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Rajasthan's Performance on the 'e-NAM Platform'

Why in News?

- According to data available up to April 2026, over the past 10 years, Rajasthan has ranked second nationwide in terms of total arrivals (the inflow of agricultural produce onto the platform) and first in terms of e-trade on the 'e-NAM platform'. (Source – DIPR & GoR, X)

Key Points:

- Currently, 173 mandis (agricultural markets) across Rajasthan are integrated with the e-NAM platform; of these, 134 e-NAM mandis are utilizing AI/ML-based machines for the quality assessment of agricultural produce. Through e-NAM, 138 commodities are being traded within Rajasthan.
- Additionally, 546 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) are registered on the e-NAM platform in Rajasthan.
- **Rajasthan in e-Payments:** The e-NAM platform in Rajasthan promotes digital payment systems, thereby facilitating the financial inclusion of farmers. In terms of e-payments, Rajasthan has secured the fourth position nationwide.
- It is noteworthy that, to boost the e-NAM system in Rajasthan, the 'e-Payment Incentive Scheme' has been subsumed under the 'Krishak Upahar Yojana'.



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Other Important Points:

National Agriculture Market (e-NAM):

- **Launch:** e-NAM is a pan-India electronic trading portal launched on April 14, 2016.
- **Implementation:** By the Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- **Functionality:** It offers AI-based quality testing, e-bidding, and online payment facilities via an online portal or mobile application.
- By integrating Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMCs) across the country onto a single platform, it facilitates the online trading of agricultural commodities in a transparent manner, enabling better price discovery and realizing the vision of "One Nation, One Market."
- **e-NAM 2.0:** Implemented by the Central Government effective February 12, 2026.
- The objective of this new platform is to promote inter-state agricultural trade through features such as an automated bidding system, demand-supply data, logistics, and fintech support.

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Bikaji Foods Founder Shiv Ratan Agarwal Passes Away

Why in News?

- Shiv Ratan Agarwal, the Founder, Chairman, and Managing Director of Bikaji Foods International Limited, passed away in Chennai on April 23, 2026.



Key Points:

- Bikaji is one of India's leading Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) companies, primarily manufacturing Bikaneri Bhujia, Namkeen, Papad, and traditional sweets.
- Year 1986:** Shiv Ratan Agarwal launched the venture in Bikaner under the name 'Shivdeep Foods Products'.
- Year 1993:** 'Shivdeep Foods Products' was renamed 'Bikaji'.
- Year 1994:** Bikaji commenced its international operations by executing its first export shipment to the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

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- **Year 2010:** Bikaji's 'Bikaneri Bhujia' was granted a Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- **Year 2014:** The company raised funds through private equity for the first time.
- **Year 2019:** Amitabh Bachchan was appointed as the Brand Ambassador for Bikaji.
- **Year 2022:** Bikaji launched its IPO, and the company was listed on the stock market.

Awards:

- **Year 2008:** Rajasthan State Award for Export Excellence.
- **Year 2009:** Government of Rajasthan State Award for Export Excellence.

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Rawatbhata-Raj Atomic Energy Limited (RRAEL)

Why in News?

- Recently, the Adani Group formed a new subsidiary named 'Rawatbhata-Raj Atomic Energy Limited' (RRAEL).



Key Points:

- RRAEL is a step-down subsidiary of 'Adani Power Limited'. It is a wholly-owned subsidiary of 'Adani Atomic Energy Limited' (AAEL).
- The primary objective of this company is the generation, transmission, and distribution of electricity from nuclear sources within India.
- The establishment of this company by the Adani Group follows the enactment of the SHANTI Bill (2025) by the Government of India.

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Other Important Points:

- **SHANTI Bill:** Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Bill, 2025.
- This bill opens up the nuclear sector to private and foreign investment. Its goal is to increase nuclear capacity from the current 8.8 GW to 100 GW by the year 2047.
- **Objective:** To encourage private participation in the construction, operation, and generation of nuclear energy by replacing the Atomic Energy Act, 1962, and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010.

Facts for Prelims:

Rawatbhata Atomic Power Project (RAPP)

- Located at Rawatbhata in Chittorgarh, the Rajasthan Atomic Power Project (RAPP) is the state's only nuclear power plant; it currently operates 7 Pressurized Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR) units with a total installed capacity of 1780 MW.
- **Inception:** In December 1973 (Collaboration: Canada).
- **Operation:** Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL).

Total Capacity of PM-KUSUM Scheme Plants in Rajasthan: 4000 MW

Why in News?

- As of April 2026, the total installed capacity of solar power plants in Rajasthan under the PM-KUSUM scheme has reached 4,000 Megawatts (MW). (Source – DIPR & GoR, X)

The infographic features a central portrait of a man in a blue shirt and patterned shawl. To his left, the text in Hindi reads '4 हजार मेगावाट के स्तर पर पहुंची पीएम-कुसुम परियोजनाएँ' (4,000 MW level reached by PM-KUSUM projects). Above the text is a sun icon with a lightning bolt, and below it is a solar panel icon. To the right of the portrait is the Rajasthan State Emblem and the text 'सत्यमेव जयते राजस्थान सरकार' (Truth alone triumphs, Rajasthan Government). At the bottom, there are two photographs: one showing a large array of solar panels in a field, and another showing rows of solar panels with green plants growing between them.

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Key Points:

- So far, 1,808 solar power plants have been installed in the state under this scheme.
- Rajasthan ranks first in the country under Component-A of the PM-KUSUM scheme, while it ranks third under Component-C.

PM-KUSUM:

- **Launched In:** March 2019
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.
- **Objective:** To ensure energy security for farmers and to fulfill India's commitment to increase the share of installed electric power capacity from non-fossil-fuel-based sources to 40 percent by the year 2030.

Three Components of the Scheme:

Component-A:

- Installation of 10,000 MW of solar capacity through the establishment of individual plants ranging in capacity from 500 Kilowatts (kW) to 2 Megawatts (MW).
- Installation of solar power plants within a 5-kilometer radius of notified substations to avoid high transmission line costs and minimize losses.
- The electricity generated is procured by the local DISCOM (Distribution Company) at a pre-determined tariff fixed by the respective State Electricity Regulatory Commission (SERC).
- **Note:** The implementation of Component-A in Rajasthan was initially being carried out by the Rajasthan Renewable Energy Corporation Limited (RRECL); however, on July 23, 2024—pursuant to the directives of the Energy Department, Government of Rajasthan—this responsibility was transferred to the Rajasthan DISCOMs.

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Component-B:

- Installation of 20 lakh (2 million) standalone solar-powered agricultural pumps.
- Under this component, provisions have been made for the installation of standalone solar-powered agricultural pumps ranging from 3 to 10 horsepower (HP), with the maximum subsidy applicable to pumps up to 7.5 HP.
- Farmers who do not possess an agricultural electricity connection for irrigation purposes and who currently rely on diesel-based pump sets are eligible to install a solar pump system under this scheme.
- Under this scheme, the farmer's contribution stands at 40 percent. The remaining 60 percent is contributed equally—30 percent each—by the Government of India and the Government of Rajasthan.
- Out of this 40 percent share, farmers may avail a bank loan of up to 30 percent, while the remaining 10 percent must be borne by the farmers themselves.
- Component-B of the scheme is being implemented through the Department of Horticulture.

Component-C (Feeder-Level Solarization)

- On December 4, 2020, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy issued guidelines for the implementation of Feeder-Level Solarization under Component-C of the PM-KUSUM scheme. These guidelines provide for the establishment of grid-connected solar power plants—either through the CAPEX mode or the RESCO mode—with a capacity sufficient to meet the annual electricity demand of one or more dedicated agricultural feeders.
- The Ministry has approved a target for the solarization of 400,000 pump sets.

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NEWS IN SHORTS

S. No.	News
1.	<p>Demise of Navneet Lal Ninama (Banswara)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Recently, Navneet Lal Ninama—a senior BJP leader and a four-time MLA from the Ghatol Assembly constituency in Banswara—passed away.He was one of the founding members of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh and the BJP.He represented the Ghatol Assembly constituency four times (in 1977, 1980, 1990, and 2003).
2.	<p>Letter of Intent between RSLDC and UNICEF India regarding Girls' Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Rajasthan Skill and Livelihoods Development Corporation (RSLDC) and UNICEF India recently signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) regarding women's empowerment in Rajasthan.Objective: To promote the digital empowerment of girls and foster skill development in creative sectors.Under this project, the goal is to provide short-term digital skills training to approximately 2,000 young women aged 18 to 29, thereby linking them to employment opportunities.This program will be implemented in a phased manner until March 2027, and payments will be disbursed based on a results-based model, following successful job placements.

3. **Between RSLDC and the Fashion Design Council of Rajasthan (FDCR)**

- A non-financial Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was recently signed between the Rajasthan Skill and Livelihoods Development Corporation (RSLDC) and the Fashion Design Council of Rajasthan (FDCR).
- **Objective of the Agreement:** To encourage skill development, employment, and entrepreneurship in the fields of fashion, textiles, design, film, media, and other creative sectors.
- Under this initiative, opportunities for training, masterclasses, industry-oriented courses, internships, and startups will be provided.

4. **The State's First Butterfly Park: Udaipur**

- Rajasthan's first butterfly park has been established at the Mewar Biodiversity Park in Amberi, Udaipur.
- Spanning an area of approximately two hectares, this park is home to colorful butterflies belonging to 80 different species.
- This park is home to the 'Zebra Skipper' butterfly, a species found nowhere else in India.

5. **'Maine Kabhi Chidiya Nahi Dekhi': Selected for DIFF - 2026**

- Jaipur-based resident Usha Dashora's film, "Maine Kabhi Chidiya Nahi Dekhi," has been selected for the Delhi International Film Festival (DIFF) - 2026.
- Produced in Hindi and Rajasthani, this 70-minute film centers on themes of child psychology and environmental awareness, vividly portraying the curiosity and sensitivity that children harbor toward birds, nature, and the Earth.
- **DIFF Event Dates:** May 4 to May 8, 2026; organized by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (Ministry of Culture) at the Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi.

6.

Rajasthan's First Integrated Soldiers' Welfare Complex: Didwana-Kuchaman

- Rajasthan's first Integrated Soldiers' Welfare Complex has been established in Didwana-Kuchaman.
- The primary objective of this complex is to provide ex-servicemen, war widows (Veeranganas), and their dependents with all essential facilities related to soldiers' welfare under a single roof.

7.

The World's Smallest Gold Table Tennis Set

- Recently, Dr. Iqbal Sakka—a gold artisan from Udaipur—created the world's smallest gold table tennis set.
- The dimensions of this table measure a mere 4×3 millimeters, while the ball is just half a millimeter in size.
- This achievement has been officially recorded in the 'Hope International World Record Book.'



NATIONAL

Information Warfare: A Symbol of the Changing Nature of War in the Modern Era

Why in News?

- Information Warfare is rapidly emerging as the fourth dimension of warfare, alongside air, land, and sea.



Key Points:

- Examples of this can be observed ranging from India's 'Operation Sindoor' to the ongoing conflict between the US and Iran.

Information Warfare

- Definition:** Information warfare is a process that involves the collection, dissemination, modification, disruption, interference, corruption, and destruction of information in order to gain an advantage over an adversary.

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- It employs various strategies and techniques to manipulate and influence public opinion, political discourse, and social norms through digital and social media platforms.

Strategies Employed:

- **Disinformation:** Misleading the public by creating edited images and videos with the aid of AI.
- **Spreading Fake News:** Presenting false stories as genuine news reports.
- **Misuse of Social Media Algorithms:** Utilizing algorithms to selectively amplify certain content and to control its reach and visibility.

Key Characteristics:

- Widespread impact at a low cost;
- Influencing the perception of victory or defeat in a conflict;
- Exerting a psychological impact on the public;
- Traditional intelligence mechanisms often struggle to detect the aforementioned threats.

Information Warfare and India

- **India's Shortcomings:** India's approach to information warfare is largely reactive. It focuses primarily on prevention, defense, and fact-checking, rather than proactively formulating strategies and taking preemptive measures.

Key Initiatives Undertaken in India to Counter Information Warfare

- **Digital Literacy Programs:** Such as the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (Prime Minister's Rural Digital Literacy Campaign) and the National Digital Literacy Mission.
- **Military Preparedness:** Such as the creation of the post of 'Director General of Information Warfare' within the Indian Army.
- **Other Initiatives:** The establishment of the PIB Fact-Check Unit and WhatsApp chatbot, as well as the formation of government social media cells and Rapid Response Teams.

Economic Developments

Flex Fuel Vehicles (FFVs)

Why in News?

- India is considering the rapid adoption of Flex Fuel Vehicles to reduce its dependence on imported crude oil.



Key Points:

Flex Fuel Vehicles (FFVs):

- FFVs are modified vehicles. Currently, they are capable of running entirely on gasoline alone, or on any blend of gasoline and ethanol (up to 83%, or E83).
- Modern FFVs are now being designed to operate even on higher ethanol blends, such as E100 (pure ethanol).
- Like standard petrol vehicles, they feature a conventional internal combustion engine. However, they are equipped with an ethanol-compatible fuel system and a distinct powertrain calibration, enabling them to run smoothly on ethanol blends in addition to petrol.
- They demonstrate superior acceleration performance when operating on higher ethanol blends.

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Schemes and Policies

Prime Minister's Internship Scheme (PMIS)

Why in News?

- The Union Ministry of Corporate Affairs has expanded the eligibility criteria for the Prime Minister's Internship Scheme. It now includes final-year undergraduate and postgraduate students as well.



Key Points:

Prime Minister's Internship Scheme:

- **Launch:** The pilot phase of this scheme was initiated in October 2024, following an announcement made in the Union Budget 2024-25.
- **Objective:** To provide the youth across the country with structured and paid internship opportunities in top companies, thereby facilitating practical experience and skill development.
- Interns receive financial assistance of a minimum of ₹9,000 per month.
- **Internship Duration:** 6 or 9 months, depending on the nature of the internship.
- **Beneficiaries:** Youth aged between 18 and 25 years who are not currently in full-time employment.

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Atal Pension Yojana

Why in News?

- The Atal Pension Yojana achieved a historic milestone on April 21, 2026, by surpassing the figure of 90 million (9 crore) subscriber enrollments.

Key Points:

Atal Pension Yojana

- This is a flagship social security scheme of the Government of India, administered by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA).
- Launched in 2015, this scheme is a voluntary, contributory pension scheme primarily focused on the poor, the underprivileged, and workers in the unorganized sector.
- It is open to all Indian citizens aged between 18 and 40 years, with the exception of those who are, or have previously been, income tax payers.
- Under this scheme, subscribers are guaranteed a monthly pension ranging from ₹1,000 to ₹5,000 upon attaining the age of 60 years.



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Technology Development and Investment Promotion (TDIP) Scheme

Why in News?

- The Government of India has issued revised guidelines for the Technology Development and Investment Promotion Scheme. The revised scheme has been launched with a total outlay of ₹203 crore for the period 2026–31.

Key Points:

- **Objective:** The objective of this scheme is to enhance India's participation and influence in global telecommunication standard-setting processes.
- It aims to promote indigenous research, development, and innovation in next-generation telecommunication technologies, such as 5G Advanced and 6G.
- This scheme provides financial assistance to Indian stakeholders to participate in global telecommunication bodies such as the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP), and oneM2M.
- **Expanded Scope for Ecosystem Participation:** The revised guidelines have significantly expanded the scope of the scheme to include startups, MSMEs, academic institutions, research organizations, telecom service providers, and industry players.
- **Implementing Agencies:** Telecommunications Standards Development Society, India (TSDSI); Telecom Centres of Excellence (TCoE), India; and Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL).



INTERNATIONAL



India-Sri Lanka Diving Exercise (DIVEX 2026)



Key Points:

- **INS Nireekshak has arrived in Colombo to participate in the fourth edition of India-Sri Lanka DIVEX 2026.**
- **DIVEX is a bilateral naval exercise focused on specialized underwater operations and submarine rescue training.**
- **Its objective is to enhance interoperability, operational coordination, and the exchange of best practices between India and Sri Lanka.**
- **This exercise signifies a deepening of maritime cooperation and supports regional stability in the Indian Ocean Region, in alignment with India's 'Vision for the Ocean'.**

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INDEXES AND REPORTS



Report Titled "Extreme Heat and Agriculture" Released



Why in News?

- The FAO and WMO have released a report titled "Extreme Heat and Agriculture," warning that extreme heat is pushing global and Indian agri-food systems toward a severe crisis.



Key Points:

Key Highlights of the Report Regarding Indian Agriculture

- **Threat to Food Security:** Heatwaves are emerging as a major threat to rice and wheat production in India; the risk is particularly high in the Ganges and Indus river basin regions.
- Furthermore, as heatwaves intensify, crises such as increased pest infestations, disease outbreaks, and rainfall deficits are likely to arise. This could lead to a rapid decline in the yields of fruits, vegetables, dairy products, and poultry.
- **Risks to Agricultural Workers:** Under high-emission scenarios, by the end of the 21st century, working capacity could decline by approximately 40% due to extreme temperature conditions.

Key Recommendations and Adaptation Strategies

Farm-Level Improvements and Innovations:

- Developing heat-tolerant crops and livestock breeds;
- Adjusting sowing schedules;
- Adopting management techniques such as improved irrigation and shading.
- **Early Warning Systems:** Systems such as seasonal forecasts help farmers anticipate risks in advance and implement protective measures.

- **Access to Financial Services:** Facilities such as cash transfers, crop insurance, and social safety nets covering disasters are crucial for distressed farmers, enabling them to mitigate losses caused by extreme heat and avoid falling into a vicious cycle of poverty.
- **Measures to Combat Climate Change:** To ensure global food security, it is necessary to transition away from high-emission economic systems.

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

- **Establishment:** Founded in 1945, the FAO is a specialized agency of the United Nations. The organization leads international efforts to combat hunger.
- **Headquarters:** Rome, Italy.
- **Members:** 194 members (193 countries and the European Union). India is a founding member.
- **Key Reports Published:** The State of the World's Forests, The State of Food and Agriculture.

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

- **Establishment:** Established in 1950, the WMO is a specialized agency of the United Nations. This organization promotes international cooperation in the fields of meteorology, operational hydrology, and related geophysical sciences.
- The WMO evolved from the 'International Meteorological Organization' (IMO), which was established in 1873.
- **Secretariat:** Geneva.
- **Members:** 193 (including India)—comprising 187 Member States and 6 Territories.
- **Key Initiatives:** Co-founded the 'Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)' in 1988, in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).