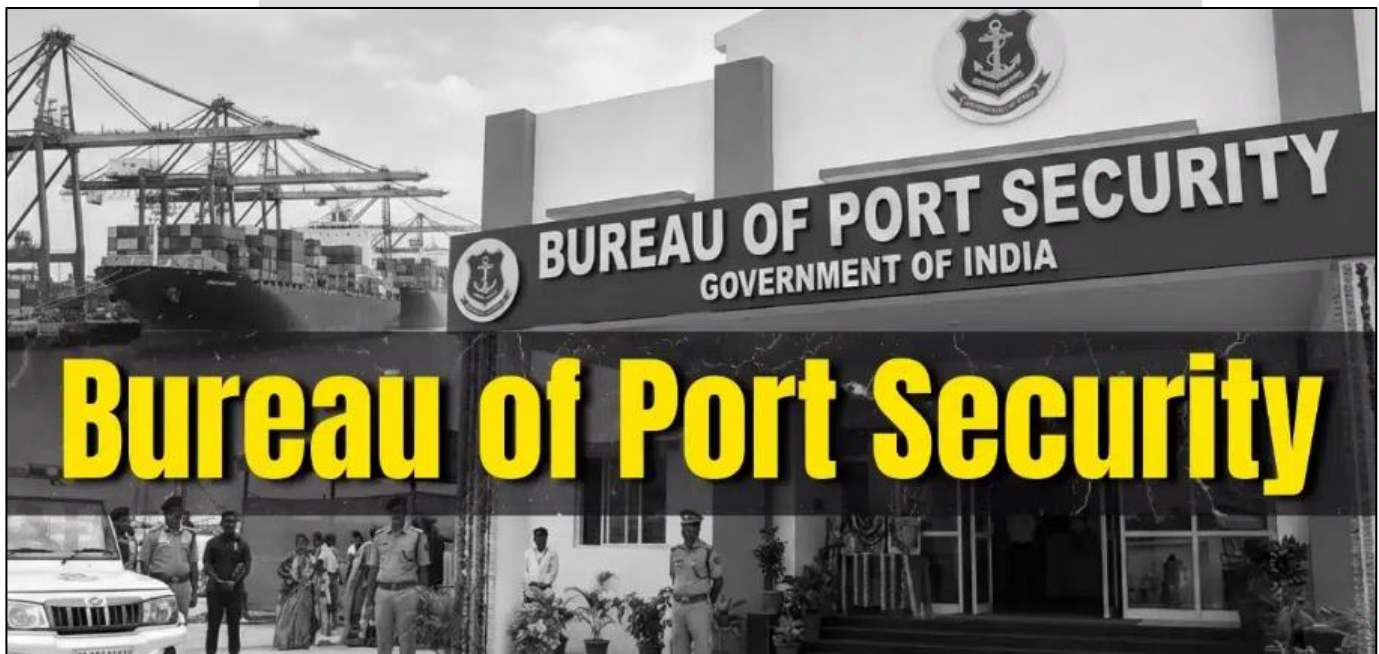
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## Port Security Bureau



### Why in News?

- A dedicated body, the Port Security Bureau, will be constituted for the security of ships and port facilities.



### Key Points:

#### Port Security Bureau:

- **Statutory Body:** It will be constituted as a statutory body under the 'Merchant Shipping Act, 2025'.
- **Objective:** It will be responsible for regulatory and inspection functions related to the security of ships and port facilities.
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways



## Government e-Marketplace (GeM)



### Why in News?

- GeM (Government e-Marketplace) has generated ₹2,200 crore in the last four years through the disposal of assets such as scrap, e-waste, and old vehicles.



### Key Points:

#### GeM (Government e-Marketplace)

- **Structure:** It has been established under the administrative control of the Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry. It is a 'Section 8 Company' (Section 8 of the Companies Act).
- **Launched:** 2016, Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- **Function:** It facilitates online procurement of common-use goods and services required by various government departments, organizations, and public sector undertakings.
- **Significance:** To enhance transparency, efficiency, and speed in public procurement.



## Kuttanad Wetland Agricultural System



### Why in News?

- Soil tests in the paddy fields of Kuttanad have revealed that aluminum levels have exceeded safe limits. It is noteworthy that the paddy fields of Kuttanad are part of the Kuttanad Wetland Agricultural System.



### Key Points:

- As the soil pH drops below 5, aluminum becomes more soluble and toxic.
- Excessive levels of aluminum damage plant roots. It also hinders the plant's ability to absorb essential nutrients such as phosphorus, calcium, potassium, and magnesium.

### Kuttanad Wetland Agricultural System (Kerala)

- This is the only system in India where rice cultivation is carried out below sea level in saline water on land reclaimed from deltaic swamps.
- It has been included under the Food and Agriculture Organization's Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems.

## National Maritime Heritage Complex



### Why in News?

- India and the Netherlands have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to cooperate in the development of the National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC) at Lothal, Gujarat.



### Key Points:

- **Introduction:** This is a flagship cultural and heritage project of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- **Objective:** To showcase India's 4500-5000-year-old maritime heritage through a world-class museum and cultural complex.
- **Location:** Lothal, Ahmedabad, Gujarat.
- **Development:** It is part of India's Sagarmala Programme.

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## INTERNATIONAL



### The Future of India-Bangladesh Relations: Parliamentary Committee on External Affairs



#### Why in News?

- According to a recent report by the Parliament's Standing Committee on External Affairs, India is facing its greatest strategic challenge in Bangladesh since the 1971 Liberation War.



#### Key Points:

- **Strategic Challenge of Regime Change After 2024:** India is facing its 'greatest strategic challenge' in Bangladesh since the 1971 Liberation War.
- The removal of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina from power in 2024 disrupted a decade-long strategic alliance between the two countries.
- The issue became even more complex after Hasina was sentenced to death in November 2025.



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- **Influence of External Powers:** The report warns of the growing influence of China and Turkey in Bangladesh, particularly in the infrastructure and defense sectors, which could undermine India's traditional strategic position.
- **Emergence of a New Political Order in Dhaka:** The interim government has banned all political activities of the Awami League, and the party has been barred from contesting the February 2026 elections.
- The National Citizens Party (NCP), led by student activists who spearheaded the movement against Hasina, has emerged. This has opened avenues for increased Chinese and Pakistani influence in Bangladesh's political and economic affairs.
- **Shrinking Strategic Space for India:** The new government in Bangladesh has adopted a more nationalist and less India-friendly stance, leading to a clear deterioration in bilateral relations.
- Anti-India sentiments are gaining ground, resulting in public protests targeting Indian diplomatic missions, including a significant demonstration at the Indian High Commission in Dhaka in December 2025.
- **Connectivity and Economic Cooperation at Risk:** India emphasized the importance of connectivity, energy cooperation, and trade integration in 2024, presenting them as pillars of the relationship.
- Projects such as the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline and cross-border rail links were seen as symbols of deepening ties, which are now potentially jeopardized due to political changes.
- **Regional and security implications:** Bangladesh remains crucial for India's 'Neighbourhood First' and 'Act East' policies, as well as its Indo-Pacific vision.
- Due to the 4,096-kilometer shared border, cooperation on border management, counter-terrorism measures, and migration becomes vital for regional stability.
- **Ganges Water Treaty and bilateral cooperation:** The panel discussed the Ganges Water Treaty, which is due for renewal in December 2026.
- No formal discussions have yet begun with Bangladesh, although India has initiated consultations with state governments.

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## ⌚ SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY ⌚

### WHO's Second Global Summit on Traditional Medicine



#### Why in News?

- The WHO's Second Global Summit on Traditional Medicine concluded in New Delhi.



#### Key Points:

##### Summit Highlights

- **Launch of the Traditional Medicine Global Library:** This library will provide equitable access to scientific data, policy documents, and validated knowledge on traditional medicine practices to people worldwide.
- The WHO South-East Asia Regional Office building was inaugurated in New Delhi.



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- **Launch of the My Ayush Integrated Services Portal:** This is the master digital portal for the Ayush sector.
- **Launch of Ayush Mark:** This is the proposed global quality certification standard for Ayush products and services.
- **The Delhi Declaration was adopted:** This declaration recognizes traditional medicine practices as a shared biocultural heritage.
- This declaration is aligned with the WHO's Global Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025–2034.

## Traditional Medicine

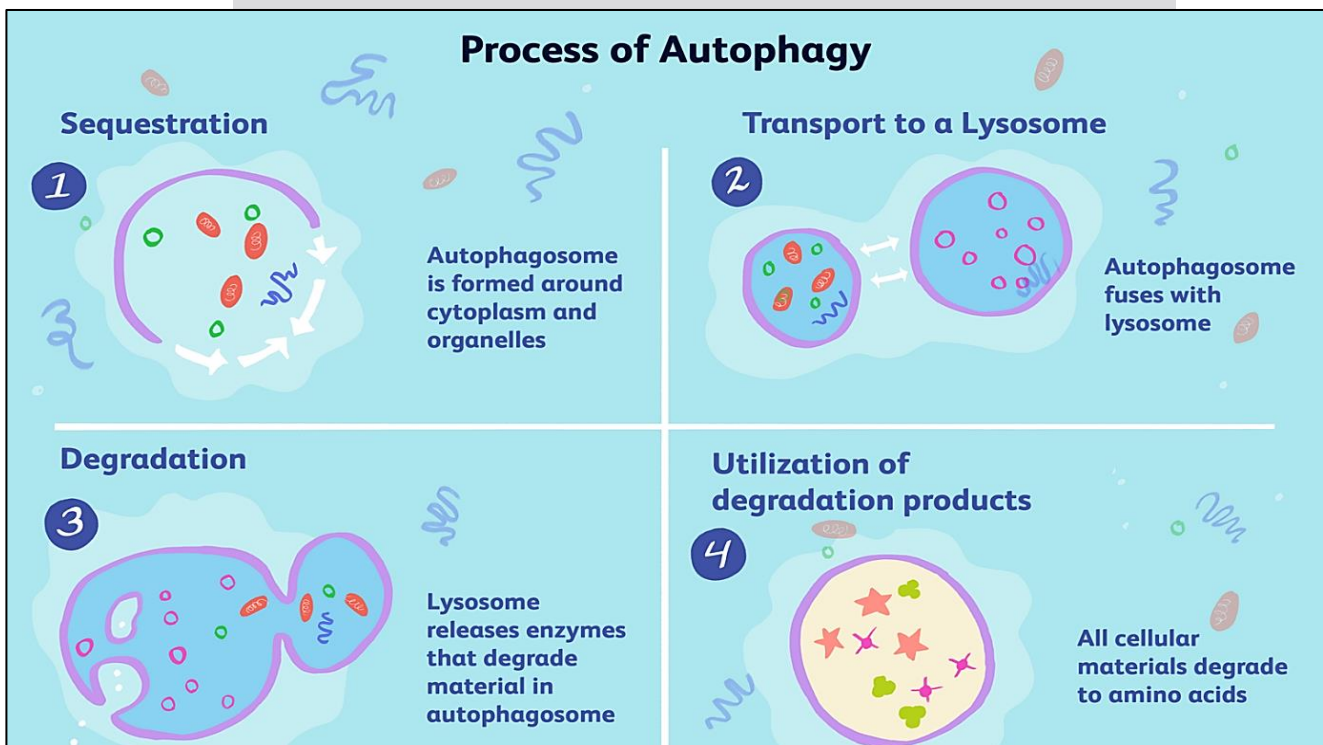
- **Definition:** Traditional medicine encompasses healthcare practices rooted in historical and cultural traditions predating biomedicine.
- **India's Traditional Medicine Systems:** In India, traditional medicine systems are collectively known as the Ayush sector. These include Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy.
- The Ayush sector in India has a market size of approximately US\$43 billion. In terms of value, it has expanded nearly eightfold over the past decade.

## Autophagy



### Why in News?

- Researchers at the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research have discovered a crucial protein complex (Exocyst complex) involved in the initial stages of autophagy.



### Key Points:

#### What is Autophagy?

- Autophagy is a fundamental cellular process through which cells degrade and recycle damaged organelles, misfolded proteins, and pathogens.
- Often described as "self-eating," it helps maintain cellular homeostasis, particularly in long-lived cells such as neurons.
- This process involves the formation of double-membraned vesicles called autophagosomes, which engulf cellular waste and deliver it to lysosomes for degradation.

## Anjdeep Ship



### Why in News?

- The third Anjdeep ship, one of the eight indigenously designed and built ASW SWC (Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft) vessels, was commissioned into the Indian Navy in Chennai on December 22, 2025.

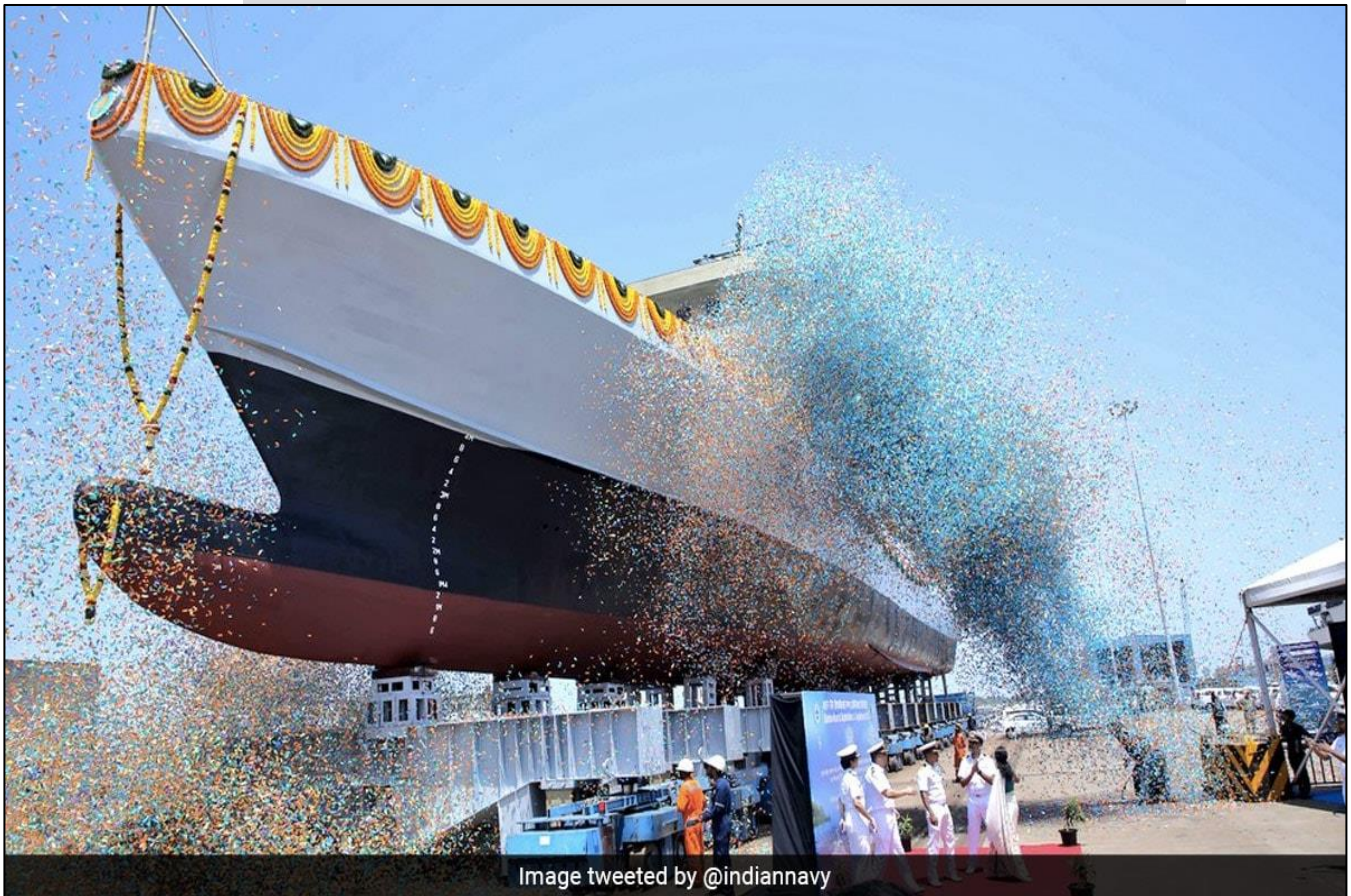


Image tweeted by @indiannavy



### Key Points:

- **Design:** Designed and built under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) between GRSE and M/s L&T Shipyard, Kattupalli, according to the classification rules of the Indian Register of Shipping (IRS).
- **Development/Construction:** By Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata.

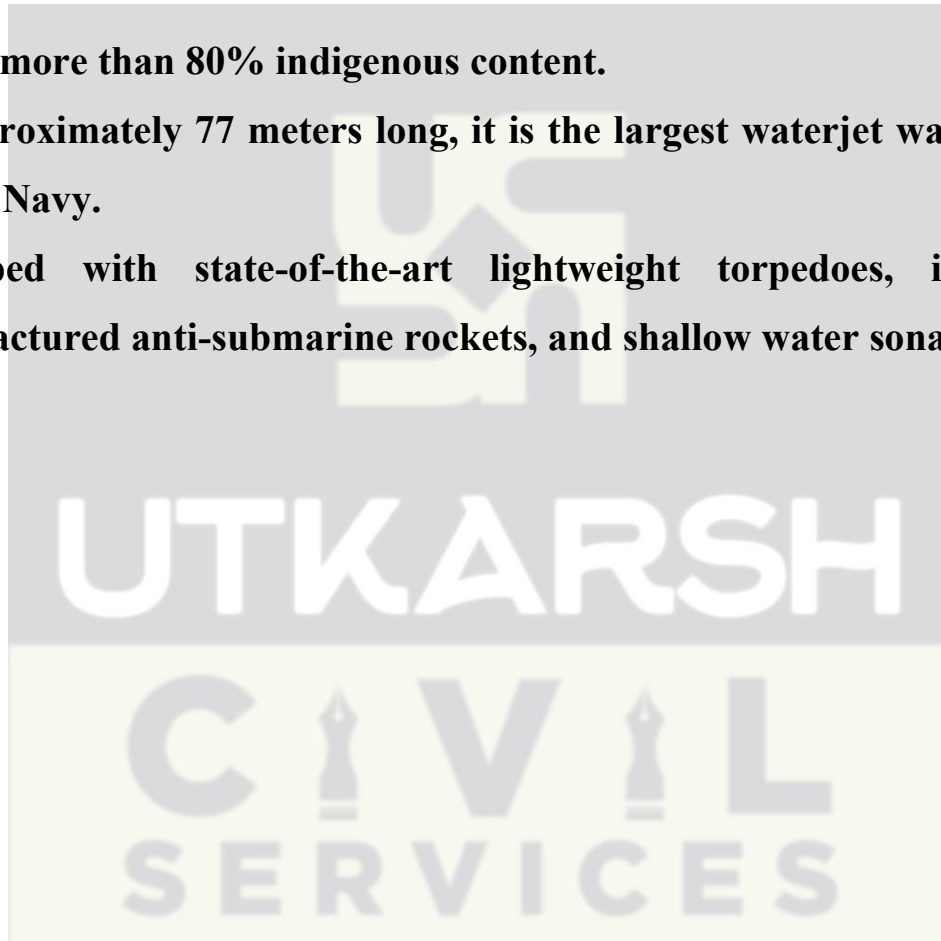


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- This ship is a reincarnation of the former Petya-class warship INS Anjdeep, which was decommissioned in 2003.
- **Naming:** Named after Anjdeep Island, located off the coast of Karwar, Karnataka.
- **Features:**
  1. It uses more than 80% indigenous content.
  2. At approximately 77 meters long, it is the largest waterjet warship of the Indian Navy.
  3. Equipped with state-of-the-art lightweight torpedoes, indigenously manufactured anti-submarine rockets, and shallow water sonar.



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## INDEXES AND REPORTS



### Report on Self-Reliance in Minerals and Metals



#### Why in News?

- The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Coal, Mines and Steel presented its report on 'Self-Reliance in Minerals and Metals'. This report presents a roadmap for India to reduce its dependence on imports of minerals and metals and to realize the vision of a self-reliant and developed India.



#### Key Points:

##### Current Status of India's Self-Reliance in Minerals and Metals

- India is largely self-reliant in major industrial minerals such as bauxite, chromite, iron ore, kyanite, limestone, and sillimanite.
- The availability of some minerals like magnesite, manganese ore, and rock phosphate is limited in the country. These minerals have to be imported to meet the domestic demand.



- India is almost entirely dependent on imports for critical minerals like lithium, cobalt, and nickel.

## Policy Measures

- **Amendments to the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act:** A transparent e-auction method has been introduced, a uniform lease period of 50 years has been prescribed for all new mining leases, and a new exploration license category has been created for 29 deep-seated and critical minerals.
- **National Critical Minerals Mission:** (2025) Its objective is to ensure a continuous supply of 30 identified critical minerals in the country.
- **Acquisition of Mineral Blocks Abroad:** Through Khanij Bidesh India Limited (KABIL), India is exploring mineral assets in countries like Argentina, Chile, and Australia.
- Khanij Bidesh India Limited is a joint venture of NALCO, HCL, and MECL.
- **Offshore Mining:** In 2024, the government launched the first auction of 13 offshore mineral blocks for the extraction of construction sand and polymetallic nodules.



## PERSONALITY

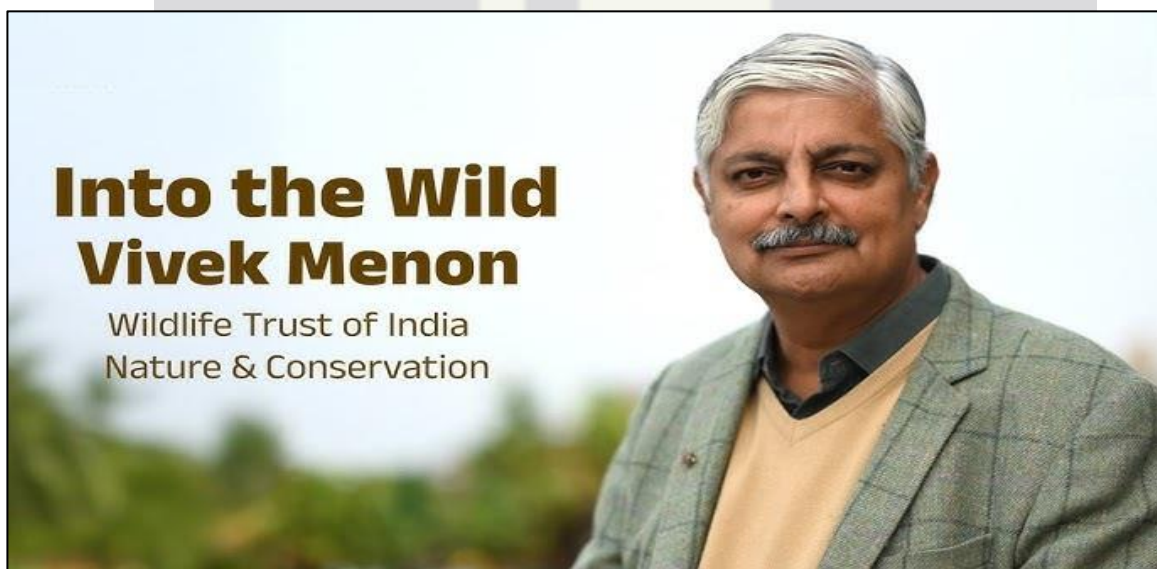


### Vivek Menon



#### Why in News?

- Indian wildlife conservationist Vivek Menon has been elected as the Chair of the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) for the term 2025-2029.



#### Key Points:

- Menon is the first Asian to chair the commission in its history.
- IUCN Species Survival Commission -**
- Introduction:** The Species Survival Commission (SSC) is the largest and most influential scientific network of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
  - Establishment:** Established in 1949 along with the IUCN.
  - It functions as one of the six expert commissions of the IUCN.
  - Function:** IUCN Red List of Threatened Species: It provides scientific assessments, classifying species into categories such as critically endangered, endangered, vulnerable, etc.

## AWARDS

### SAIL: Honored with 8 National Awards



#### Why in News?

- Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL), the country's public sector steel producer, has been honored with 8 prestigious national awards by the Public Relations Society of India (PRSI).



#### Key Points:

- Award Ceremony:** During the 47th All India Public Relations Conference held in Dehradun from December 13 to 15, 2025.
- SAIL secured top honors in various categories:**

Sl. No.	Category	Contribution
1.	Best Use of AI in Public Relations Campaign	For AI-powered news bulletin 'AI Cell Track' created by the Cell.
2.	Best Advertising Campaign Using AI	For the impactful AI-generated advertisement campaign during the Women's World Cup 2025.
3.	Corporate Website	Recognition for website user experience and accessibility of information.

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4.	Most Effective Event Management	For effective execution of the exhibition in 'India Steel-2025'.
5.	Make in India (Defense Sector)	To promote indigenous manufacturing efforts in national defense.
6.	E-Newsletter	For in-house production and effective broadcast of the audio-visual news bulletin 'CellTrack'.
7.	Best Communication Campaign (Internal Publics)	For organizing the 'AI & U' competition aimed at connecting Cell personnel with emerging technologies.
8.	Sustainable Development	For excellence in creative design and layout of the Corporate Sustainability Report 2023-24.



## Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL):-

- An Indian public sector steel manufacturing corporation based in New Delhi.
- **Established:** January 19, 1954
- **SAIL has several integrated steel plants in India, such as;**
  1. Bhilai Steel Plant - Chhattisgarh
  2. Durgapur Steel Plant – West Bengal
  3. Rourkela Steel Plant – Odisha
  4. Bokaro Steel Plant - Jharkhand
  5. Burnpur Steel Plant – West Bengal
- SAIL has been awarded the prestigious 'Great Place to Work' certification for the second time by the Great Place to Work Institute, India, for the period from January 2025 to January 2026.





## NEWS IN SHORTS ⚡

S. No.	News
1.	<p><b>GI Tagged Indigenous Lemons: Karnataka</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The export of GI-tagged Indi limes from Vijayapura in Karnataka to Oman has boosted India's agricultural exports.</li><li>■ Indi limes are known for their distinctive aroma, high juice content, and long shelf life.</li><li>■ They represent the agricultural heritage of North Karnataka.</li></ul>
2.	<p><b>Smriti Mandhana</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Indian cricketer Smriti Mandhana has become the first Asian woman to complete 4,000 runs in Women's T20s.</li><li>■ Mandhana scored 4007 runs in 154 matches.</li><li>■ She is the second woman batter to achieve this feat.</li><li>■ <b>Note</b> - New Zealand's Suzie Bates is in first place.</li></ul>



3.

## Kashiwazaki Kariwa Nuclear Plant



- Japan has announced the restart of the world's largest nuclear power plant after 15 years.
- **Location:** Niigata Prefecture, Japan.
- The plant was shut down after the 2011 earthquake and tsunami.

4.

## INSV Kaundinya



- In December 2025, INSV Kaundinya, built using a 2000-year-old technique based on a painting from the Ajanta Caves, will travel from Porbandar, India to Oman.
- This ship does not have an engine or GPS technology.
- After the Indian government approved this project in 2023, a company in Goa built this ship using the Taka method.

5.

## Bannerghatta Biological Park



- Eight Black-capped Capuchin monkeys have been brought to Bannerghatta Biological Park in Bengaluru from South Africa for the first time.
- This species is not found in India.
- **Scientific name:** Sapajus apella.

6.

## Dr. Kishore Paknikar

- The Prime Minister's Professorship, launched to strengthen the research ecosystem in universities, will be awarded for the first time to scientist Dr. Kishore Paknikar.
- He is the former Director of Agharkar Research Institute (ARI), Pune.
- **Professorship awarded by:** National Research Foundation, Government of India.
- A research grant of ₹2.5 lakh per month and ₹24 lakh per year will be provided for research for a period of 5 years.

