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The State's First University to Implement an NEP-Based Ordinance: MDSU Ajmer



Why in News?

- Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati University (MDSU), Ajmer, has become the first university in Rajasthan to implement an ordinance for the effective execution of the National Education Policy (NEP) – 2020.



Key Points:

- The university had already implemented the provisions of NEP-2020, at the Undergraduate (UG) level starting from the academic session 2023-24; this includes significant changes such as the semester system, credit framework, and skill development initiatives.

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- It is noteworthy that the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) and the semester system have already been implemented across all government colleges in Rajasthan. Additionally, special emphasis is being placed on making higher education skill-based and practical-oriented.

Facts for Prelims (NEP – 2020):

- **Approval:** Approved on July 29, 2020, as the third education policy of independent India.

Structural Reforms (School Education)

- **5+3+3+4 Framework:** Replacing the old 10+2 system, a 5+3+3+4 structure has now been adopted.
- **Foundational Stage (5 years):** 3 years of Anganwadi/Pre-school + Classes 1 and 2.
- **Preparatory Stage (3 years):** Classes 3 to 5.
- **Middle Stage (3 years):** Classes 6 to 8.
- **Secondary Stage (4 years):** Classes 9 to 12.
- **Education in Mother Tongue:** Emphasis has been placed on keeping the medium of instruction in the mother tongue, local, or regional language up to Class 5 (and, if possible, up to Class 8).
- **Student-Teacher Ratio (STR):** The goal is to maintain this ratio at less than 30:1 in every school, and less than 25:1 in disadvantaged areas.

Higher Education

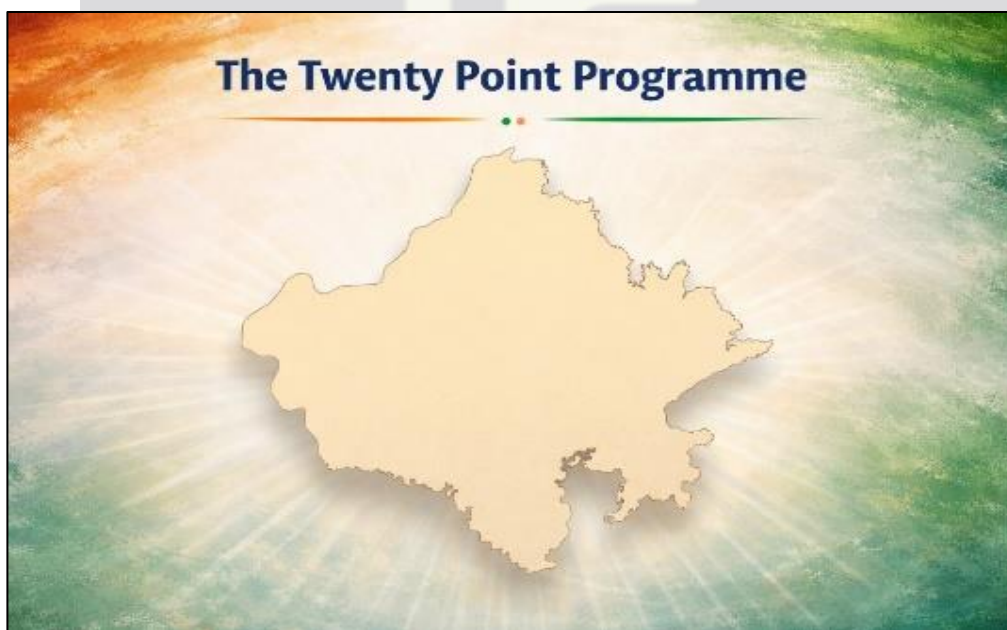
- **GER Target:** To increase the 'Gross Enrolment Ratio' (GER) in higher education to 50 percent by the year 2035.
- **Multidisciplinary Education:** Students will be able to choose a combination of subjects of their choice (e.g., Physics with Music). Undergraduate (UG) degrees will be of 3 or 4 years' duration, with the option of multiple entry and exit points (leading to a Certificate, Diploma, or Degree).
- **Regulatory Framework:** Establishment of the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) to oversee the entire higher education sector, excluding medical and legal education.
- **PARAKH:** A new National Assessment Centre named 'PARAKH' (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development) has been established for the assessment of students.

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Latest Rankings of the Twenty-Point Programme

Why in News?

- Recently, in the latest rankings for March 2026—released by the State Government under the Twenty-Point Programme (TPP)—Bhilwara, Chittorgarh, and Jhalawar secured the first position (with a score of 93.33 percent).



Key Points:

- Jaipur district topped the charts in health and other services, excelling in institutional deliveries (100 percent) and 'A Grade' plantation activities.
- Jaipur secured the 32nd rank, while Jodhpur secured the 21st rank.

About the Twenty-Point Programme:

- Inception:** Year 1975.
- Main Objective of the Programme:** To eradicate poverty and improve the standard of living of the common man.
- This programme was revised in the years 1982, 1986, and 2006. The Twenty-Point Programme – 2006 came into effect on April 1, 2007.

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The 20 Points of the Twenty-Point Programme – 2006:

Points	Subject
1.	Poverty Alleviation
2.	Citizen Empowerment
3.	Farmer Assistance
4.	Labor Welfare
5.	Food Security
6.	Housing for All
7.	Clean Drinking Water
8.	Health for All
9.	Education for All
10.	Women's Welfare
11.	Child Welfare
12.	Youth Development
13.	Slum Improvement
14.	Social Security
15.	Development of Rural Roads
16.	Rural Electrification
17.	Development of Backward Regions
18.	IT-Enabled E-Governance
19.	Environmental Protection and Afforestation
20.	Welfare of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Minorities, and OBCs

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100-Day 'TB-Free India Campaign'

Why in News?

- The 100-day 'TB-Free India Campaign' was launched in Rajasthan from the Sawai Man Singh Medical College, Jaipur, on the occasion of World TB Day.

Key Points:

- Under this campaign, all individuals aged over 14 years will undergo examinations at various camps; these examinations will include TB screening, as well as checks for Hemoglobin (Hb), Blood Sugar, Blood Pressure (BP), Body Mass Index (BMI), and Chest X-rays.
- **Rajasthan's Ranking in TB Screening:** In the year 2025, Rajasthan secured the first position nationwide by screening over 17.5 million (1 crore 75 lakh) potential TB patients.
- **Note:** In the year 2024, Rajasthan ranked third in the country in the 'TB-Mukt Gram Panchayat Abhiyan.' Under this campaign, 3,355 Gram Panchayats (village councils) in Rajasthan were declared TB-free in 2024.
- **Note:** In the year 2025, the Government of Rajasthan declared 3,350 Gram Panchayats as TB-free under the 'TB-Mukt Gram Panchayat Abhiyan.'
- **National Event for World TB Day 2026:** Organized by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in Noida (Uttar Pradesh).

Facts for Prelims (World Tuberculosis Day):

- World Tuberculosis Day is observed annually on March 24th.
- **Theme for 2026:** Yes! We can End TB! Led by countries. Powered by people.



WWF-India and Prabha Khaitan Foundation Awards Ceremony

Why in News?

- The 6th 'Machhli' and 'Vanya Prani Mitra' Awards Ceremony was recently organized in Jaipur under the joint aegis of WWF-India and the Prabha Khaitan Foundation (PKF).



Key Points:

- This ceremony was dedicated to honoring forest guards and community heroes who work selflessly in the field of wildlife conservation.

Major Awards:

- **Machhli Award:** This award was presented for wildlife rescue and anti-poaching activities.
- **Recipient:** Udaipur Wildlife Rescue Team: For collective efforts.

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- **Recipient:** Saroj Kanwar: For contributions to wildlife conservation.
- **Recipient:** Anita Chaudhary: Forest Guard at Shergarh Sanctuary, Kota, who has rescued over 500 wild animals.
- **Recipient:** Ramlal Gurjar: For anti-poaching and community engagement.
- **Vanya Prani Mitra Award:** This award was presented for human-wildlife conflict management and community awareness.
- **Recipient:** Anil Kumar Bishnoi (Hanumangarh): Rescued over 10,000 deer over the last 35 years.
- **Recipient:** Peera Ram Dhayal (Jalore): For wildlife and environmental conservation in Western Rajasthan.
- **Recipient:** Darshan Kumar Menaria (Udaipur): For conflict management and conservation efforts.

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✂ NEWS IN SHORTS ⚡

S. No.	News
1.	<p>National Para Fencing Championship – 2026</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Venue: Sawai Mansingh Stadium, Jaipur; held from March 23 to March 27, 2026.■ Organizer: Divyang Para Sports Association of Rajasthan.
2.	<p>Rajasthan at India's First Beach Taijiquan National Wushu Championship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Event: India's first Beach Taijiquan Junior and Senior National Wushu Championship was held in Chennai, from March 20 to March 23, 2026.■ Rajasthan's Performance: A total of three medals, including one silver and two bronze.■ Silver Medal: Kishan Kachhawa■ Bronze Medal: Riddhi Parik■ Bronze Medal: The pair of Riddhi Parik and Abhigya Sharma (in Pair Taijiquan).■ Organizers: Wushu Association of India and Tamil Nadu Wushu Association.
3.	<p>'Parinda Lagao, Parinda Bachao' (Install Bird-feeders, Save Birds) Campaign</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Jaipur District Collector Dr. Jitendra Kumar Soni recently launched the 'Parinda Lagao, Parinda Bachao' campaign.

NATIONAL

Subhash Chandra Bose Disaster Management Award

Why in News?

- The Union Ministry of Home Affairs has stated that nominations for this award remain open throughout the year. They may be submitted until September 30.



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Key Points:

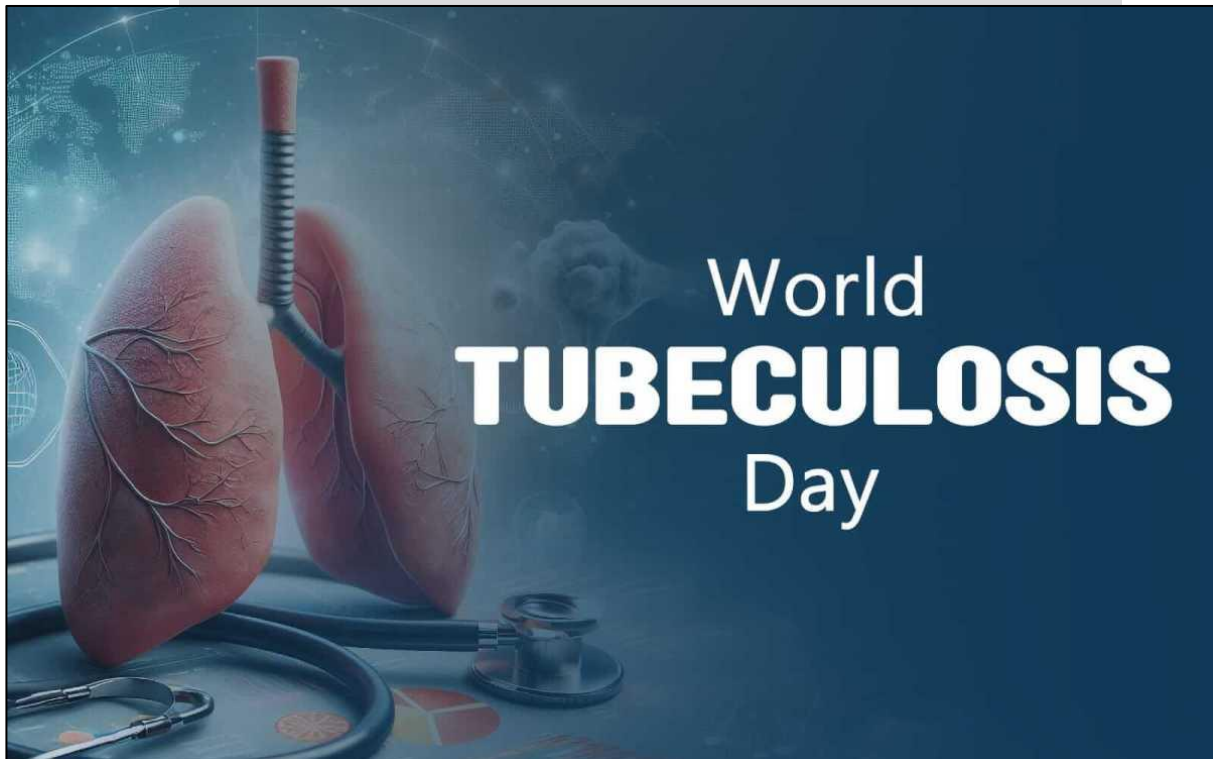
Subhash Chandra Bose Disaster Management Award

- **Announcement:** Annually on January 23, on the birth anniversary of Subhash Chandra Bose.
- **Institution:** Established by the Government of India.
- **Categories:** Individual and Institutional.
- **Scope:** To recognize the invaluable contributions of individuals and institutions in the field of disaster management.
- **Eligibility:** Both Indian citizens and institutions are eligible.

World Tuberculosis Day

Why in News?

- World Tuberculosis Day is observed on March 24th to educate people about tuberculosis.



Key Points:

- This day is celebrated to commemorate the anniversary of Dr. Robert Koch's discovery of the TB bacterium in 1882.
- The theme for 2026 is "Yes! We can end TB, Led by countries, Powered by people" which focuses on both hope and action.

Tuberculosis

- Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease that primarily affects the lungs and is caused by a bacterium called Mycobacterium tuberculosis.
- It spreads through the air when infected individuals cough, sneeze, or spit.

Economic Developments

Biogas

Why in News?

- Given the severe shortage of cooking gas, biogas is emerging as a viable alternative.



Key Points:

- Biogas is produced when organic matter is broken down by bacteria in an oxygen-free environment. This process is known as anaerobic digestion.

About Biogas

- Composition:** Methane (CH_4) 55–60%, Carbon Dioxide (CO_2) 35–40%, and trace amounts of ammonia, hydrogen sulfide (H_2S), and moisture.

Key Technologies Involved in Production:

- Biodigesters:** In this technology, organic matter dissolved in water is broken down by natural microorganisms within airtight systems (such as containers or tanks).

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- **Landfill Gas Recovery Systems:** This involves the decomposition of municipal solid waste at landfill sites under anaerobic conditions.
- **Wastewater Treatment Plants:** These plants can recover organic matter, solids, and nutrients from sewage sludge, which can then be utilized as inputs for biogas production.

Key Initiatives to Promote Biogas Usage in India

- **Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan (GOBARdhan) Scheme:** Launched in 2018 under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) [Rural], its objective is to convert organic waste into biogas.
- **National Bio-Energy Programme (NBP):** This encompasses various sub-schemes related to biogas, such as:
 - **Waste-to-Energy Programme:** The generation of energy—in forms such as biogas, Bio-CNG, etc.—from urban, industrial, and agricultural waste, as well as municipal solid waste.
 - This involves processes such as incineration, gasification, or thermal decomposition.
 - **Biogas Programme (2021-22 to 2025-26):** Its objective is the establishment of biogas plants for clean cooking fuel, lighting, etc.

Artificial Intelligence for Agricultural Innovation (AI4AI)

Why in News?

- The World Economic Forum's (WEF) AI4AI initiative is driving transformation within the agricultural sector



Key Points:

AI4AI

- **Launch:** 2021
- **Objective:** It brings together public and private partners to implement impactful agri-tech solutions at scale. Its aim is to accelerate the transformation of global food systems.
- **Key Focus Areas:** These include inclusivity, sustainability, and efficiency.
- From 2021 to 2024, it has been utilized by four Indian states: Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana, and Madhya Pradesh.

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Initiatives to Boost the Orange Economy

Why in News?

- Three initiatives have been launched with the objective of boosting India's Orange Economy. These include the National AI Skilling Initiative, MyWAVES, and the rollout of an Advanced Electronic Program Guide (EPG) integrated with in-built satellite tuners in television sets.



Key Points:

- The Orange Economy is also referred to as the Creative Economy. It refers to sectors driven by ideas, technology, culture, and intellectual property, rather than by traditional manufacturing.

National AI Skilling Initiative:

- Initiator:** This initiative has been launched by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in partnership with Google and YouTube.
- Objective:** Its goal is to train 15,000 participants across the creative and media sectors.
- Implementation:** It is being implemented through the Indian Institute of Creative Technologies (IICT).

MyWAVES:

- This is a structured platform for user-generated content. It enables citizens to create, upload, and share content on Prasar Bharati's WAVES OTT platform.

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Schemes and Policies

GARBH-INi

Why in News?

- The Union Minister of Science and Technology stated that, under the GARBH-INi initiative, this study involving 12,000 women is being conducted with the objective of developing indigenous, AI-based solutions to address the issue of preterm birth.



Key Points:

GARBH-INi

- This is a flagship program supported by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT).
- **Objective:** To reduce adverse pregnancy outcomes.
- This initiative has established a national biorepository and the 'GARBH-INI-DRISHTI' data-sharing platform.

Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) Scheme

Why in News?

- The Government of India has decided to restore the rates and value caps under the RoDTEP scheme for all eligible export products.



Key Points:

RoDTEP Scheme

- It was launched in 2021, by amending the Foreign Trade Policy 2015-20.
- This scheme has replaced the 'Merchandise Exports from India Scheme' (MEIS). This change was implemented after the WTO declared MEIS to be inconsistent with international trade practices.
- **Objective:** It provides a refund of taxes and duties incurred during the manufacturing and distribution of exported goods. It applies to those levies that are not reimbursed under any other mechanism.
- It is administered by the Department of Revenue under the Union Ministry of Finance.

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The Economic Impact of the Middle East Conflict



Why in News?

- The Middle East conflict poses a structural risk to the global economy while simultaneously reshaping key aspects of global commodity markets, industrial supply chains, financial conditions, and geopolitical equations.



Key Points:

Key Impacts of the Conflict

- **Shipping Routes:** The supply of commodities passing through the Strait of Hormuz is being disrupted. This is a narrow maritime passage situated between Iran and Oman. It serves as a critical choke point for the movement of commodities.

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- **Industrial Supply Chains:** For instance, helium is vital for semiconductor manufacturing, medical imaging, and various other high-technology applications. Production in Qatar has been adversely affected due to the conflict. Notably, Qatar accounts for approximately one-third of global helium exports.
- **Global Food System:** The Gulf region serves as a major hub for the supply of urea, ammonia, sulfur, and other fertilizers.
- India is heavily dependent on the import of LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas), which is utilized in fertilizer production.
- **Uneven Impact Across Geographic Regions:** Asian economies are bearing the brunt of this conflict, as more than 80% of the oil and LNG shipped through the Strait of Hormuz in 2024 was destined for Asian markets.
- **Impact on Economic Policies:** The risk of "stagflation"—that is, a recession accompanied by inflation—is on the rise. High or rising oil prices fuel inflation while simultaneously slowing down the pace of economic growth.
- The ongoing Middle East conflict has underscored the fact that the Gulf region constitutes a strategic arena where economic, political, and social interests are deeply intertwined. Addressing such crises necessitates a combination of diversified partnerships and agile diplomacy.

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Conflict Zones in the Headlines



Why in News?

- The IAEA has called for maximum restraint following reports of an Iranian missile attack near Israel's Dimona nuclear research center.



Key Points:

- Dimona is the city in the Negev Desert that hosts Israel's nuclear research center.

Other Regions:

- **Natanz Nuclear Enrichment Center:** This is an Iranian facility.
- **South Pars Gas Field:** This forms part of the world's largest shared natural gas field, located between Iran and Qatar.
- **Litani River:** Israel destroyed a crossing built over this river in southern Lebanon, which was being utilized by Hezbollah.
- **City of Tyre:** Located in southern Lebanon, this is a coastal city. It is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- **Ras Laffan Industrial City:** Recently, this major gas hub in Qatar came under attack.

Globe Network

Why in News?

- India hosted the 12th Steering Committee meeting of the 'Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities' (Globe Network).



Key Points:

Globe Network

- Origin:** It was established in 2021. It is based on the 'Riyadh Initiative,' which was launched during Saudi Arabia's G20 Presidency (2020).
- Introduction:** It is a global platform for specialized anti-corruption law enforcement agencies.
- Objective:** Its aim is to foster international cooperation worldwide to detect and investigate corruption cases. Additionally, it seeks to enhance cooperation for the prosecution of such cases.
- Membership:** It is open to the anti-corruption agencies of all United Nations member states. Furthermore, countries that are parties to the 'United Nations Convention against Corruption' (UNCAC) may also become members.
- India's 'Central Bureau of Investigation' (CBI) and 'Enforcement Directorate' (ED) are members of this network.

Pax Silica and the New Era of Digital Colonialism

Why in News?

- Concern has been raised in the Rajya Sabha that India's participation in Pax Silica could lead to the emergence of digital colonialism.



Key Points:

Pax Silica

- Pax Silica is a U.S.-led strategic initiative aimed at building a secure, resilient, and innovation-driven silicon supply chain rooted in critical minerals.
- The first Pax Silica Summit was held in December 2025, and signatory nations include Australia, Israel, Japan, South Korea, Singapore, the UK, the Netherlands, and the UAE.
- India joined this initiative during the AI Impact Summit held in New Delhi in February 2026.

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What is Digital Colonialism?

- Digital colonialism refers to a system in which developed nations or corporations exert control over the digital infrastructure, data, and technical standards of other countries.
- Developing nations become dependent on foreign platforms, software, and data ecosystems.
- It is analogous to classical colonialism, but control is exercised through data, algorithms, and digital networks rather than through territorial occupation.

Pax Silica as a Potential Driver of Digital Colonialism

- Dominance in technology standard-setting,
- Control over data ecosystems,
- Technological dependency,
- Erosion of strategic autonomy.



INDEXES AND REPORTS



State of the Global Climate 2025 Report



Why in News?

- According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Earth's energy imbalance has reached its highest level in 65 years.



Key Points:

- This finding is part of the State of the Global Climate 2025 report, released by the WMO on the occasion of World Meteorological Day.
- World Meteorological Day is observed on March 23. This year, the theme for the day was "Observing Today, Protecting Tomorrow."
- For the first time, Earth's energy imbalance has been included among the key climate indicators in this report.



Earth's Energy Imbalance (EEI)

- It is the difference between the amount of energy Earth receives from the Sun and the amount of energy Earth radiates back into space.
- **"Positive" EEI:** Earth is gaining energy and warming up.
- **"Negative" EEI:** Earth is losing energy and cooling down.
- EEI measures the rate of heat accumulation in the climate system due to anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and presents a comprehensive picture of global warming.

Causes for the increase in Earth's energy imbalance:

- Increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases,
- Reduction in aerosol emissions,
- Increase in trace gases and water vapor (which reduces the emission of long-wave radiation),
- Reduced reflection by clouds and sea ice.

Other Key Highlights of the Report

- The year 2025 was the second or third warmest year on record, standing approximately 1.43°C above the 1850–1900 average.
- The 11 years between 2015 and 2025 have been the warmest years on record.
- In 2024, atmospheric CO₂ concentrations were recorded at their highest levels in the last 2 million years.
- Ocean heat content reached a new record level in 2025.