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'Vande Ganga' Jal Sanrakshan - Jan Abhiyan, 2026

Why in News?

- Starting on May 25, 2026 (Ganga Dashami), the 'Vande Ganga' Jal Sanrakshan - Jan Abhiyan' will be launched across the state with the objective of enhancing public participation in groundwater management and water harvesting.



Key Points:

- Launch Venue:** Jaipur Exhibition and Convention Center (JECC), Sitapura.
- Campaign Duration:** May 25 to June 05, 2026 (from Ganga Dashami to World Environment Day).
- During the campaign's inaugural ceremony, individuals who have performed outstanding work in the field of water conservation will be honored with the 'Jal Gaurav Samman'.

Key Department-wise Activities under the Campaign:

Department	Activities
Water Resources Department	Worship/ceremonies at rivers, large and medium dams, lakes, and canals; programs under the Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain campaign; water conservation public participation programs, etc.

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Public Health Engineering Department	Organization of the 'Water Testing Campaign'
Industries & Commerce Department	Providing information to industrial institutions, private and government offices regarding Green Office Initiative, Energy Audit, and Green Budget.
Autonomous Governance Department	Lighting lamps at water sources; cleaning statues of great personalities; disposal of plastic waste at designated sites; issuance of new work orders under the AMRUT 2.0 Scheme.
Agriculture & Horticulture Department	Approvals to be issued for sprinklers, drip irrigation systems, farm ponds, and pipelines. Workshops and exhibitions on natural, organic, and micro-irrigation methods.
Forest & Environment Department	Organization of "Run for Environment" on 4 June. Preparations for "Hariyalo Rajasthan" campaign.

Other Important Points:

The 2025 'Vande Ganga' Jal Sanrakshan – Jan Abhiyan:

- **Duration:** June 5 to June 20, 2025.
- **Campaign Launch:** On the occasion of World Environment Day and Ganga Dussehra (June 05), from the Ramgarh Dam in Jaipur.
- **Conclusion:** Gadisar Lake, Jaisalmer.

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Rajasthan Ranks 5th in the 'PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana'


Why in News?

- As of May 14, 2026, 200,000 rooftop solar power plants have been installed in Rajasthan under the 'PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana' (PM Surya Ghar Free Electricity Scheme).

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Key Points:

- **The 200,000th Rooftop Plant:** Tara Sharma, a resident of Jaipur, became the consumer to have the 200,000th rooftop solar plant installed under this scheme.
- Notably, plants with a total capacity of 771 Megawatts (MW) have been installed in the state under this scheme so far.

Top 5 Districts in Rajasthan under the Scheme:

Rank	District	Number of Installed Plants
1 st	Jaipur	41,296
2 nd	Sri Ganganagar	19,135
3 rd	Sikar	12,104
4 th	Hanumangarh	11,530
5 th	Jhunjhunu	10,185

Top 5 States in the Country under the Scheme:

Rank	State	Number of Installed Plants (in Lakhs)
1 st	Gujarat	6.61
2 nd	Maharashtra	5.69
3 rd	Uttar Pradesh	5.25
4 th	Keralam	2.39
5 th	Rajasthan	2.04

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Facts for Prelims:

PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana (Free Electricity Scheme).

- **Launch:** On February 13, 2024, by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- **Concerned Ministry:** Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.
- **Objective:** To provide free electricity to households by facilitating the installation of rooftop solar panels.
- **Target:** To provide solar powered energy-supply to 10 million (one crore) households by March 2027.
- The State Government has released the 'Integrated Clean Energy Policy-2024' to promote renewable energy; this policy includes provisions for Net Metering, Gross Metering, as well as Virtual Net Metering and Group Net Metering to boost rooftop solar adoption.

Subsidies Provided under the Scheme:

Average Monthly Electricity Consumption (Units)	Recommended Solar Plant Capacity	Subsidy Assistance
0-150	1-2 kW	₹30,000 to ₹60,000
150-300	2-3 kW	₹60,000 to ₹78,000
More than 300	Above 3 kW	₹78,000

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NEWS IN SHORTS

S. No.	News
1.	<p>Rajasthan's Third Fecal Sludge Treatment Plant (FSTP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Rajasthan's third Fecal Sludge Treatment Plant (FSTP) will be established at Mathania in Jodhpur.■ A Fecal Sludge Treatment Plant (FSTP) is an affordable and sustainable system designed to scientifically treat fecal matter discharged from septic tanks.■ This technology ensures environmental protection by converting solid waste into compost and liquid waste into treated water.■ This decentralized system is ideal for rural and semi-urban areas that lack sewer line infrastructure.
2.	<p>Mount Abu Summer Festival – 2026</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Event: To be held on May 9 and 10, 2026, at Rajasthan's only hill station, 'Mount Abu'.■ Organizers: Rajasthan Tourism Department and the District Administration of Sirohi.■ Key Attractions: A live performance by renowned Bollywood playback singer Tulsi Kumar and Sufi music by the band 'Dune of Rajasthan'.
3.	<p>First Police Station of the Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Recently, the first police station of the Rajasthan Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) has been opened in Jaipur.■ This specialized police station was inaugurated by Dinesh M.N., the ADG of the Anti-Narcotics Task Force.■ Operating at the state level, this Jaipur-based station monitors and directs ANTF operations across the entire state of Rajasthan.■ Currently, 18 special outposts and one police station are active across the state to curb drug trafficking.

4.

'Centre of Excellence' for Robotic Surgery

- The Ajmer-based Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital (JLNH) is set to be developed as a 'Centre of Excellence (CoE)' for robotic surgery.
- Financial assistance from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF) will be provided to support the hospital's developmental works and to strengthen its medical services.
- The Rajasthan Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF) provides financial assistance to the state's poor and needy citizens for the treatment of serious illnesses, accident relief, and aid during natural disasters.
- This fund primarily extends assistance to non-BPL families those with an annual income of less than ₹2 lakh for the treatment of cancer, heart ailments, and kidney diseases.

5.

Unveiling of the Statue of Rao Dudaji

- Recently, the statue of Rao Dudaji was unveiled by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in Merta, Nagaur.
- Rao Dudaji (1440–1515 AD) was the fourth son of Rao Jodha, the founder of Jodhpur and the founding ruler of the Mertiya Rathore dynasty.
- He was the grandfather of Saint Mirabai and laid the foundation of a separate Rathore kingdom by liberating the Merta region.

6.

Unveiling of the Statue of Former Vice President Late Bhairon Singh Shekhawat

- Recently, a statue of India's former Vice President and Rajasthan's former Chief Minister, the late Bhairon Singh Shekhawat (affectionately known as 'Babosa'), was unveiled by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.
- **Unveiling Venue:** Jodhpur.

7.

Inauguration of 'Career Counseling Van' from Bikaner

- Recently, Union Minister of Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal flagged off a Career Counseling Van in Bikaner; the initiative is operated by the Nirvikalp Foundation in collaboration with Bikaji.
- This Van has been dedicated to Bikaji's founder, Shivratan Agarwal (known as 'Fanna Babu').



Economic Developments



100 GW Nuclear Power Capacity



Why in News?

- In a report, TERI has outlined a roadmap for India to achieve a target of 100 GW of nuclear power capacity by 2047.



Key Points:

- Currently, 25 nuclear reactors are operational across seven sites in the country. Their total installed nuclear power capacity stands at 8.8 Gigawatts (GW).
- **Capacity Expansion:** Large Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) should serve as the backbone for providing continuous and stable electricity supply (base-load power). Meanwhile, Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) will be utilized in sectors such as steel and cement where reducing carbon emissions is particularly challenging.

- Small Modular Reactors are scaled-down versions of large nuclear power plants. These reactors generate up to 300 megawatts of electricity per module. These reactors offer the following advantages:
 - i. **Modular Structure:** Since their components are manufactured in factories, they can be assembled rapidly, resulting in lower costs.
 - ii. **Flexibility in Capacity Expansion:** Their capacity can be expanded in a phased manner to keep pace with rising energy demand.
 - iii. **Enhanced Safety:** They feature passive safety systems, enabling automatic shutdown in emergency situations without human intervention.
- **Need for Large-Scale Investment Mobilization:** Expanding the installed nuclear power capacity will require an estimated capital expenditure of approximately ₹23–25 lakh crore.
- **Workforce Expansion:** The construction phase alone will require a workforce of 1.2–2 lakh personnel, necessitating extensive efforts in specialized skills training.

Challenges Facing India

- The current regulatory framework is outdated regarding the deployment of Small Modular Reactors and the participation of the private sector.
- The Atomic Energy Act (2025) lacks clarity regarding specific regulations for the operation of such reactors, project ownership structures, and financial models for private sector participation.
- There are issues regarding high capital costs (₹20–25 crore per megawatt), heavy reliance on imports for nuclear fuel, and nuclear waste management.
- There is a shortage of personnel with specialized skills. Apprehensions regarding the hazards of nuclear energy still persist in the public mind.

Scheme for Promotion of Lignite Gasification Projects

Why in News?

- The Union Cabinet has approved the 'Scheme for Promotion of Surface Coal/Lignite Gasification Projects'.



Key Points:

- This scheme will assist in achieving the target of gasifying 100 million tonnes (MT) of coal by the year 2030, under the National Coal Gasification Mission, 2021.
- Coal gasification is essentially a thermochemical process in which coal is converted into a versatile and combustible gaseous mixture known as Synthesis Gas (Syngas).
- Syngas is a mixture of Carbon Monoxide (CO) and Hydrogen (H₂). It is utilized in the manufacturing of products such as Urea, Methanol, Synthetic Natural Gas (SNG), and Ammonia.

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- **Status of Coal/Lignite Reserves in India:** Coal Reserves (401 billion tonnes); Lignite Reserves (47 billion tonnes).

Key Features of the Scheme

- **Objective:** To gasify approximately 75 million tonnes (MT) of coal and lignite by providing incentives to domestic industries.
- **Financial Incentive:** A maximum of 20% of the cost of Plant and Machinery, to be disbursed in four tranches linked to the achievement milestones of the project.
- **Policy Support:** To facilitate long-term investment, the government has extended the coal linkage tenure to 30 years under the 'Non-Regulated Sector Linkage Auction Framework.'

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Record Growth in India's Agricultural Exports

Why in News?

- Despite high tariff rates imposed by the United States, the value of India's agricultural exports surged past the \$50 billion mark in the financial year 2025-26.



Key Points:

Reasons for the Growth in India's Agricultural Exports:

- **Market Diversification:** For instance, the export of marine products witnessed a massive increase in shipments sent to countries such as China, Vietnam, Japan, and Belgium.
- **Global Market Dynamics:** Low crop yields in the world's largest coffee-producing nations (Brazil and Vietnam) created significant and lucrative opportunities for Indian exports.
- **Value Addition:** The share of processed food products within total agricultural exports has consistently risen. This share increased from approximately 15% in the financial year 2018 to about 20% in the financial year 2025.

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Key Government Initiatives to Boost Agricultural Exports:

- **Agricultural Export Policy (2018):** This policy is designed to double the agricultural exports, diversify export products, and promote indigenous, organic, and traditional produce.
- **Krishi Udan Scheme 2.0:** This scheme facilitates air transport to ensure the rapid delivery of perishable agricultural produce to markets, particularly for products originating from the Northeast and tribal regions.
- **'One District One Export Hub' Initiative:** To promote the export of local commodities, specific products with export potential are identified in each district under the 'One District One Product' (ODOP) framework.

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Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)

Why in News?

- The Central Government has imposed a ban on sugar exports until September 2026 in order to keep domestic prices under control.

Directorate General of Foreign Trade



Key Points:

- The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) has changed the export policy status from 'Restricted' to 'Prohibited'.

Directorate General of Foreign Trade

- **Concerned Agency:** An attached office under the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- **Function:** To formulate and implement India's Foreign Trade Policy.
- **Main Objective:** To promote and facilitate exports/imports while keeping the country's interests in mind.
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi, with 24 regional offices across India.

Increase in Import Duties on Gold and Silver in India

Why in News?

- The Government of India has raised the effective import duty on gold and silver from 9.2% to 18.4%.



Key Points:

- The Basic Customs Duty has been increased from 5% to 10%, while the Agriculture Infrastructure and Development Cess (AIDC) has risen from 1% to 5%.

Reasons Behind the Latest Decision

- This decision comes immediately after the Prime Minister urged citizens to temporarily reduce their gold purchases to help protect the Rupee and the country's foreign exchange reserves.
- The government has linked this move to concerns regarding:

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- o An increase in the Current Account Deficit (CAD).
- o Pressure on foreign exchange reserves.
- o Global uncertainty stemming from the crisis in West Asia.
- o Volatility in crude oil prices and shipping routes.
- Priority must be given to allocating foreign exchange for essential imports such as crude oil, fertilizers, defence equipment, and industrial goods.

Key Terms

- **Current Account Deficit (CAD):** The CAD represents the difference by which a country's total imports of goods, services, and transfers exceed its exports.
- **Agriculture Infrastructure and Development Cess (AIDC):** Introduced in the Union Budget 2021-22, this cess is levied at specified rates on certain commodities including agricultural produce and related items.
- Its primary objective is to mobilize funds for the development and improvement of agricultural infrastructure within India.
- This cess applies to products such as gold, silver, alcoholic beverages, crude edible oils, apples, coal, fertilizers, pulses, and cotton.
- **Import Duty:** This is a tax levied by a country's customs authorities on imports and certain exports.

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🎓 Indian Governance and State System 🎓

Majoritarianism Cannot Override Constitutionalism: Supreme Court

📣 Why in News?

- Recently, the Supreme Court observed that India is a constitutional democracy where majority rule prevails; however, it is the duty of the courts to scrutinize the decisions of the government or the majority based on the principles and values enshrined in the Constitution.

📌 Key Points:

- The aforementioned observation was made by a nine-judge Constitution Bench reviewing the scope of the "Right to Freedom of Religion."

Constitutionalism

- It refers to a system in which the powers of the government are limited by the Constitution.

Significance:

- **Protection of Rights:** It safeguards fundamental freedoms against state interference.
- **Preservation of the Rule of Law:** It ensures that every individual enjoys the protection of fair and stable laws for instance, the 'Right to Equality before the Law' under Article 14.
- **Protection of Democracy:** It guarantees free and fair elections and ensures that power remains vested in the people.
- **Ensuring Accountability:** It facilitates independent oversight through institutions such as the CAG to maintain transparency in the functioning of the government.

- **Separation of Powers:** Governmental powers are distributed among the Legislature, the Executive, and the Judiciary to prevent any single institution from becoming overly powerful.
- **Checking Majoritarianism:** It ensures that majority rule does not infringe upon the rights of minorities and vulnerable sections of society. Example: Articles 29 and 30 of the Constitution protect the rights of linguistic and religious minorities.

Challenges to Constitutionalism

- The rise of authoritarian tendencies, which undermine constitutional principles.
- Judicial overreach, which challenges the principle of the separation of powers.
- Governance-related issues (such as corruption), which can erode public trust in democratic institutions.

Key Judicial Decisions Related to Constitutionalism:

- **Kesavananda Bharati vs. State of Kerala (1973):** This case introduced the concept of the 'Basic Structure Doctrine'. The Court held that constitutional amendments cannot alter the fundamental principles of the Constitution.
- **Rameshwar Prasad v. Union of India (2006):** The Court held that constitutionalism is founded upon the Rule of Law and rejects absolutism.
- **I.R. Coelho v. State of Tamil Nadu (2007):** It was observed that, in order to safeguard the principles of constitutionalism, checks on governmental power are essential so that democratic principles are not undermined.



India's Shipbuilding Sector



Why in News?

- Recently, A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed to develop India's first mega greenfield shipyard in Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu, under the comprehensive India–Republic of Korea framework titled 'VOYAGES'.



Key Points:

'VOYAGES'

- 'VOYAGES' stands for: Shared Vision for Operation of Yard-Assisted Growth with Efficiency and Scale.

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- Signed in April 2026, this agreement promotes India–South Korea cooperation in shipbuilding, shipping, and maritime logistics through technology transfer, green shipbuilding, and the training of Indian professionals in South Korea.

Overview of India's Shipbuilding Sector

- **Global Standing:** India's global share in the shipbuilding sector is less than 1%, lagging significantly behind China (47%), South Korea (25%), and Japan (18%).
- **Aging Fleet:** The average age of Indian fleets is 21 years, thereby generating a demand for approximately 2,500 new vessels.
- **Market Growth:** The sector is projected to grow from US\$ 90 million (2022) to reach US\$ 8.12 billion by 2033.

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India-Sri Lanka Economic Cooperation

📣 Why in News?

- The India-Sri Lanka Business Forum, organized in Mumbai by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in partnership with the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, has identified six priority sectors.



📌 Key Points:

Key Areas of Cooperation

- **Ports:** India and Sri Lanka are exploring opportunities for cooperation in port infrastructure and maritime connectivity to strengthen trade and regional supply chains.
- **Transport and Logistics:** Improving shipping routes, rail connectivity, warehousing, and cold storage facilities to enhance logistics efficiency.
- **Pharmaceuticals:** Sri Lanka has expressed interest in importing affordable generic medicines from India under the existing Free Trade Agreement (FTA) framework.
- **Digital Payments:** Sri Lanka is exploring the potential for cross-border digital payment systems, such as UPI, with India.

- **Travel and Tourism:** Expanding tourism and travel connectivity through improved visa facilities and travel routes.
- **Review of the India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (FTA):** Both countries are considering updating the FTA to include raw materials related to pharmaceuticals, logistics equipment, and trade facilitation measures.

Challenges in Bilateral Economic Cooperation

- **Trade Imbalance:** Sri Lanka has concerns regarding its trade deficit with India.
- **Regulatory Barriers:** Delays in customs clearance and regulatory approvals impact trade efficiency.
- **Infrastructure Constraints:** Limited logistics and transport infrastructure can lead to increased trade costs.
- **Economic Instability:** Sri Lanka's recent economic crisis has impacted investor confidence.
- **Geopolitical Competition:** External powers are increasingly competing to gain influence in strategic sectors such as ports and infrastructure.

Sri Lanka's Significance for India

- **Strategic Location:** Sri Lanka is situated in close proximity to critical maritime lines of communication in the Indian Ocean, through which over 60% of India's energy supplies and significant trade pass.
- **Maritime Security:** This is of paramount importance under India's SAGAR initiative to ensure regional stability and counter China's naval presence.



INDEXES AND REPORTS



Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) 2025 Report



Why in News?

- The Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) 2025 report has been released. The 2025 report marks the seventh edition of LEADS.

LOGISTICS EASE ACROSS DIFFERENT STATES (LEADS) 2025



Key Points:

- LEADS is a flagship report that evaluates the performance of states and Union Territories in the logistics sector. It is released by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the Government of India.

The LEADS Report

- **Inception:** It was conceptualized in 2018, modeled after the World Bank's Logistics Performance Index (LPI).
- **New Framework:** LEADS 2025 now incorporates a four-tier performance framework. Previous reports utilized a three-tier performance criterion.
- **Evaluation Indicators:** Objective indicators such as regulatory assistance and logistics facilities have been assigned a weightage of approximately 59% in the assessment.

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- Additionally, perception-based indicators have also been included, such as logistics infrastructure, services, and sustainable logistics.

Current Status and Challenges of India's Logistics Sector

- **Logistics Costs:** According to data from the financial year 2023-2024, logistics costs in India stand at approximately 8% of the GDP.

Key Challenges:

- **Infrastructure Deficiencies:** Poor road conditions, congestion at ports, and a lack of universal rail connectivity.
- **Over-reliance on Road Transport:** In India, over 60% of freight movement takes place via roads. This leads to increased fuel consumption, traffic congestion, and higher transportation costs.
- **Unorganized Sector:** The logistics sector is dominated by small-scale operators, which results in operational inefficiencies.
- **Other Challenges:** Complex regulatory procedures and a slow pace in the adoption of cutting-edge technologies.

Key Initiatives to Strengthen the Logistics Sector

- **National Logistics Policy (NLP) 2022:** Its objective is to reduce logistics costs and bring them on par with those of other developed nations.
- **PM GatiShakti National Master Plan:** This is an integrated infrastructure master plan aimed at ensuring the seamless and rapid movement of people and goods.
- **Logistics Data Bank 2.0:** This initiative integrates with the APIs (Application Programming Interfaces) of the Unified Logistics Interface Platform (ULIP). It provides exporters and MSMEs with real-time information and tracking facilities for the transportation of goods via road, rail, sea, etc.
- **Other Initiatives:** Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) projects, Strengthening of Multimodal and Integrated Logistics Ecosystem (SMILE) program, Multi-Modal Logistics Parks (MMLPs), E-Way Bill system, granting infrastructure status to the logistics sector, Logistics Efficiency Enhancement Program, etc.