

# Daily Current Affairs

Date : 08 May 2026



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### Plantation Target under the 'Chief Minister's Mega Tree Plantation Campaign'



#### Why in News?

- Under the 'Haryalo Rajasthan' (Green Rajasthan) mission—an initiative aimed at enhancing the state's green cover—a target has been set to plant 100 million (10 crore) saplings across the entire state during the upcoming monsoon season (2026). (Source: DIPR)



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## Key Points:

- **Note:** In Rajasthan, the ‘Haryalo Rajasthan’ campaign, the ‘Chief Minister’s Mega Tree Plantation Campaign,’ and the ‘Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam’ (One Tree in Mother’s Name) campaign are being implemented jointly.
- Under the ‘Chief Minister’s Mega Tree Plantation Campaign’—part of ‘Haryalo Rajasthan’ (and the ‘Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam’ initiative)—the Government of Rajasthan had set a target in its 2025-26 budget to plant 100 million saplings and ensure their subsequent conservation. Under this mission, an overall target of planting 500 million (50 crore) saplings across the state has been established for the period spanning 2024 to 2028.
- This initiative draws inspiration from the Prime Minister’s ‘Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam’ campaign, serving as a multi-sectoral program designed to augment the state's green cover.
- To ensure the effective monitoring of the plantation program within the state, a three-tier task force mechanism has been established. Under this framework, task forces will operate at three distinct levels: a State-Level Task Force chaired by the Chief Secretary; a District-Level Task Force chaired by the District Collector; and a Sub-Divisional Level Task Force chaired by the Sub-Divisional Officer.

## Other Important Points:

- In the year 2024, under the ‘Chief Minister’s Mega Tree Plantation Campaign,’ 72.2 million (7.22 crore) saplings were planted against a set target of 70 million (7 crore). Similarly, during the 2025 monsoon season, an achievement surpassing the target was recorded, with over 117.4 million (11.74 crore) saplings planted against a target of 100 million (10 crore).

## Department-wise Statistics for the 'Haryalo Rajasthan' Campaign:

Rank	Department	Total Saplings Planted
1	Education Department	40,349,117
2	Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department (MGNREGA, WDSC, Rajeevika)	28,914,629
3	Forest Department	20,361,250
4	Pollution Control Board	5,673,319
5	Local Self Government Department	3,619,814

### Facts for Prelims:

#### 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' (A Tree in Mother's Name) Campaign

- **Launch:** By the Prime Minister on June 5, 2024, on the occasion of World Environment Day.
- Under this campaign, people are encouraged to plant a tree as a symbol of their love, reverence, and respect for their mothers, and to pledge to protect trees and Mother Earth.
- **Objective:** The objective of this campaign is to prevent land degradation and ensure the ecological restoration of degraded land.

## Development of 5 Districts as 'Modern Industrial Hubs' under the BHAVYA Scheme

### Why in News?

- The Government of Rajasthan has proposed to develop Modern Industrial Hubs (MIH) in 5 districts under the Central Government's BHAVYA scheme.

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# BHAVYA

Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojna

Cabinet approves **Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojna (BHAVYA)** to develop **100 plug-and-play industrial parks** with an allocation of **₹ 33,660 crore**

Scheme aims to develop **world-class industrial infrastructure**, unlocking manufacturing potential and driving India's growth story

Industrial parks from **100 to 1000 acres** to be developed with support of up to **₹ 1 crore per acre**

BHAVYA to be implemented with **states and private sector**, under the **National Industrial Corridor Development Programme** framework

CABINET DECISION  
18-03-2025



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## Key Points:

- **The 5 Districts:** Balotra, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Kota, and Dausa.
- **BHAVYA:** Bharat Industrial Development Scheme.
- **Scheme Approval:** Approved by the Union Cabinet on March 18, 2026.
- **Objective:** Under this scheme, the goal is to develop 100 'Plug-and-Play' industrial parks across the country.
- Under this scheme, industrial parks ranging from 100 to 1,000 acres in size will be selected for development. Additionally, financial assistance of up to ₹1 crore per acre will be provided for core infrastructure, value-added infrastructure, and social infrastructure.
- **Plug-and-Play Model:** This implies that industries will find pre-approved land, electricity, water, roads, and other basic amenities ready for use, enabling companies to commence their production without delay.
- **Purpose:** To create world-class industrial infrastructure and unlock manufacturing potential.
- **Implementing Agency:** National Industrial Corridor Development Corporation Limited (NICDC), under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

## Beneficiaries under the Scheme:

- **Primary Beneficiaries:** Manufacturing units, MSMEs, startups, and global investors requiring ready-to-use industrial infrastructure.
- **Secondary Beneficiaries:** Workers, logistics service providers, service sector enterprises, and local communities.

## 'Sahakarita Mein Sahakar' Campaign: State-Level Workshop

### Why in News?

- Under the 'Sahakarita Mein Sahakar' (Cooperation within Cooperation) campaign, a state-level workshop was organized in Jaipur on May 8, 2026. The workshop was presided over by Gautam Kumar Dak, the Minister of State for Cooperation (Independent Charge).



### Key Points:

- Organizers:** Apex Bank, Jaipur, and NABARD.
- It is noteworthy that the Ministry of Cooperation is organizing a series of regional workshops across the country to accelerate transformative reforms within the cooperative sector.

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- The objective of these initiatives is to extend modern grain storage facilities to the grassroots level—closest to the farmers—to empower and expand the network of Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS), to diversify cooperative activities, and to promote ‘Sahakarita Mein Sahakar’ for the welfare of the members and beneficiaries of cooperative institutions.

## **Facts for Prelims (Ministry of Cooperation):**

- **Establishment:** A separate ministry, designated as the Ministry of Cooperation, was established by the Central Government on July 6, 2021.
- **Primary Objective:** To realize the vision of "Sahakar Se Samriddhi" (Prosperity through Cooperation) and to strengthen the cooperative movement within the country.
- Amit Shah serves as India's first and current Minister of Cooperation.

UTKARSH

CIVIL  
SERVICES

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## NEWS IN SHORTS

S. No.	News
1.	<p><b>Pratapgarh's 'Bambori Village' in the Spotlight</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>On May 6, 2026, Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma participated in a 'Gram Vikas Chaupal' (Village Development Forum) in Bambori village, Pratapgarh, and stayed there overnight.</li><li>During the evening 'Gram Vikas Chaupal,' the Chief Minister engaged in a direct dialogue with the villagers, including women, farmers, and the youth.</li></ul>
2.	<p><b>'Chaurasiawas Pond' Set to Become Ajmer City's Third Lake</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Following Ajmer's historic Anasagar and Varun Sagar (Foy Sagar), the Chaurasiawas Pond is being developed as the city's third major lake.</li><li>Rajasthan Legislative Assembly Speaker Vasudev Devnani recently inspected the pond and formulated a roadmap worth ₹5 crore for its beautification and development.</li></ul>
3.	<p><b>Naresh Raghani 'Madhukar' Receives 'Bharat Vibhushan Samman 2026'</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Recently, Naresh Raghani 'Madhukar'—a senior journalist and writer from Ajmer—was honored with the 'Bharat Vibhushan Samman 2026' for his outstanding contributions to literature and creative writing.</li><li>He was conferred this award for his acclaimed science fiction novel, Chiranjeevi Bhava.</li><li>This honor was bestowed by the 'Institute of Social Reform and Higher Education Trust' (ISRHE) in collaboration with NITI Aayog.</li></ul>

4.

## Seema Hingonia's Book: 'Suraksha Sakhi'

- The book Suraksha Sakhi (Security Companion), authored by Seema Hingonia—an officer of the Rajasthan Police Service—was released on May 3, 2026, at the Jhalana Officers' Institute in Jaipur.
- This book serves as a vital guide for women's empowerment and their legal protection.
- The book features 15 stories addressing contemporary issues faced by women, such as domestic violence, cybercrime, dowry harassment, Triple Talaq, and the practice of witch-hunting.

5.

## Shilpgram in Dungarpur District

- The Government of Rajasthan has issued financial approval amounting to ₹9 crore for the construction of a Shilpgram (Crafts Village) in Palwara village of Dungarpur district.
- **Objective:** This project is being developed on the lines of the Shilpgram in Udaipur, with the aim of promoting local handicrafts and culture, as well as attracting tourism.

6.

## Mahindra World City Limited (Jaipur)

- Mahindra World City Limited (Jaipur) is a joint venture between RIICO and Mahindra & Mahindra, featuring developed Special Economic Zones (SEZs), Domestic Tariff Areas (DTAs), and social infrastructure zones.
- RIICO holds a 26 percent stake in this venture. More than 100 industrial units are operational within Mahindra World City Limited (Jaipur), providing direct and indirect employment to approximately 75,000 people.

7.

## Excise Department's 'Special Preventive Campaign'

- The Rajasthan Excise Department is conducting a 'Special Preventive Campaign' against illicit liquor across the state from May 1 to May 15, 2026.
- Under the direction of Excise Commissioner Namit Mehta, the primary objective of this campaign is to completely curb the manufacturing, storage, transportation, and sale of illicit liquor.

8.

## 'Apno Khet Apno Khad' (Our Farm, Our Fertilizer) Campaign

- **Campaign Period:** April 6 to April 30, 2026.
- **Main Objective of the Campaign:** To improve soil health and reduce farmers' dependence on chemical fertilizers.
- **Organizer:** Department of Agriculture, Rajasthan.

# UTKARSH

# CIVIL SERVICES

## NATIONAL

### 100th N-Gen Post Office

#### Why in News?

- The Union Minister for Communications and Development of North Eastern Region (DONER) virtually inaugurated India Post's 100th N-Gen Post Office at the North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shillong, on May 6, 2026.



#### Key Points:

- Introduction:** These advanced post offices are being established within educational institutions to provide services tailored to the specific needs of students, faculty members, and local residents.

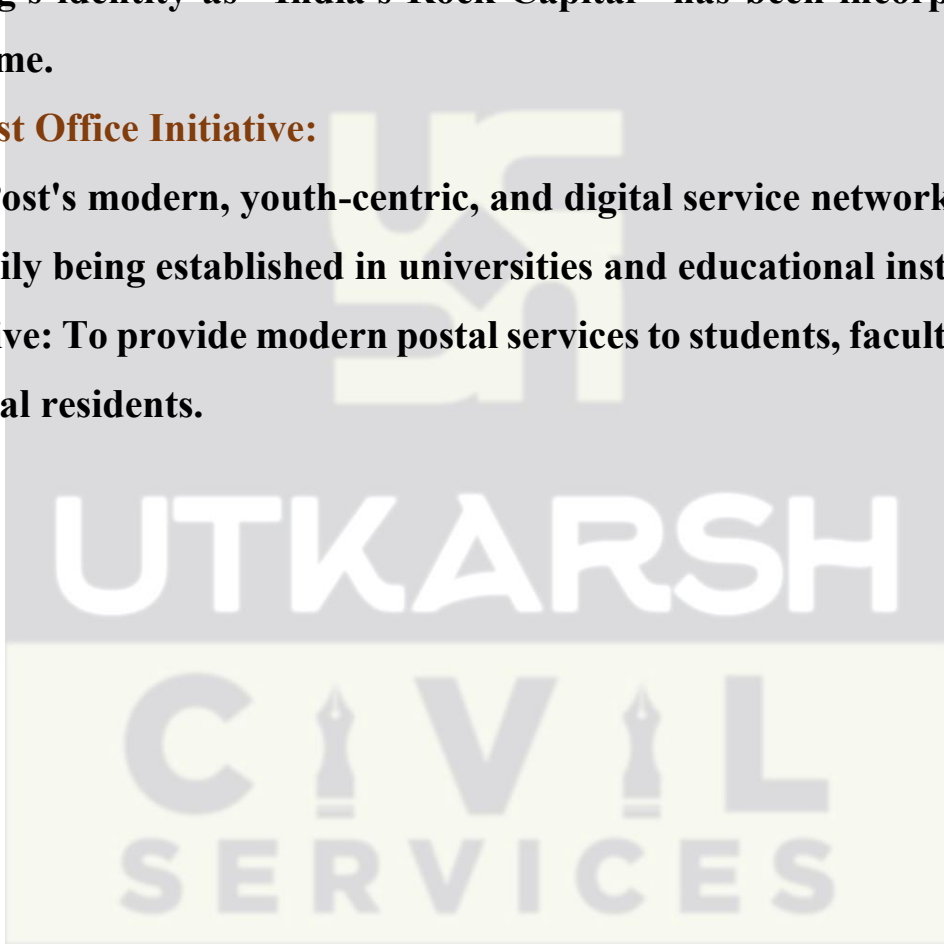
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## ■ Features:

1. This post office is entirely operated by women.
2. Constructed using local materials such as bamboo and straw.
3. An eco-friendly model reflecting the cultural identity of Meghalaya.
4. Shillong's identity as "India's Rock Capital" has been incorporated into the theme.

## ■ N-Gen Post Office Initiative:

1. India Post's modern, youth-centric, and digital service network initiative.
2. Primarily being established in universities and educational institutions.
3. Objective: To provide modern postal services to students, faculty members, and local residents.



## Urban Testbed and Aerosol Observatory

### Why in News?

- The Pune-based Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), operating under the 'Mission Mausam' initiative, has established a state-of-the-art Urban Testbed and Aerosol Observatory at the SRM Institute of Science and Technology in Ramapuram, Chennai.



### Key Points:

- This comprehensive observatory is the first of its kind to be established in India.
- **Inauguration:** On May 6, 2026, by Dr. M. Ravichandran, Secretary of the Ministry of Earth Sciences.

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- The center houses approximately 15 state-of-the-art instruments valued at over ₹60 crore. These instruments are designed to track nearly 50 types of atmospheric data, including weather patterns, air flow, aerosol particles, and temperature variations.

## Mission Mausam:

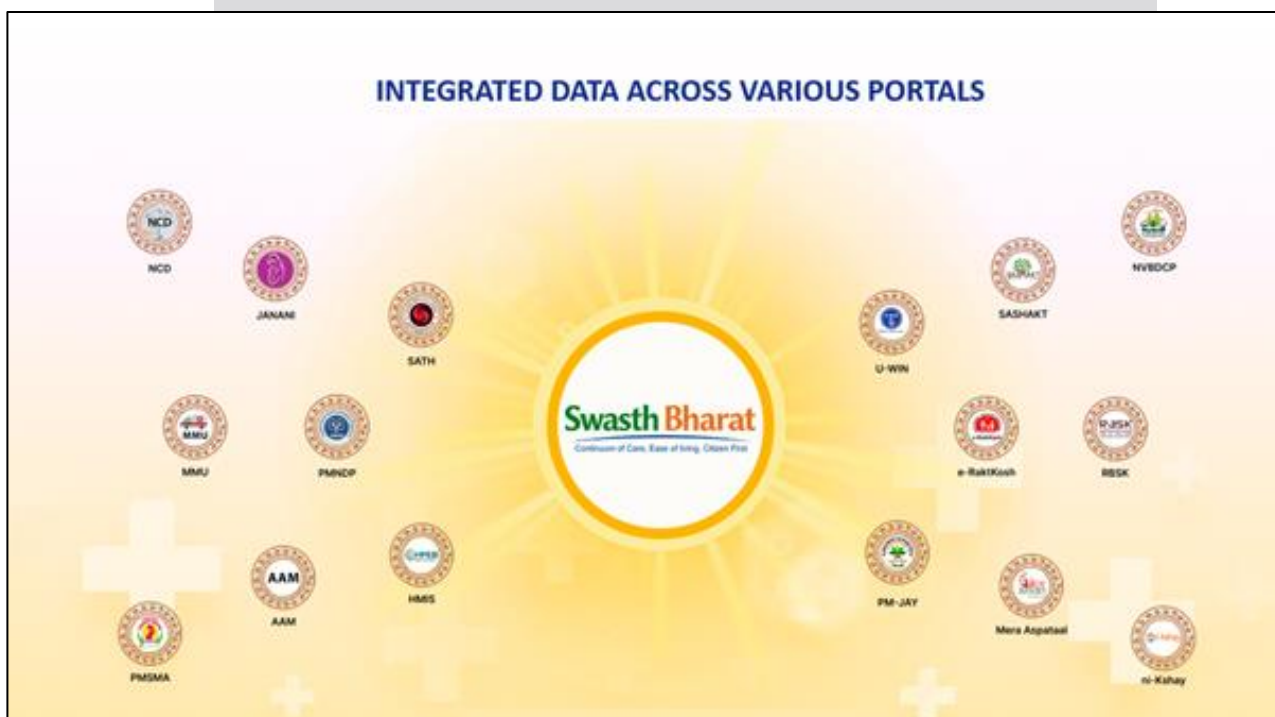
- **Launch:** The Prime Minister launched 'Mission Mausam' in September 2024 as a flagship scientific initiative of the Ministry of Climate, adopting a forward-looking approach.
- **Objectives:** The mission aims to modernize observational infrastructure, improve monsoon forecasting, and enhance disaster preparedness through the immediate prediction and early warning of severe weather events. Furthermore, it seeks to strengthen climate services to support key sectors—such as agriculture, water resources, disaster management, aviation, and energy—thereby enabling India to become a "Weather-Ready and Climate-Smart Nation."

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## Swasth Bharat Portal

### Why in News?

- Recently, the Swasth Bharat Portal was launched by the Minister of Health and Family Welfare during the 10th National Summit on the theme of 'Innovation and Inclusivity'.



### Key Points:

- Objective:** To accelerate India's digital health transformation and integrate fragmented health systems.
- Efficiency of the Swasth Bharat Portal:**
  - Infrastructure:** Reduction of approximately 20–30 percent
  - Time required for data entry:** Reduction of approximately 20–40 percent
  - Duplication of human resources:** Reduction of approximately 20–40 percent
  - Speed of decision-making:** Will increase

## Commonwealth Table Tennis Championships, 2026



### 📌 Key Points:

- **Event:** The Commonwealth Table Tennis Championships, 2026, will be held at the Thyagaraj Stadium in Delhi from July 27 to August 2, 2026.
- **Participants:** Players from over 35 countries will participate in this event.
- **Organizers:** This competition will be jointly organized by the Delhi Government and the Table Tennis Federation.

## Geography and Geology

### Mayon Volcano



## Why in News?

- On May 3, 2026, Mayon Volcano, located in the Albay province of the Philippines, erupted; subsequently, authorities raised the alert level to Level 3 on a five-tier scale.

## Key Points:

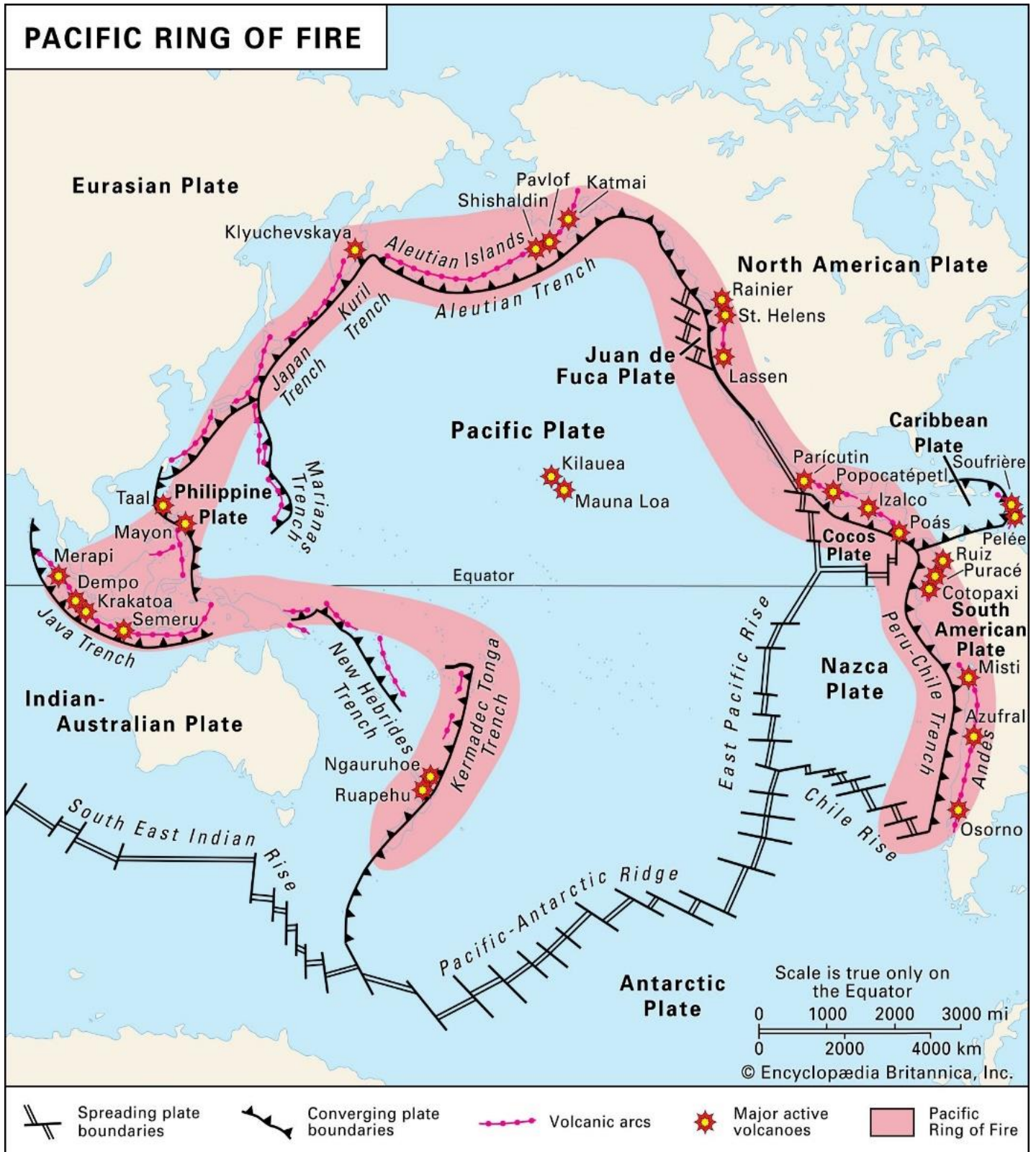
- **Introduction:** It is a classic stratovolcano (composite volcano) characterized by steep upper slopes and a small crater at its summit.
- **Nickname:** It is globally renowned for its "perfect cone" shape, attributed to its highly symmetrical structure.
- **Location:** Luzon Island, Albay Province, Philippines.
- **Eruptive Materials (Strombolian Eruptions):** Lava flows, pyroclastic density currents (PDCs), and lahars (mudflows).
- **Origin:** It forms part of the Pacific Ring of Fire and was formed by the subduction of the Philippine Sea Plate beneath the Philippine Mobile Belt.
- The Mayon Volcano Natural Park is situated here.
- **Historical Eruptions:** The most destructive eruptive event involving Mayon Volcano occurred in February 1814, when it buried the town of Cagsawa beneath ash and lava.

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## Other Important Points:

### Pacific Ring of Fire:



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- **Introduction:** The Pacific Ring of Fire (or Circum-Pacific Belt) is a vast, horseshoe-shaped region situated within the Pacific Ocean basin that is characterized by frequent earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.
- **Extent:** Approximately 40,000 kilometers.
- **Location:** The Ring of Fire begins at the southern tip of South America, extends through the Andes Mountains, traverses the western coasts of Central America, the United States, and Canada, crosses the Aleutian Islands in Alaska, and continues through Japan, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Papua New Guinea, before concluding near New Zealand.
- **Characteristics:** This belt is home to approximately 75% of the world's active and dormant volcanoes.
- **Cause:** The activity occurring in the Ring of Fire is caused by plate tectonics—specifically subduction zones—where an oceanic plate slides beneath a continental plate.

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## Indian Governance and State System

### Article 174 (Dissolution of the Legislative Assembly)

#### Why in News?

- On May 7, 2026, the Governor of West Bengal, R.N. Ravi, dissolved the Legislative Assembly. This decision was taken following the results of the 2026 Assembly elections in the state.

#### West Bengal



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## Key Points:

- **Constitutional Provision: Article 174, Constitution of India, 1950**
  - (1) The House or Houses of the Legislature of a State shall be summoned to meet at least twice in every year, and six months shall not intervene between its last sitting in one session and the date appointed for its first sitting in the next session.
  - (2) Subject to the provisions of clause (1), the Governor may from time to time—
    - (a) summon the House or either House to meet at such time and place as he thinks fit;
    - (b) prorogue the House or Houses;
    - (c) dissolve the Legislative Assembly.
- **Reason:** This step was taken following the election results, after former Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee refused to resign.

## Key Cases Related to Article 174:

1. **Nabam Rebia and Bamang Felix vs. Deputy Speaker, Arunachal Pradesh (2016):** The Supreme Court held that the exercise of the Governor's discretion under Article 174(1) must be in accordance with constitutional norms and the advice of the Council of Ministers.
2. **State of Punjab vs. Satya Pal Dang (1969):** The Court upheld the discretionary power of the Governor to dissolve the Legislative Assembly, provided that such action remains within the constitutional framework.

## Significance of Article 174 of the Indian Constitution:

1. **Ensuring Regular Legislative Sessions:** There must not be a gap of more than six months between two sessions of the State Legislature.
2. **Balance of Powers between the Executive and the Legislature:** Although the Governor possesses the authority to summon, prorogue, and dissolve the Legislature, these powers are generally exercised on the advice of the Council of Ministers.
3. **Democratic Renewal:** The dissolution of the Legislative Assembly enables the holding of fresh elections, thereby providing voters with the opportunity to elect new representatives.

## INTERNATIONAL

### 2nd Meeting of the BRICS Employment Working Group, 2026

#### Why in News?

- On May 7, 2026, the 2nd meeting of the BRICS Employment Working Group (EWG)—held under India's BRICS Chairship—concluded successfully in Thiruvananthapuram.



#### Key Points:

- Event Dates:** May 6–7, 2026 | **Location:** Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
- The meeting was guided by the theme of India's 2026 BRICS Chairship: "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation, and Sustainability."
- Objectives:** To enhance cooperation in digital technology, social security, and women's workforce participation; and to strengthen skill development and employability.

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## ■ 4 Key Thematic Areas of Discussion:

1. Promoting social security and formalization.
2. Enhancing Female Labor Force Participation Rate (FLFPR).
3. Strengthening cooperation on employability and skill development.
4. Leveraging digital technology for all workers, including gig and platform workers.

- ## ■ Cultural Dimension:
- Cultural performances showcasing Kerala's heritage were organized for the delegates, featuring: Bharatanatyam, Mohiniyattam, Kalaripayattu, Mayura Nritham, Margamkali, Oppana, etc.

## Key Outcomes:

1. Consensus reached on extending social security coverage to all forms of work.
  2. Women's workforce participation recognized as a critical indicator of inclusive growth.
  3. Emphasis placed on lifelong learning, vocational training, and skill-to-job matching.
  4. Discussion on the study regarding the contextual classification of occupations being undertaken by India in collaboration with the ILO.
  5. Emphasis placed on the need for social security for gig and informal workers.
  6. Digitalization identified as a key enabler of labor market transformation.
- ## ■ The member countries of BRICS are Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Indonesia, and the United Arab Emirates.

## Visit of the President of Vietnam to India

### Why in News?

- To Lam, President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and General Secretary of the Central Committee of the 'Communist Party of Vietnam', undertook a three-day State Visit to India from May 5 to 7, 2026.



## Key Points:

- This marked President To Lam's first State Visit to India following his election as the President of Vietnam in April 2026.
- President To Lam's visit takes place on a special occasion, as both nations celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership agreement established during Prime Minister Modi's visit to Vietnam in 2016.

## Outcomes:

## Announcements:

S.No.	Title
1.	Upgrading bilateral relations to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.
2.	A new trade target of USD 25 billion by 2030.
3.	Vietnam is joining the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI).
4.	Announcement of export of Indian grapes to Vietnam and Vietnamese durian to India.
5.	Establishment of a site interpretation center at the UNESCO World Heritage Site in My Son.

- **List of Agreements:** 13 Strategic Memorandums of Understanding Signed.

Title	Brief Description
MoU between IREL (India) Limited and Institute for Technology of Radioactive and Rare Elements (ITRRE), Vietnam on mutual cooperation	This MoU formalizes the long-standing commitment of both sides to expand bilateral cooperation in the field of rare earth elements and other advanced technologies.
Cultural Exchange Programme for 2026–30 between Ministry of Culture, India and Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Vietnam	India and Vietnam signed a cultural agreement in 1976. Under this, specific activities and exchanges have been agreed upon within a Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) framework valid for five years (2026–2030).

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<b>MoU between Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), Mumbai and Ho Chi Minh City People's Committee to establish friendship and cooperation</b>	<b>The agreement aims to establish a formal framework enabling both cities to share expertise in urban management and economic development.</b>
<b>MoU on establishment of ICCR Chair of India Studies between ICCR and University of Science and Education, Da Nang University</b>	<b>Under this MoU, an ICCR Chair has been established at Da Nang University in Vietnam.</b>
<b>MoU between Nalanda University, Rajgir and Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics (HCMA), Hanoi</b>	<b>This MoU strengthens India's long-term initiatives to facilitate capacity building and training in Vietnam.</b>
<b>MoU between NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) and National Payment Corporation of Vietnam (NAPAS)</b>	<b>This MoU establishes institutional cooperation between India's NIPL and Vietnam's NAPAS on interoperability of cross-border QR code payments to enable transactions.</b>
<b>MoU between Gyan Bharatam (Ministry of Culture) and University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City (USSH, VNUHCM) on digitization of Cham manuscripts</b>	<b>This MoU establishes institutional cooperation for survey, documentation, preservation, digitization, and online dissemination of Cham manuscripts of Indian origin preserved in Vietnam, involving the National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM) and Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA).</b>

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## Other Key Points:

### Vietnam's Significance for India:

- **Key Partner in the 'Act East Policy':** It constitutes a vital component of India's 'Act East Policy,' its Indo-Pacific Vision, and its regional cooperation strategy.
- **Strategic and Geographic Importance:** Situated in close proximity to major maritime trade routes in the South China Sea, it aids in ensuring secure and unimpeded trade within the region.
- **Balancing China's Influence:** Both India and Vietnam advocate for freedom of navigation in the South China Sea, as well as a rules-based international order.
- Both nations remain committed to the principles enshrined in the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).
- **Supply Chain Diversification:** Cooperation in the sectors of rare earth minerals and industrial imports serves to bolster India's manufacturing capabilities.
- **Energy Security:** Indian companies have invested in oil and gas exploration projects within Vietnam's maritime zones in the South China Sea—a region exceptionally rich in hydrocarbon reserves.

## ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

### First International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) Summit, 2026

#### Why in News?

- The Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change launched the official website and logo for the First International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) Summit, 2026, in New Delhi.



#### Key Points:

- **Host:** India (Organizer: Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change)

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- **Summit Schedule:** To be held in New Delhi on June 1–2, 2026.
- **Summit Theme (2026):** 'Save Big Cats, Save Humanity, Save Ecosystems'.
- **Participation:** It will bring together over 400 conservationists, policymakers, scientists, multilateral agencies, financial institutions, corporate leaders, and community representatives from across the globe.
- **Summit Logo:** The logo symbolizes harmony, balance, and interconnected ecosystems. Depicted at the center of the logo are the seven big cat species—symbolizing unity and shared responsibility—surrounded by a lotus-inspired design representing the five elements of nature.



- **Summit Website:** It will serve as a dedicated global platform for outreach, engagement, and information sharing. The official IBCA Summit 2026 logo film will also be featured on this platform.
- **Outcome:** A key outcome of the summit will be the adoption of the first global resolution on big cat conservation, titled the 'Delhi Declaration'.

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## Other Important Points:

### International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA):

- **Introduction:** The IBCA is a multi-national, multi-agency alliance comprising 95 big cat range countries, non-range countries interested in big cat conservation, conservation partners, scientific organizations engaged in big cat research, as well as business groups and corporations committed to supporting big cat conservation efforts.
- **Need for IBCA:** Big Cats are under threat due to habitat loss, poaching, climate change, and human-wildlife conflict.
- **Establishment:** On April 9, 2023—during a grand international event held in Mysuru, Karnataka, to commemorate the completion of 50 years of India's Project Tiger—the Prime Minister of India launched the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) for the global conservation of seven major big cat species: the Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar, and Puma.
- **Headquarters and Secretariat:** Following a decision by the Government of India, the Union Cabinet approved the establishment of the IBCA, with its headquarters located in India, on March 12, 2024.
- **Objective:** To unite countries within the range of big cat populations, non-range countries interested in conservation, conservation partners, scientific organizations, and business groups willing to collaborate on the conservation of big cats.
- **Implementation:** The IBCA was established through the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) under the aegis of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- **Chairperson:** Bhupender Yadav, Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

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- **Director General of the Secretariat:** Dr. S.P. Yadav (First Director General).
- **Observer Countries:** Kazakhstan, Namibia, and Thailand.
- **Member Countries:** Angola, Armenia, Bhutan, Cambodia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Eswatini, Guinea, Guatemala, India, Liberia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Niger, Nicaragua, Nepal, Paraguay, Russia, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Somalia, South Sudan, and Suriname.
- **Note:** All member countries of the United Nations are eligible to join the Alliance; this includes both "range countries"—where these species are naturally found—and "non-range countries" interested in collaborating on the conservation of big cats.
- **Partner Organizations:** International Union for Conservation of Nature (Switzerland), International Snow Leopard Trust (Kyrgyzstan), Global Tiger Forum (India), Amur Tiger Center (Russia), World Wide Fund for Nature International (Switzerland), World Customs Organization (Belgium), Mobius Foundation (India), Cheetah Conservation Fund (Namibia), Centre for Sustainable Green Economy (India),
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (Italy), United Nations World Tourism Organization (Spain), and United Nations Development Programme (USA).
- **Conservation:** Conservation of the seven big cats: Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar, and Puma.
- **Funding:** India has pledged financial assistance of ₹150 crore to the IBCA (2023–2028).
- **Big Cat Conservation Efforts in India:** Asiatic Lion Project, Project Snow Leopard, Project Cheetah, Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, National Board for Wildlife (NBWL), Project Tiger.

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**CIVIL**  
SERVICES

## Conservation Status of Big Cats

Species	Scientific Name	IUCN Red List Status	CITES Appendix	Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972
Tiger	Panthera tigris	Endangered	Appendix I	Schedule I
Lion	Panthera leo	Vulnerable	Appendix I	Schedule I
Leopard	Panthera pardus	Vulnerable	Appendix I	Schedule I
Snow Leopard	Panthera uncia	Vulnerable	Appendix I	Schedule I
Puma	Puma concolor	Least Concern	Appendix II (P. c. costaricensis and cougar: Appendix I)	Not Applicable
Jaguar	Panthera onca	Near Threatened	Appendix I	Not Applicable
Cheetah	Acinonyx jubatus	Vulnerable	Appendix I	Schedule I

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## 🕒 SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY 🕒

### Germanium-Free Drone Imaging Technology

#### 📣 Why in News?

- Recently, Hyderabad-based startup EonSpaceLabs launched 'Lumira\_E40I50' (Lumira)—India's first germanium-free thermal imaging payload for drones.



#### 📌 Key Points:

- Introduction to Germanium-Free Drone Imaging Technology:** This is an indigenous Electro-Optical and Infrared (EO/IR) imaging system that replaces traditional germanium-based lenses with a domestically developed alternative. Traditionally, military-grade thermal cameras rely on germanium to transmit thermal radiation; however, this new system utilizes chalcogenide glass to achieve equivalent performance without the need for this rare mineral.

- **Developer:** Defense technology startup EonSpaceLabs, Hyderabad.
- **Objective:** The primary goal is to achieve strategic autonomy by reducing India's dependence on China, which currently dominates the global supply of germanium.

## Key Features:

1. **Technological Breakthrough:** Instead of traditional germanium lenses, this thermal camera employs chalcogenide glass, delivering high-performance capabilities.
2. **Long-Range Surveillance:** The system is capable of detecting humans at distances of up to 2 km and vehicles up to 8 km, making it ideal for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) missions.
3. **Optical Zoom (Onboard AI):** Equipped with a 40x optical zoom for high-precision surveillance.
4. **Environmental Resilience:** It is designed to operate in extreme temperatures ranging from  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $+55^{\circ}\text{C}$ .
5. **Weight and Portability:** The payload is lightweight (ranging from 800 grams to 2.2 kilograms), making it compatible with compact drones, aerostats, and eVTOL platforms.

## Other Key Points:

- Founded in 2021 by Sanjay Kumar, Puneet Badeka, and Manoj Kumar Gaddam, this company focuses on Electro-Optical and Infrared (EO/IR) payloads for drones, satellites, and surveillance platforms.
- **Why could Germanium become a problem? :** Germanium is expensive, entirely imported, and subject to disruptions in the global supply chain.