

Daily Current Affairs

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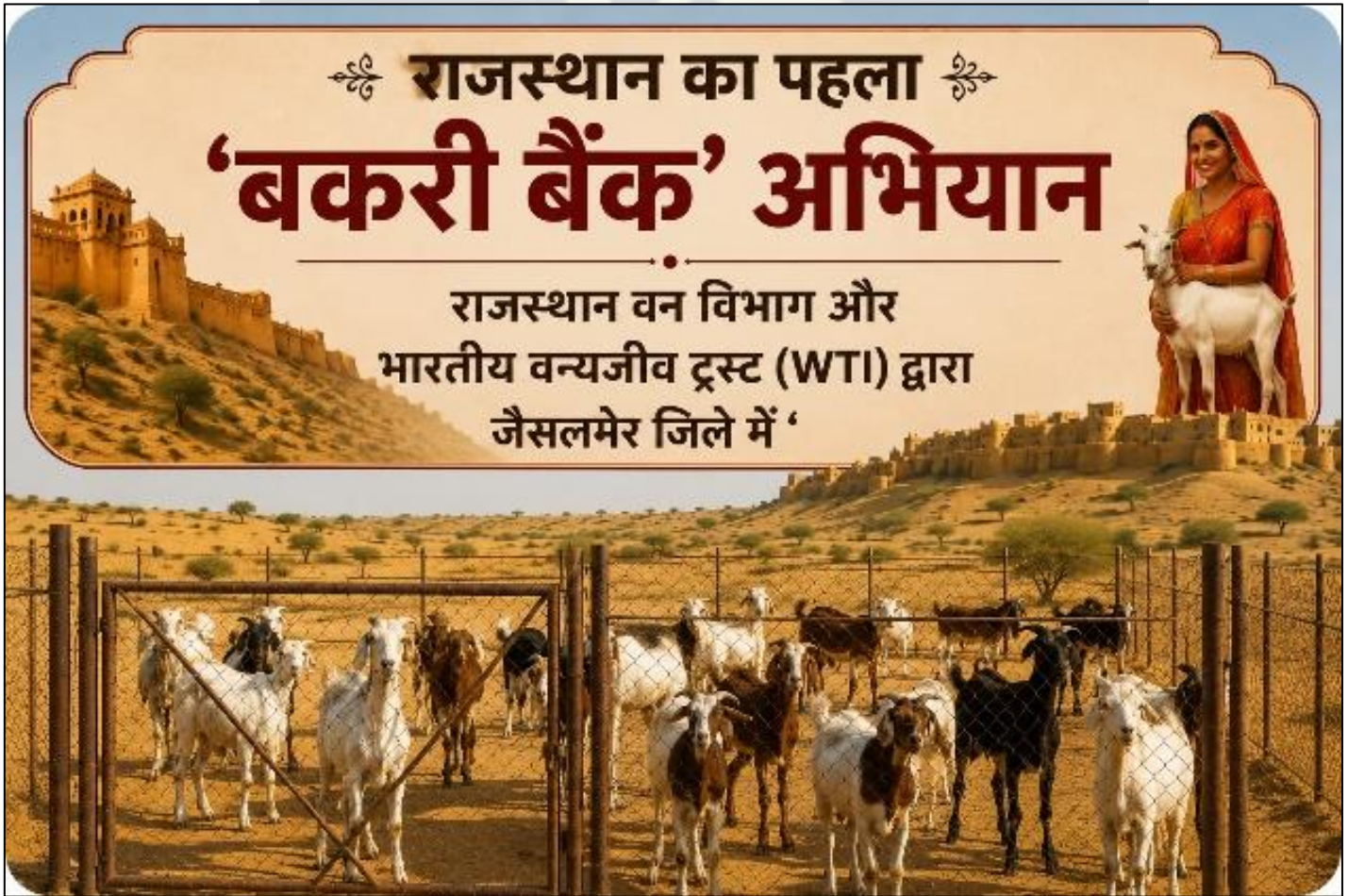


Rajasthan's First 'Goat Bank' Initiative



Why in News?

- Recently, the Rajasthan Forest Department and the Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) announced the launch of India's first 'Goat Bank' initiative for the conservation of the rare Caracal.



Key Points:

- Location:** Jaisalmer.
- Main Objective of the 'Goat Bank' Initiative:** To conserve the Caracal while simultaneously mitigating human-wildlife conflict.

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- **Implementation:** If a Caracal preys on a villager's goat, instead of going through a standard compensation process, the Forest Department will directly provide a new goat to the livestock owner from the 'Goat Bank.' Initially, a stock of 25 goats will be maintained in the 'bank.'
- In exchange for the assistance received under this initiative, villagers will be required to return one lamb (young goat) to the bank in the future. This will ensure a continuous replenishment of the Goat Bank's stock, thereby benefiting a larger number of livestock owners.
- Under this initiative, hotspot areas known for the presence of Caracals will be mapped, and 'Goat Banks' will be established in selected locations within these areas.

Other Important Points:

Launch of 'Project Caracal' in Rajasthan

- **Location:** This project was launched from the Ranthambore Tiger Reserve, situated in Sawai Madhopur.
- **Project Implementation:** By the Rajasthan Forest Department, in collaboration with the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), SACON, and Tiger Watch.
- **Objective of 'Project Caracal':** To map the Caracal population, enhance monitoring efforts, and promote community participation in conservation.
- **Project Leadership:** Led by Dr. Shomita Mukherjee as the Principal Investigator, with Dr. Ayan Sadhu and Dr. Dharmendra Khandal serving as Co-Principal Investigators.

Facts for Prelims (Caracal):

- The Caracal is a medium-sized wild cat, known for its long, black tufted ears and its ability to leap over 3 meters high to catch birds in flight.

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- **Scientific Name:** Caracal caracal .
- **Local Name:** In India, it is known as 'Syahgosh' (Black-eared Cat).
- **Habitat:** Found in semi-arid scrublands, savanna grasslands, dry forests, and ravines.
- **Distribution in India:** Primarily in Rajasthan and Gujarat.
- **In Rajasthan:** Primarily found in Ranthambore Tiger Reserve and Mukundra Hills Tiger Reserve.
- **Beyond India:** Apart from India, the Syahgosh is found in several countries across Africa, the Middle East, and Central and South Asia.

Conservation Status:

- **IUCN Red List:** Least Concern.
- **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972:** Included in Schedule I.
- **Note:** In 2021, the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) and the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change included the Caracal in the list of 'Critically Endangered' species under the 'Species Recovery Programme'.

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National Technology Day: State-Level Celebration

Why in News?

- On May 11, 2026, the state-level celebration of National Technology Day was organized at the B.M. Birla Auditorium in Jaipur.



Key Points:

- Organizer:** Department of Science and Technology, Government of Rajasthan.
- Objective of the Celebration:** To enhance public awareness regarding science, technology, and innovation within the state, and to encourage students, innovators, and researchers.
- During the ceremony, innovators associated with the National Innovation Foundation (NIF) and the Rajasthan State Innovation Council (SIC) were felicitated.

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- Additionally, 26 innovation-based technologies related to agriculture, water conservation, health, rural livelihoods, and smart technologies were showcased at the event.
- It is noteworthy that 'National Technology Day' is celebrated annually on May 11th to commemorate the nuclear tests conducted under 'Operation Shakti' at Pokhran on May 11, 1998.
- **'Science Clubs' in Rajasthan:** To foster an interest in science among school students in Rajasthan, 820 Science Clubs are being established in Model Schools and PM-SHRI Schools, thereby promoting research and experiential learning. Furthermore, Robotics Labs have also been set up in over 500 schools.

Other Important Points:

- **'Rajasthan Science Festival – 2026' Souvenir:** On May 11, 2026 the occasion of National Technology Day Governor Haribhau Bagde unveiled the souvenir and poster for the 'Rajasthan Science Festival 2026'.
- This event was organized at the Jaipur-based office of the Central Electronics Engineering Research Institute (CEERI), in collaboration with Vijnana Bharati.

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Brahmagupta Award and Innovation Center

Why in News?

- On May 11, 2026, during the state-level celebration of 'National Technology Day' held in Jaipur, Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma announced the institution of the 'Brahmagupta Award' and the establishment of an 'Innovation Center' in Jaipur.



राष्ट्रीय प्रौद्योगिकी दिवस

‘ब्रह्मगुप्त पुरस्कार’

एवं

‘इनोवेशन सेंटर’

की घोषणा

Key Points:

- Objective of the Award:** The 'Brahmagupta Award' will be conferred upon talented individuals, scientists, and students who have made outstanding contributions in the fields of science, mathematics, innovation, and research.

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- **Inspiration:** This award will be presented in memory of the great Indian mathematician and astronomer Brahmagupta, who was born in Bhinmal (Jalore) during the 7th century.
- **Significance:** Its objective is to preserve the state's scientific heritage while simultaneously inspiring the new generation toward innovation and national service.
- **Note:** The State Government had previously announced the establishment of the 'Brahmagupta Center of Frontier Technologies' at an estimated expenditure of ₹300 crore in the budget for the year 2026-27.
- This Center will be established within the 'Coaching Hub' located in Pratap Nagar, Jaipur, providing the youth with modern infrastructure and a conducive environment to work on technology and novel ideas.

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‘Somnath Swabhiman Parv’ (Somnath Self-Respect Festival) – State-Level Program



Why in News?

- The State Government organized the ‘Somnath Swabhiman Parv’ to mark the completion of 1,000 years since the first foreign invasion of the Somnath Temple (1026 AD) and 75 years since the temple's modern reconstruction.

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सोमनाथ मंदिर का भव्य निर्माण हमें याद दिलाता है, कि सृजन की शक्ति विनाश से कहीं अधिक प्रबल होती है। हमारी संस्कृति का स्वभाव है, कि हम झुकते नहीं, टूटते नहीं, बल्कि हर चुनौती के बाद और अधिक मजबूती से खड़े होते हैं। स्वच्छता, ईमानदारी, शिक्षा, पर्यावरण संरक्षण, महिला सम्मान और राष्ट्रसेवा हमारी समृद्ध विरासत का हिस्सा हैं।

-मुख्यमंत्री श्री भजनलाल शर्मा

‘सोमनाथ स्वाभिमान पर्व’ कार्यक्रम, झाड़खंड महादेव मंदिर, 11 मई 2026

RajCMO | RajCMO | rajcmo

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Key Points:

- **Organizers:** Held under the joint aegis of the Department of Art and Culture and the Devasthan Department (Government of Rajasthan).

- **Venue:** Jharkhand Mahadev Temple, Jaipur.

Rajsthani Craftsmanship in the Temple's Reconstruction:

- The modern structure of the Somnath Temple has been built in the Chalukya style (also known as the Solanki architectural style or Maru-Gurjara style), a style rooted in the ancient temples of Rajasthan.
- **Baan Stambh (Arrow Pillar):** A significant feature of the temple; its arrow points towards the South Pole, signifying that there is no landmass between the temple and the South Pole.
- **Pran Pratishtha (Consecration Ceremony – 1951):** Performed by the then-President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad.

Facts for Prelims (Senior Citizen Pilgrimage Scheme):

- The Devasthan Department of the Government of Rajasthan initiated a pilgrimage scheme for the state's senior citizens offering travel by train starting in 2013, and by air starting in 2016.
- The Devasthan Department is responsible for organizing the pilgrimage and covering the expenses of the designated journey.
- **Rajasthan State Budget 2025-26:** An announcement was made to facilitate pilgrimages for 6,000 senior citizens via air travel and 50,000 senior citizens via air-conditioned trains under the Senior Citizen Pilgrimage Scheme.
- Pilgrims will be selected through a lottery system conducted by a district-level committee.

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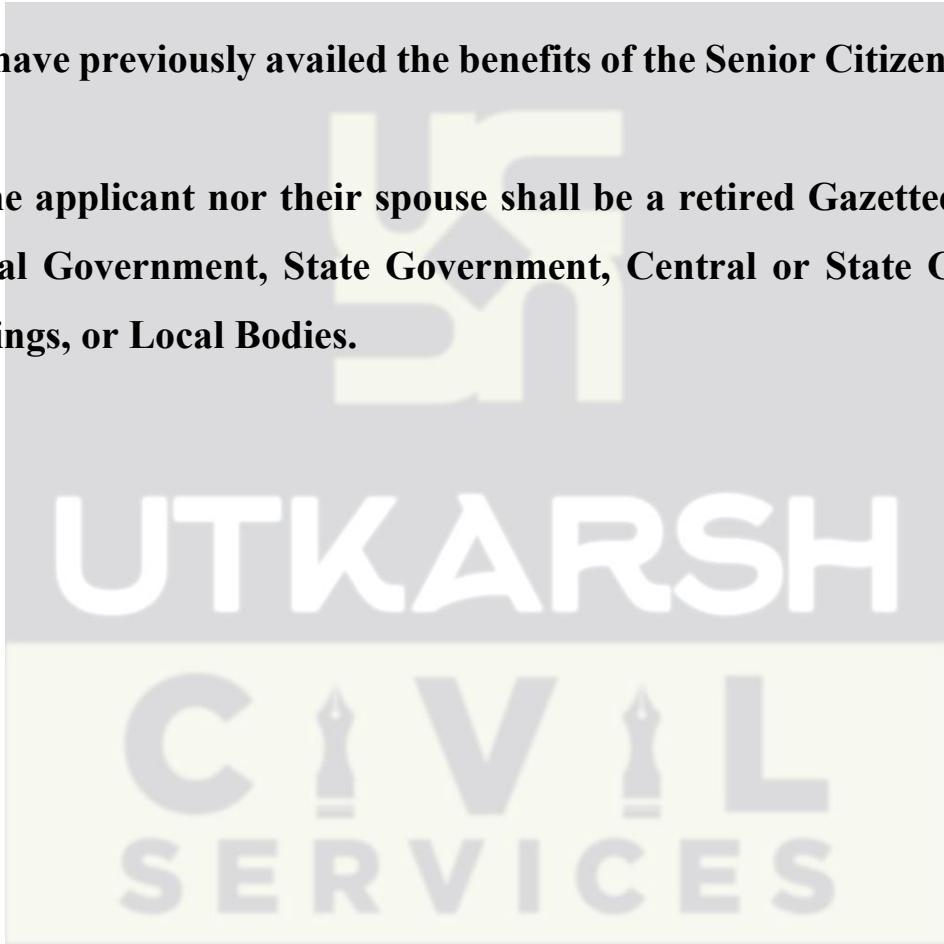
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Eligibility Criteria:

- Must be a domicile (permanent resident) of Rajasthan.
- Must be over 60 years of age (as of April 1, 2025).
- Neither the applicant nor their spouse (husband or wife) should be an income tax payer.
- Must not have previously availed the benefits of the Senior Citizen Pilgrimage Scheme.
- Neither the applicant nor their spouse shall be a retired Gazetted Officer of the Central Government, State Government, Central or State Government Undertakings, or Local Bodies.

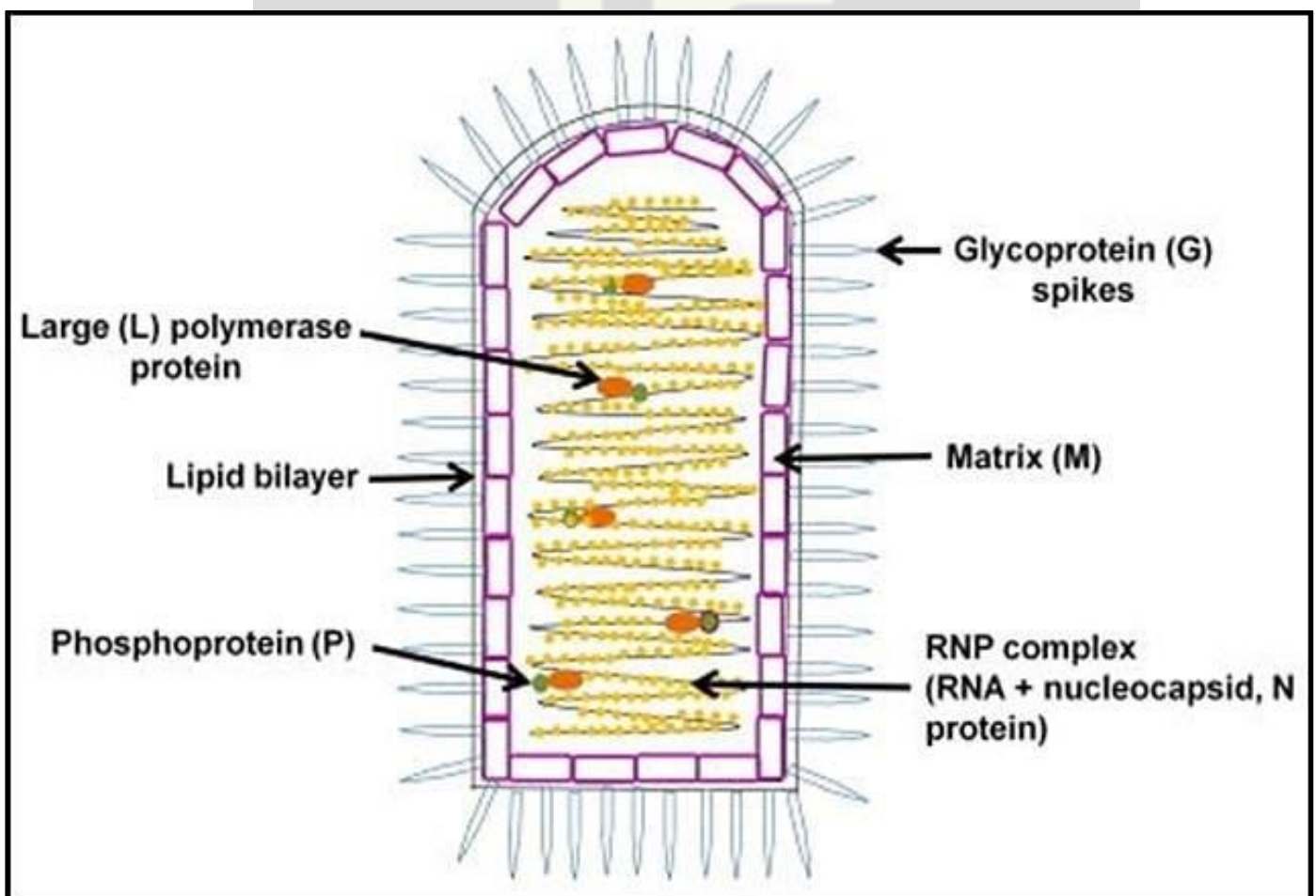


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Chandipura Virus (CHPV)

Why in News?

- According to a recent report released by the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, 15 children died under mysterious circumstances in April 2026 in the Lasadiya Tehsil of Salumber and the Parsola Tehsil of Pratapgarh due to the Chandipura Virus (CHPV).



Key Points:

- **Basis of Confirmation:** Investigations conducted by NIV Pune revealed the presence of Chandipura virus antibodies in serum samples collected from animals in the affected villages, thereby confirming the presence of the virus in this region.

- **Similar Symptoms:** All affected children exhibited symptoms such as high fever, vomiting, and convulsions symptoms that are similar to those of Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES).
- Chandipura Virus (CHPV):**
- **Type:** It is a deadly RNA virus that primarily causes Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES) characterized by inflammation of the brain in children. The virus was first discovered in 1965 in the village of Chandipura in Maharashtra, after which it was named.
 - **Family:** This virus belongs to the 'Rhabdoviridae' family, which also includes the rabies virus.
 - **Transmission:** It is primarily transmitted through the bite of the Phlebotomine sandfly (a type of fly).
 - **Threat:** This virus specifically affects children under the age of 15 and can cause death within 48 to 72 hours of infection.

NEWS IN SHORTS

S. No.	News
1.	<p>Ranjit Singh Rathore (Councillor, Hillingdon Council)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Recently, Ranjit Singh Rathore hailing from Dhundhla village in Pali secured a victory in the councillor elections for Hillingdon Council in London.Contesting as a candidate for the Conservative Party from the Northwood Hills Ward, he was declared the winner after securing 1,902 votes.





National Panchayat Awards, 2025



Why in News?

- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj announced the National Panchayat Awards 2025. In this edition, Kawrthah North village in Mizoram secured the top position in the 'Clean and Green Panchayat' category of the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Sustainable Development Awards.



Key Points:

National Panchayat Awards

- **Main Objective:** To recognize and reward the best-performing Panchayats and to promote inclusive, participatory, and sustainable development in rural India. These awards are presented annually.
- **Evaluation Framework:** It aligns with the nine themes of the Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs).

Two Award Categories:

- **Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Sustainable Development Awards:** Awards are presented to outstanding Gram Panchayats based on their performance across nine thematic areas.
- **Nanaji Deshmukh Best Panchayat Sustainable Development Awards:** Awards are presented to the overall best-performing Panchayats at the District, Block, and Gram Panchayat levels.

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)

Why in News?

- The Central Government has appointed Lieutenant General N.S. Raja Subramani (Retired) as the country's next Chief of Defence Staff (CDS).



Key Points:

Chief of Defence Staff

- **Creation of the Post:** The post of CDS was created in the year 2019. It was established based on the recommendations of the Group of Ministers (GoM) constituted in 2001 which, in turn, was based on the report of the 1999 K. Subrahmanyam Committee (Kargil Review Committee).

Functions and Responsibilities of the CDS:

- He serves as the Principal Military Advisor to the Defence Minister on matters concerning the three services.
- **Head of the Department of Military Affairs (DMA):** As the *ex-officio* Secretary, the CDS oversees matters related to the Armed Forces, procurement (excluding capital acquisition), and integration (promoting "jointness" in training, logistics, etc.).
- **Permanent Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee:** He functions as the "first among equals" to coordinate among the three Service Chiefs.
- **Strategic Functions:** Theatre Commands, Nuclear Authority (Military Advisor to the Nuclear Command Authority), and Policy and Planning formulation.

Schemes and Policies

Per Drop More Crop (PDMC)

Why in News?

- The Central Government has set a target to bring an additional 100 lakh hectares of agricultural land under micro-irrigation.



Key Points:

- This target will be achieved over a five-year period, from 2025-26 to 2029-30, through the 'Per Drop More Crop' component of the comprehensive National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture.

National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)

- **Launch:** Initiated in the year 2014-15 under the framework of the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC).
- From the year 2022-23 onwards, it has been subsumed under the 'Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana' (Prime Minister's National Agriculture Development Scheme).

- **Nodal Ministry:** Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- **Objective:** To enhance agricultural productivity by focusing on the convergence of integrated farming, water-use efficiency, soil health management, and resource conservation.

Four Major Components:

- **On-Farm Water Management / Per Drop More Crop:** Under this component, micro-irrigation (drip and sprinkler systems) is promoted to enhance water-use efficiency.
- **Coverage:** Since the year 2015-16, approximately 109 lakh hectares of land have been brought under micro-irrigation.
- **Rainfed Area Development:** This component utilizes a "Watershed Plus Framework" for the conservation of natural resources.
- It promotes Integrated Farming Systems, wherein allied activities such as horticulture, animal husbandry, fisheries, and agro-forestry are encouraged alongside multi-cropping, with the aim of diversifying income sources and mitigating crop-related risks.
- **Soil Health Management:** Its objective is to promote appropriate nutrient management tailored to specific locations and crops. This is being implemented through the Soil Health Card Scheme to encourage the balanced use of fertilizers, crop residue management, and organic farming, while simultaneously curbing the excessive use of urea.
- **Climate Change and Sustainable Agriculture Monitoring, Modeling, and Networking:** This component promotes the mutual exchange of climate-related information between farmers and scientists through pilot projects, with the aim of facilitating better agricultural adaptation in response to climate change.

11 Years of Jan Suraksha Schemes

Why in News?

- Recently, Prime Minister Modi highlighted the impact of key social security schemes launched by the Central Government 11 years ago, including the Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana, and Atal Pension Yojana.



Key Points:

- PMJJBY, PMSBY, and APY were launched on May 9, 2015.
- Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY)**
- Scheme:** PMJJBY is a one-year life insurance scheme that can be renewed year after year and provides coverage for death occurring due to any cause.
- Eligibility:** Individuals in the age group of 18 to 50 years who hold an individual bank or post office account are eligible to enroll under this scheme.

- Those who join the scheme before attaining the age of 50 years can continue to receive life insurance risk cover up to the age of 55 years, subject to the payment of regular premiums.

- **Benefits:** A life insurance cover of ₹2 lakh in the event of death due to any cause, for which an annual premium of ₹436 is payable.

Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY)

- **Scheme:** PMSBY is a one-year accident insurance scheme that can be renewed year after year and provides coverage for death or disability caused by an accident.

- **Eligibility:** Individuals in the age group of 18 to 70 years who hold an individual bank or post office account are eligible to enroll under this scheme.

- **Benefits:** An accidental death-cum-disability cover of ₹2 lakh (₹1 lakh in the case of partial disability) in the event of death or disability caused by an accident, for which an annual premium of ₹20 is payable.

Atal Pension Yojana (APY)

- **Background:** Its objective is to provide financial security to people in the unorganized sector and to help them cope with future contingencies.

- APY is administered by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) under the overall administrative and institutional framework of the National Pension System (NPS).

- **Eligibility:** All bank account holders aged between 18 and 40 years are eligible.

- Applicants must not be income tax payers.

- Subscribers are required to contribute for a minimum period of 20 years.

- The contribution amount varies based on the selected pension slab and the age of entry.

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- **Benefits:** Based on their contributions, subscribers will receive a guaranteed minimum monthly pension of ₹1,000, ₹2,000, ₹3,000, ₹4,000, or ₹5,000 after attaining the age of 60 years.
- **Distribution of Scheme Benefits:** The pension is paid primarily to the subscriber.
- Upon the death of the subscriber, the pension is paid to their spouse.
- In the event of the death of both the subscriber and their spouse, the accumulated pension corpus is paid to the nominee.
- **In the case of premature death (before the age of 60):** The spouse may continue making contributions until the beneficiary attains the age of 60, thereby ensuring the continuity of pension eligibility.

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The Caspian Sea



Why in News?

- Amidst the ongoing conflict in West Asia, the Caspian Sea has emerged as an alternative route for military and trade supplies between Russia and Iran. It is being utilized for the transportation of weapons, drones, grain, and other commodities.





Key Points:

The Caspian Sea

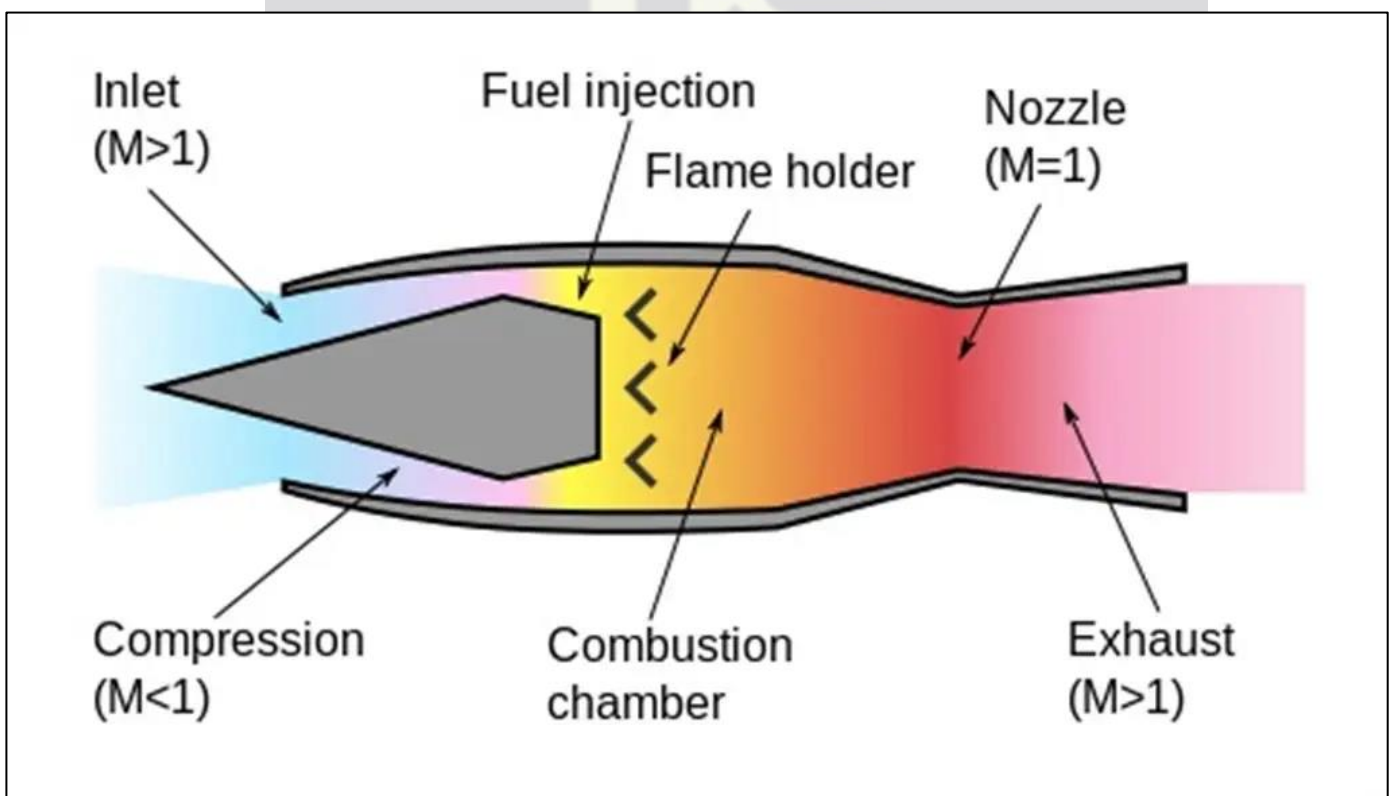
- It is the world's largest inland body of water (or the largest lake). It is situated at the crossroads of Eastern Europe and Western Asia.
- **It shares borders with five countries:** Russia (northwest), Kazakhstan (northeast), Turkmenistan (southeast), Iran (south), and Azerbaijan (west).
- **Water Inflow:** The Volga River is the primary source of water for the Caspian Sea, contributing approximately 80% of its total water inflow.
- Since it lacks any external outlet, water is lost solely through evaporation. This is the reason why its waters have become saline.
- **Current Status:** Rich in oil and natural gas, the Caspian Sea has shrunk by 46% between 2001 and 2024. The primary reasons for this are the high rate of evaporation and the construction of dams on the Volga River.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Scramjet Propulsion System

Why in News?

- The DRDO has successfully completed the testing of its 'Actively Cooled Full-Scale Scramjet Combustor.' During this test, it achieved a run-time of over 1,200 seconds.



Key Points:

Scramjet Propulsion System

- **Concept:** Scramjet stands for Supersonic Combustion Ramjet.
- It is an advanced air-breathing jet engine designed to operate efficiently at hypersonic speeds. In this system, fuel combustion takes place at supersonic speeds.

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- **Working Mechanism:** This engine utilizes the vehicle's high forward velocity to draw in external air and compress it, thereby enabling the combustion of fuel within the combustor.
- While traveling through the air, it utilizes atmospheric oxygen as the oxidizer.
- **Fuel Types:** Hydrogen or advanced liquid hydrocarbon endothermic fuels.
- **Advantages:** This system reduces the overall weight of the vehicle, making it a highly efficient propulsion system for low-cost, reusable space travel. Furthermore, this system provides an ideal foundation for the development of hypersonic cruise missiles.

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Divyastra Missile

Why in News?

- India conducted the second successful flight test of the 'Divyastra' missile from Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Island, located off the coast of Odisha.



Key Points:

The 'Divyastra' Missile

- It is an advanced Agni missile equipped with a Multiple Independently Targetable Re-entry Vehicle (MIRV) system.
- MIRV System:** It was originally developed in the early 1960s. This system enables a single missile to carry multiple nuclear warheads simultaneously, each capable of independently striking different targets.
- The United States (the first country to develop MIRV technology), Russia, the United Kingdom, France, and China also possess MIRV technology.