

Daily Current Affairs

Date : 12 December, 2025



Index

Sr. No.	Topic
1.	Senior Citizen Pilgrimage Scheme-2025
2.	Dr. Mohit Kachhwaha receives 'GIPS Award 2025-26'
3.	News in Shorts 1. MoU between Rajivika and Manjari Foundation 2. Jaipur Tiger Festival 3. Gaurav Sahu: Three medals at the Asian Senior Powerlifting Championships 4. 37th Federation Cup Handball Championship (Rajasthan Men's Team Runner-up) 5. 'Aravalli Heritage People's Campaign' 6. Rajasthan Ranks Second in Cement Production 7. 'Samvidhan Ghar' Digital Library in Dholpur
4.	Shilp Didi Program
5.	Global Environment Outlook 2025
6.	Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP)
7.	Charaichung Royal Bird Sanctuary: Charaichung Festival
8.	Diving Support Craft A-20
9.	National Quantum Communication Hub
10.	Maitri-2 Station: Parliamentary Question
11.	National Supercomputing Mission
12.	Small Modular Reactors: Parliamentary Question
13.	Asian Development Bank – ADB
14.	UNEP Champions of the Earth Award 2025

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RAJASTHAN



Senior Citizen Pilgrimage Scheme-2025



Why in News?

- On December 11, 2025, the first flight for foreign pilgrimage took off under the Rajasthan Devasthan Department's 'Senior Citizen Pilgrimage Scheme-2025'.



Key Points:

- 38 senior pilgrims from the state, including 19 women, departed from Delhi Airport for the Kathmandu Airport.
- In the Rajasthan State Budget 2025-26, it was announced that under the Senior Citizen Pilgrimage Scheme, 6,000 senior citizens would be provided air travel and 50,000 senior citizens would be provided air travel.

--2--

Daily Current Affairs



Date : 12 December, 2025



- The only air travel available under this scheme is to Pashupatinath (Kathmandu).
- The Chief Minister flagged off the 'Rajasthan Vahini Bharat Gaurav Tourist Train' from Durgapura (Jaipur) Railway Station on June 6, 2025. This was the first time senior citizens in the state were offered an air-conditioned pilgrimage to Rameswaram and Madurai (Tamil Nadu).

About the Scheme:

- **Launch:** Rail travel from 2013 and combined rail and air travel from 2016.
- **Objective of the Scheme:** To enable senior citizens (aged 60 years or older) who are natives of Rajasthan to travel to one of the various designated pilgrimage sites, located within the country or abroad, once in their lifetime.

Eligibility:

1. Must be a native of Rajasthan and have attained the age of 60. Even if the applicant's spouse is under 60 years of age, they can travel with the applicant as an attendant.
2. Neither the applicant nor their spouse should be income tax payers.
3. The applicant must not have previously availed of the Senior Citizen Pilgrimage Scheme of the Devasthan Department.
4. Those who live on alms will not be eligible for the scheme.
5. Must be physically and mentally fit for travel and not suffering from any infectious disease.

Facts for Prelims (Economic Survey – 2024-25):

- The Rajasthan State Road Transport Corporation (RSRTC) has increased the scope of travel fare discount for women and senior citizens from 30 percent to 50 percent.

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Daily Current Affairs

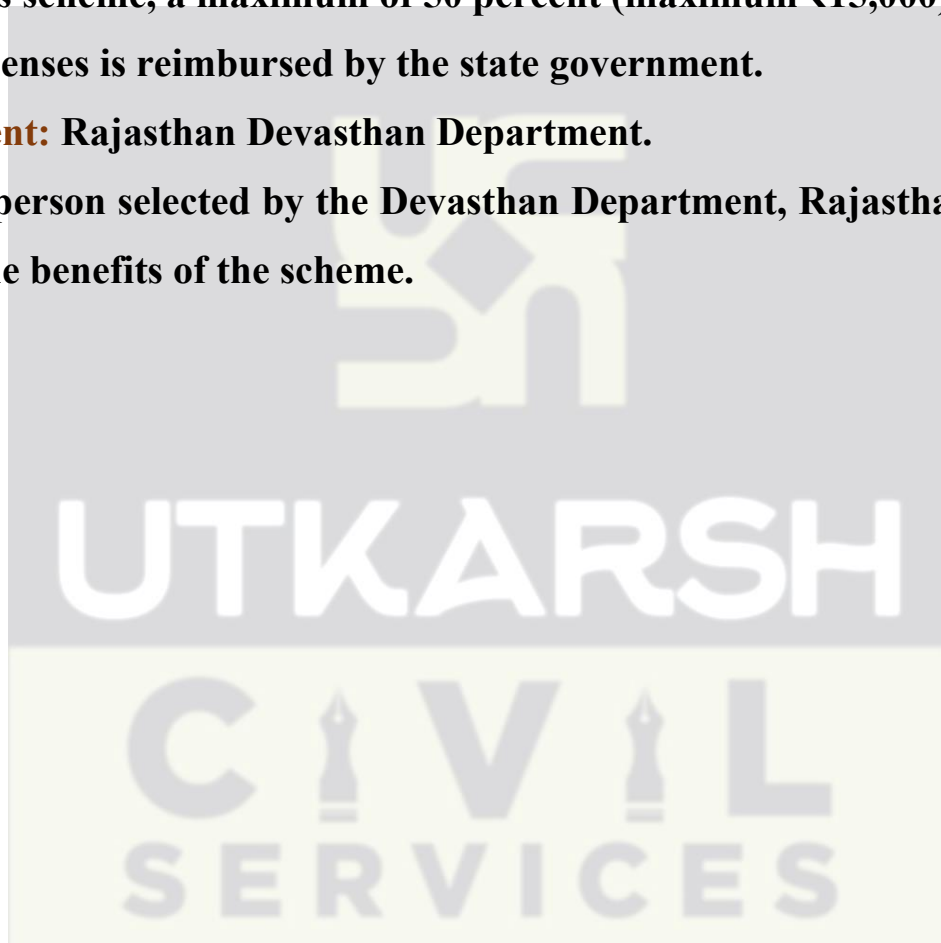
 Date : 12 December, 2025



Other important points:

Sindhu Darshan Pilgrimage Scheme:

- **Scheme launched:** April 1, 2016. (The minimum age limit was reduced to 21 years in 2018.)
- Under this scheme, a maximum of 50 percent (maximum ₹15,000) of the total travel expenses is reimbursed by the state government.
- **Department:** Rajasthan Devasthan Department.
- Only the person selected by the Devasthan Department, Rajasthan is eligible to avail the benefits of the scheme.



-:4:-

Dr. Mohit Kachhwaha receives 'GIPS Award 2025-26'



Why in News?

- Recently, Dr. Mohit Kachhwaha from Rajasthan was awarded the Ministry of Power's 'Grid India Power System Award, 2025-26' during the International Conference on Power Systems (ICPS) 2025 at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Hyderabad.



ग्रिड-इंडिया
GRID-INDIA



Key Points:

- Dr. Mohit Kachhwaha is the only person from Rajasthan to be honored. He is currently pursuing advanced post-doctoral research on cyber attack prevention at Delft University in the Netherlands.
- **Resident:** Jodhpur.
- At the 14th edition of GIPSA, 30 scholars were honored for their innovative contributions in the power systems domain.

✂ NEWS IN SHORTS ⚡

S. No.	News
1.	<p>MoU between Rajivika and Manjari Foundation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Rajasthan Rural Livelihoods Development Council (Rajivika) and the Manjari Foundation on December 11, 2025.■ Under the MoU, 10 to 12 enterprises will be selected from across the state and strengthened through a five-year phased training series, expert mentorship, and market-oriented strategies.■ Additionally, the Manjari Foundation will provide training to women-led enterprises in aspects such as institutional development, leadership skills, product quality, packaging, branding, digital marketing, market linkages, and compliance.
2.	<p>Jaipur Tiger Festival</p>  <p>Held: December 11 to 14, 2025, at the Jawahar Kala Kendra.</p> <p>Inaugurated: Governor Haribhau Bagde.</p> <p>Rajasthan has a total of 160 tigers, of which 144 are in the wild and 16 are in captivity. Ranthambore has the highest number of tigers, 71.</p>

3.

Gaurav Sahu: Three medals at the Asian Senior Powerlifting Championships



- Gaurav Sahu of Udaipur won three medals (two silver and one bronze) in the 59 kg weight category at the Asian Senior Powerlifting Championships.
- **Event:** Istanbul, Turkey, from December 2 to 10, 2025.
- **Squat category** - 230 kg (silver medal)
- **Bench press category** - 112.5 kg (silver medal)
- **Deadlift category** - 232.5 kg (bronze medal)

4.

37th Federation Cup Handball Championship (Rajasthan Men's Team Runner-up)

- **Organized by:** Uttar Pradesh Handball Association under the aegis of Handball Association of India at KD Singh Babu Stadium, Lucknow.
- **Men's Winner:** Punjab (defeated Rajasthan 32-23 in the final)
- **Runner-up:** Rajasthan
- **Women's Winner:** Himachal Pradesh
- **Runner-up:** Uttar Pradesh

5.

'Aravalli Heritage People's Campaign'

- The 'Aravalli Heritage People's Campaign' was launched in Jaipur on the occasion of International Mountain Day (December 11, 2025).
- This initiative was launched in protest against the Supreme Court's November 20, 2025, decision, which set a new definition of the Aravalli Range.
- New definition - A landform will be considered part of the Aravalli Range only if its height is at least 100 meters higher than the local land.

6.

Rajasthan Ranks Second in Cement Production



- According to data as of December 2025, Rajasthan ranks second in cement production nationwide, after Andhra Pradesh.
- Six new cement plants will be established in Jaisalmer between 2026 and 2029.
- **Andhra Pradesh (First):** 62.5 million tons of installed capacity.
- **Rajasthan (Second):** 55 million tons of installed capacity.

7.

'Samvidhan Ghar' Digital Library in Dholpur

- Recently, a rural digital library was launched in Kachpura Angai, Dholpur, in collaboration with IIFCL and the Dholpur Zila Parishad. It was named 'Samvidhan Ghar'.



Shilp Didi Program



Why in News?

- The Union Textiles Secretary announced that the Shilp Didi program has increased the income of women artisans, with some earning over ₹5 lakh.



Key Points:

- **Launch:** 2024 (100-day pilot phase - June 2024)
- **Objective:** To economically empower women artisans (Shilp Didis) by providing them training, digital skills, and access to markets, including e-commerce platforms and physical exhibitions.
- **Implementation:** Ministry of Textiles

Key Features:

1. E-training modules
2. Marketing opportunities (Dilli Haat, Craft Fairs)
3. E-commerce integration
4. 100 women artisans from 23 states are involved at the pilot stage.
5. 30 diverse crafts are covered.



ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY



Global Environment Outlook 2025



Why in News?

- The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) released the 7th edition of the Global Environment Outlook 2025 (GEO-7) during the 7th session of UNEP held in Nairobi.



Key Points:

1. **Greenhouse Gas Increasing:** Greenhouse gas emissions have increased by 1.5% per year since 1990 (by 2024; 1.55°C).
 2. **Economic Cost of Mitigation:** \$143 billion per year.
 3. **Plastic Crisis:** 8000 million tons of plastic waste, resulting in \$1.5 trillion in health-related economic losses annually.
 4. **Biodiversity:** 1 million of an estimated 8 million species are threatened with extinction.
- 20-40% of the global land area has been degraded.

Suggestions:

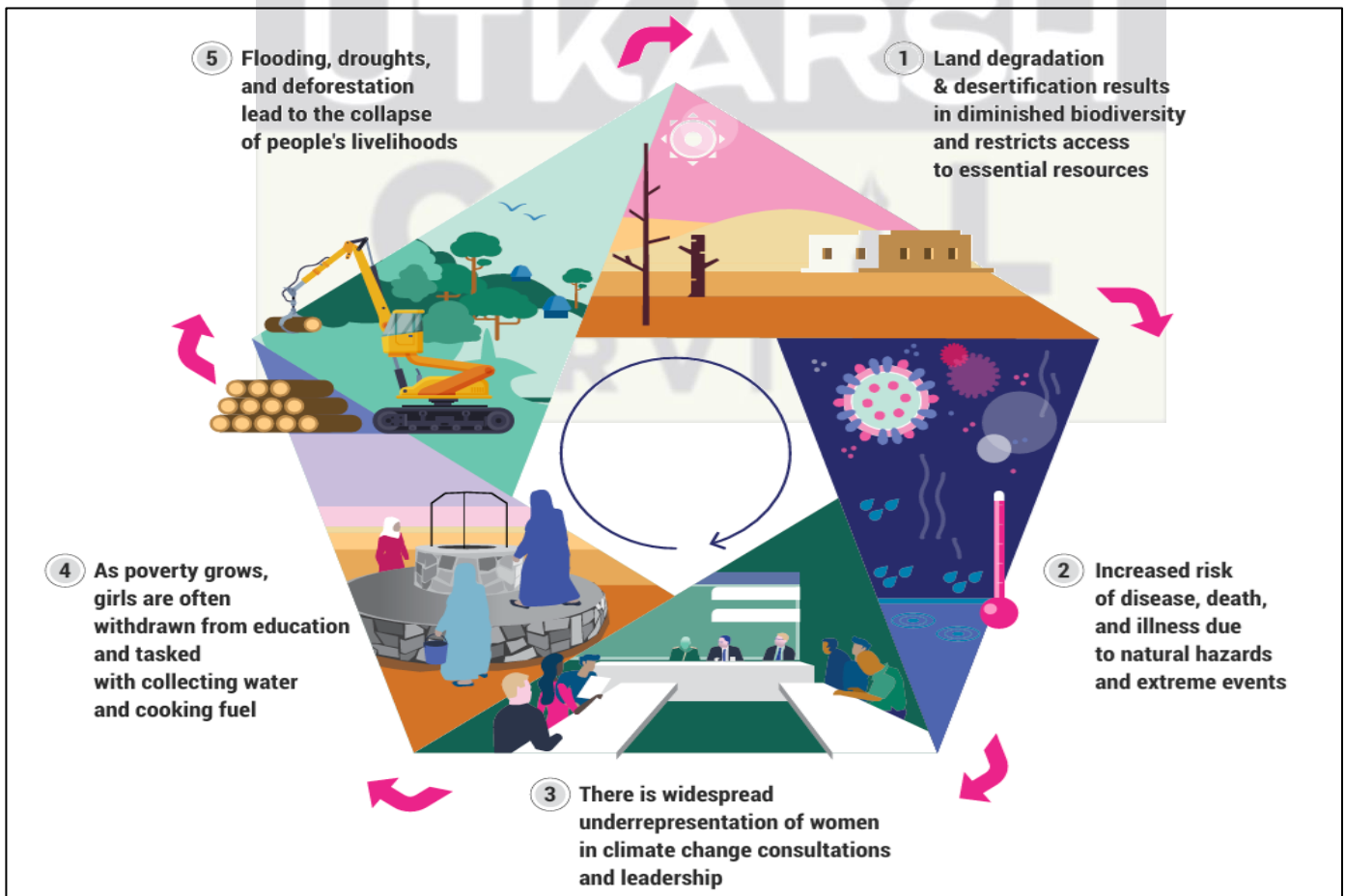
- **GEO-7's suggestions to prevent environmental degradation:**
 1. **Economy and Finance:** Achieve net-zero by 2050, requiring annual investment of \$8 trillion by 2050.
 2. Circular and regenerative models, energy efficiency improvements (renewable energy).
 3. Conservation and restoration of ecosystems.
 4. International cooperation and integrated action.

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Other key points:

Impacts of environmental degradation:

- **Dangerous Tipping Points:** 1.5°C is likely to be exceeded by the early 2030s and 2.0°C by the 2040s.
- **Collapse of global economies:** Annual global GDP could fall by 4% by 2050 and 20% by 2100, leading to widespread unemployment, poverty, and systemic instability.
- **Loss of fertile land:** Each year, an area equivalent to Colombia or Ethiopia is lost, jeopardizing agriculture and water availability.
- **Nutrition:** Per capita food availability could fall by 3.4% by 2050, increasing hunger, malnutrition, famine, and social unrest.



Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP)



Why in News?

- Recently, the Minister of State for Information and Jal Shakti provided information regarding the Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project in the Lok Sabha.
- As of November 30, 2025, major physical rehabilitation works have been completed for 31 dams under DRIP Phase II.



Key Points:

- Total cost for Phases II and III = ₹10,211 crore.
- **Coverage:** 19 states and 3 central agencies.
- **Duration:** 10 years (2021 to 2031)
- **Phase I:** During the first phase (2012 to 2021) of DRIP, implemented with World Bank financial assistance, emergency action plans have been prepared for 210 dams in 7 states.
- **Phase II:** Emergency action plans have been prepared for 12 dams so far.

Other Key Points:

Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project:

- **Type:** State Sector Scheme.
- **Objective:** To provide immediate financing for the repair and maintenance of dams in states.
- **Launched:** April 18, 2012, by the Central Water Commission (CWC) with World Bank assistance.
- **External Financial Assistance:** World Bank and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).

-:12:-

Daily Current Affairs

 Date : 12 December, 2025

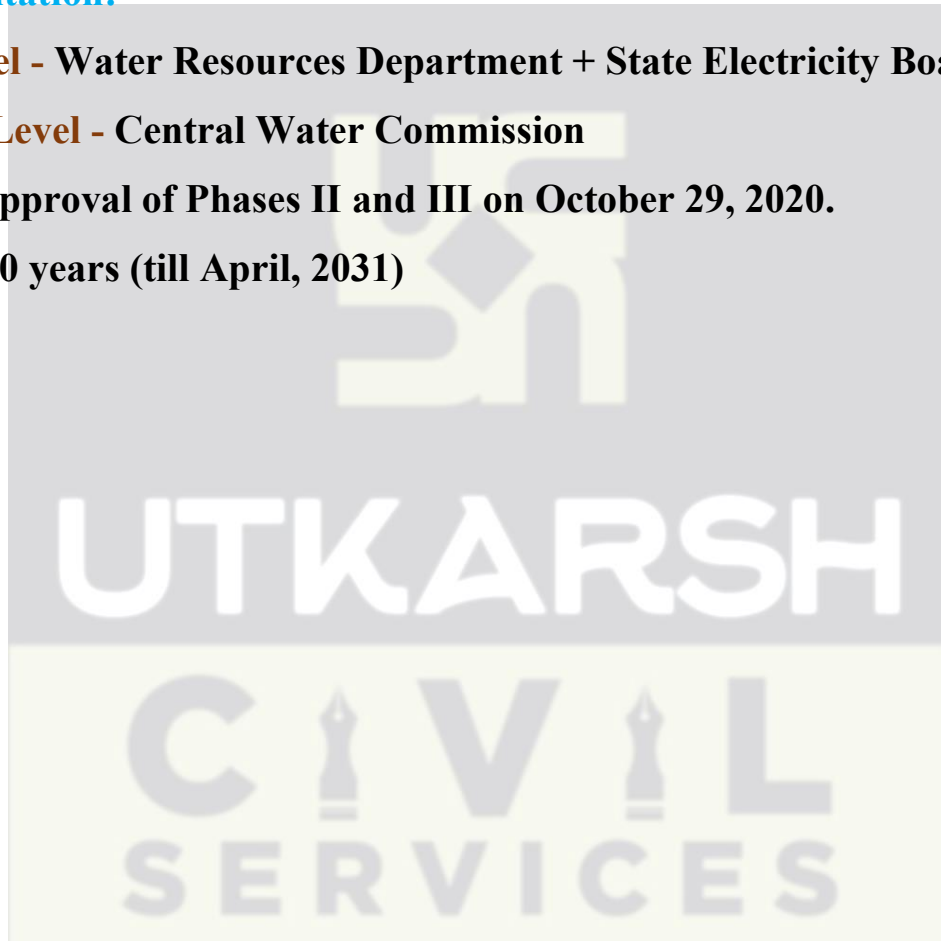


Financial Share:

1. **General Category States: 70:30 (External: Central)**
2. **Special Category States: 80:20**
3. **Central Agencies: 50:50**

Implementation:

- **State Level - Water Resources Department + State Electricity Board**
- **National Level - Central Water Commission**
- **Phases: Approval of Phases II and III on October 29, 2020.**
- **Tenure: 10 years (till April, 2031)**



Charaichung Royal Bird Sanctuary: Charaichung Festival



Why in News?

- Recently, the Charaichung Festival was held on Majuli Island in Assam to revive Asia's first protected royal bird sanctuary.



Key Points:

- Founded by:** Ahom King Pratap Singh (1633 AD).
- Location:** Majuli Island, Assam.
- Festival Edition:** Second.
- Asia's First Protected Bird Sanctuary.

Other Important Points:

Majuli Island

- Located:** Brahmaputra River, Assam
- World's Largest River Island.
- Rivers:** Formed between the Brahmaputra's tributaries, the Kherkutia and Subansiri rivers.
- Resident Tribes:** Sonowal, Kachari, Deori, Mishing, etc.

-:14:-

⌚ SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY 🌡

Diving Support Craft A-20



Why in News?

- The Indian Navy will commission the first indigenously designed and built diving support craft, 'DSC-A-20', into service on December 16, 2025, under the aegis of the Southern Naval Command in Kochi.



Key Points:

- **Design:** As per the Naval Rules of the Indian Register of Shipping.
- **Construction:** The first vessel in a series of 5 diving support craft built by M/s Titagarh Rail Systems Limited, Kolkata.
- **Purpose:** Designed for a wide range of diving and underwater operations in coastal waters.
- **Displacement:** 390 tons

National Quantum Communication Hub



Why in News?

- IIT Madras inaugurated India's National Quantum Communication Hub on its campus as part of the National Quantum Mission.



Key Points:

National Quantum Communication Hub:

- **Objective:** To enhance national capabilities in quantum secure communications.
- This hub will focus on quantum key distribution networks, post-quantum security, quantum memory and repeaters, and satellite-based quantum communications.

Maitri-2 Station: Parliamentary Question



Why in News?

- India plans to establish the newly constructed Maitri-II Station in Antarctica to replace the existing Maitri Research Station.



Key Points:

Significance:

- The new Maitri-II Station is envisioned as a state-of-the-art, year-round research station that will significantly enhance India's scientific capabilities in biology, geology, glaciology, atmospheric science, climate studies, and long-term environmental monitoring.

Timeframe –

- The estimated operational timeframe for Maitri-II is 7 years and it is expected to be completed by 2032.

Nodal Agency –

- The project is led by the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research, Goa, under the Ministry of Earth Sciences.

Other Indian research stations in Antarctica –

- **Dakshin Gangotri – 1983**
- **Maitri – 1989**
- **Bharati – 2012**

National Supercomputing Mission



Why in News?

- The Prime Minister has called for achieving self-reliance in the field of supercomputing.



Key Points:

National Supercomputing Mission:

- **Launched** – Year 2015
- **Scheme Type** – Central Sector Scheme
- **Nodal Agency** – Department of Science and Technology, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
- **Implementing Agency** – Centre for Development of Advanced Computing – C-DAC, Pune, Indian Institute of Science – Bengaluru
- **Objective** – It aims to empower academic and research and development institutions in India by installing supercomputing systems of various capacities.
- This facility is provided through the National Knowledge Network (NKN), a government-supported high-speed network connecting research and academic institutions.

Small Modular Reactors: Parliamentary Question



Why in News?

- The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre has initiated the design and development of small modular reactors.



Key Points:

SMR – Additional Information-

- SMRs are advanced nuclear reactors with a capacity of up to 300 MW, approximately 1/3 the capacity of conventional reactors.
- They are compact, assembled in factories, and transported for installation, making them suitable for remote or space-limited areas.

Key Features-

- **Small** – Significantly smaller in size than conventional nuclear reactors.
- **Modular** – Components manufactured in factories can be transported and assembled on site.
- **Reactors** – Use nuclear fission to generate heat, which is converted into energy.
- **SMR and India** – The Union Budget 2025-26 announced the launch of the Nuclear Power Mission, with the primary objective of focusing on research and development of small modular reactors and developing at least 5 indigenously designed and operational SMRs by 2033.



INDEXES AND REPORTS



Asian Development Bank – ADB



Why in News?

- The Asian Development Bank raised India's growth forecast for FY 2026 from 6.5% to 7.2%.



Key Points:

ADB:- Additional Information –

- **Founded** – 1966
- **Headquarters** – Manila, Philippines.
- **Members** – 69 members – India is a founding member.
- **Major shareholder countries of ADB** – Japan, United States, China, India, Australia.

🏆 AWARDS 🏆

UNEP Champions of the Earth Award 2025



Why in News?

- Recently, Supriya Sahu, Additional Chief Secretary of the State of Tamil Nadu, was awarded the UNEP Champions of the Earth Award 2025 for her leadership in climate change mitigation, adaptation, and heat-resilience.



Key Points:

- **Introduction:** The United Nations' highest environmental honor, awarded annually by UNEP to individuals demonstrating exceptional environmental leadership.
- **Established:** 2005

Key Features:

- **Four award categories:** Policy Leadership, Inspiration and Action, Entrepreneurship, Science and Innovation
- **Theme for 2025:** Focuses on climate justice, resilient infrastructure, methane emission reduction, sustainable cooling, and forest conservation.

Daily Current Affairs

Date : 12 December, 2025



2025 Winners:

Sr. No.	Category	Winner	Contribution
1.	Policy Leadership	Students of the Pacific Islands fighting against climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Youth-led NGO sought advice from the International Court of Justice, confirming the legal duties of states to prevent climate change damage and protect human rights.
2.	Inspiration and Action	Supriya Sahu (India)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Leading work on heat adaptation, nature-based solutions, ecosystem restoration, and sustainable cooling in Tamil Nadu.■ Created 2.5 million green jobs.■ Benefited 12 million people through forest expansion.
3.	Entrepreneurship	Mariam Issoufou (Niger/France)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Sahelian architecture: passive cooling without AC, temperature reduction by over 10°C.
4.	Science and Innovation	Imazon (Brazil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ A research institute uses AI-powered geospatial tools to uncover illegal deforestation in the Amazon rainforest.
5.	Lifetime Achievement	Manfreki Kaltagirone (posthumously)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Head of the UNEP's International Methane Emissions Observatory.■ Advocate for global methane transparency.

-:22:-