

October - 19

NATIONAL NEWS

Disaster Risk and Resilience Assessment Framework

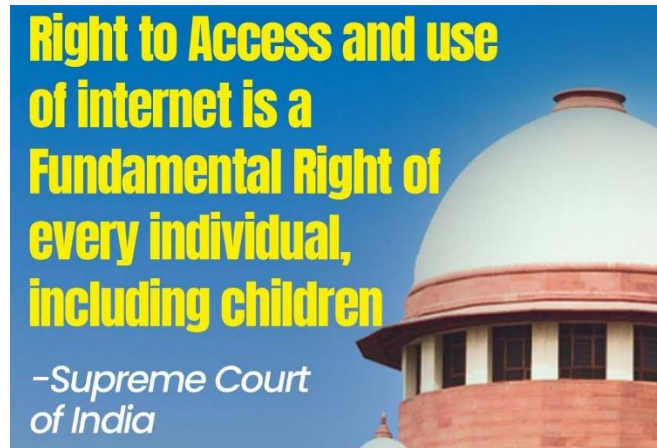
- ❖ The Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) assessed disaster risks to telecom towers in five States: Assam, Gujarat, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Uttarakhand.
- ❖ The study found that 57% of 48,416 telecom towers in Tamil Nadu face high or very high cyclonic wind risk, while 33% are exposed to flooding.
- ❖ In Assam, 83% of 18,388 telecom towers are in very high cyclonic wind zones, 43% face high flood exposure and 5% face high landslide exposure.
- ❖ The framework was developed with the Department of Telecommunications and the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA).
- ❖ It recommends stronger towers, raised generators, battery backup, alternative communication networks and satellite connectivity to maintain services during disasters.



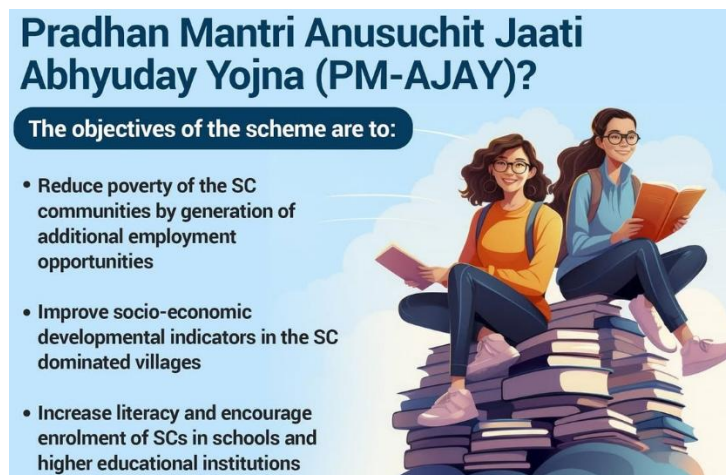
Supreme Court on Digital Rights

- ❖ The Supreme Court recognised children's right to access and use the internet as part of their fundamental rights under Articles 21 and 19(1)(a) of the Indian Constitution.
- ❖ Article 21 protects the Right to Life and Personal Liberty, while Article 19(1)(a) protects the Right to Freedom of Speech and Expression.
- ❖ The Court observed that blanket bans on internet access may be disproportionate and could push children towards unsafe online platforms.

- ❖ Recommended safeguards include parental guidance, supervision, age-appropriate protections and dedicated “child mode” accounts on social media.
- ❖ Online safety measures should protect children from exploitation while respecting their digital rights and supporting the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012.



PM-AJAY - Adarsh Gram Development

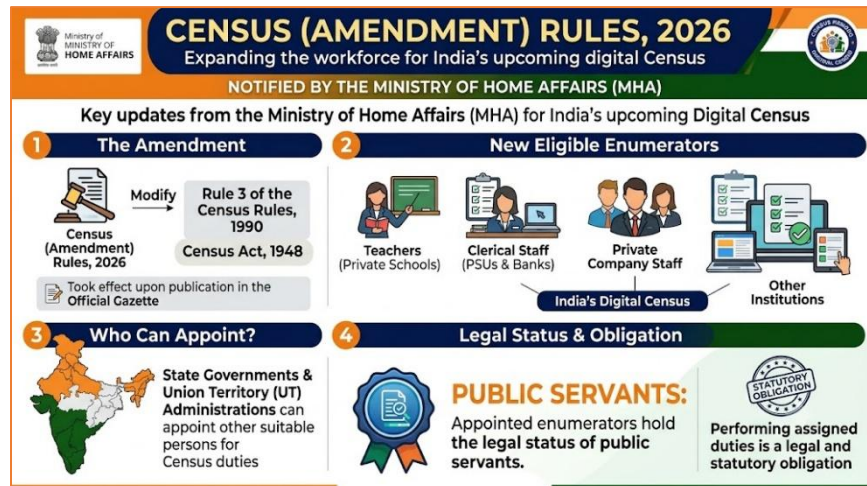


- ❖ Under the Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM-AJAY), 18,093 villages were declared Adarsh Grams as of 8 September 2026.
- ❖ The scheme is implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to improve the socio-economic and educational conditions of Scheduled Caste (SC) communities.
- ❖ More than 47,200 villages have been covered, benefiting over 47.79 lakh people, with 46,944 development works completed.

- ❖ Around ₹1,730 crore was released to States under the Grants-in-Aid component from 2021–22 to 2025–26, supporting livelihood and skill development for over 2.5 lakh beneficiaries.
- ❖ The scheme has three components: Adarsh Gram development, Grants-in-Aid for socio-economic projects, and construction and repair of student hostels.

Census (Amendment) Rules, 2026

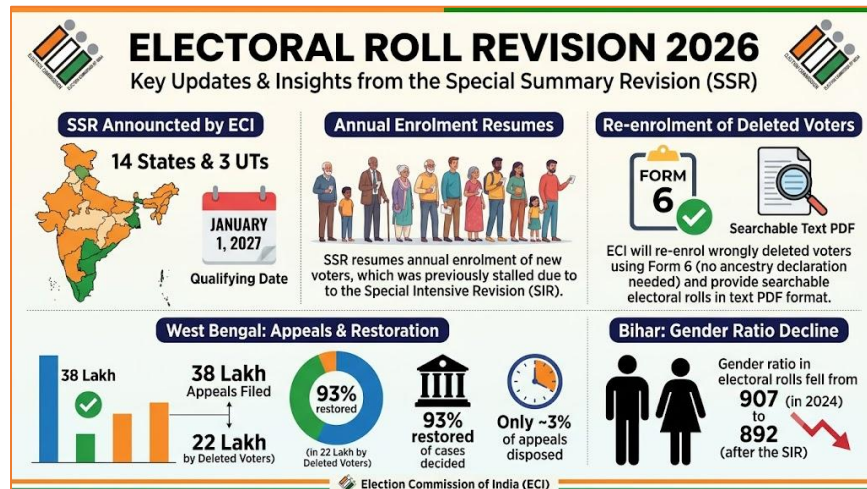
- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) notified the Census (Amendment) Rules, 2026, to expand the categories of people eligible to work as Census enumerators for India's upcoming digital Census.
- ❖ The amendment modifies Rule 3 of the Census Rules, 1990, under the Census Act, 1948, and took effect upon publication in the Official Gazette.
- ❖ Teachers from private educational institutions and clerical staff from public sector undertakings (PSUs), banks, private companies and other institutions can now be appointed as enumerators.
- ❖ State Governments and Union Territory (UT) administrations can appoint other suitable persons for Census duties.
- ❖ Appointed enumerators have the legal status of public servants, and performing their assigned duties is a statutory obligation.



Electoral Roll Revision 2026

- ❖ The Election Commission of India (ECI) announced SSR in 14 States and 3 Union Territories, with January 1, 2027, as the qualifying date.
- ❖ SSR resumes the annual enrolment of new voters, which was stalled due to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR).

- ❖ The ECI will re-enrol wrongly deleted voters using Form 6 without an ancestry declaration and provide searchable electoral rolls in text PDF format.
- ❖ In West Bengal, 38 lakh appeals were filed, including 22 lakh by deleted voters; tribunals restored voters in 93% of cases decided but disposed of only about 3% of appeals.
- ❖ In Bihar, the gender ratio in electoral rolls fell from 907 in 2024 to 892 after the SIR.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

IMF-World Bank Leadership 2027



- ❖ Pakistan was selected to chair the Boards of Governors of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank Group in 2027.

- ❖ Pakistan will hold the chairmanship for the first time since 1953.
- ❖ Ahad Khan Cheema, Pakistan's Economic Affairs Minister and World Bank Governor, was announced as the incoming chair during the World Bank-IMF Annual Meetings in Bangkok.
- ❖ The chairperson oversees proceedings attended by member countries' finance ministers and central bank governors but does not control lending decisions.
- ❖ Pakistan's appointment comes as it awaits approval for another US\$1.2 billion from the IMF, despite its continuing dependence on external financing.

World Health Summit 2026



- ❖ The World Health Summit 2026 was held in Berlin, Germany.
- ❖ Theme: "From Crisis to Resilience: Innovating for Health".
- ❖ Bangladesh and the European Investment Bank (EIB) announced a €250 million programme to improve women's healthcare, expected to benefit 47 million women and girls.
- ❖ The Gates Foundation and Wellcome Leap launched the Uzima: A Stillbirth Prevention Program, with \$100 million to target a 50% reduction in stillbirths over a decade in selected countries.
- ❖ Germany pledged €10 million through the Global Financing Facility (GFF) to support maternal and child health.
- ❖ Key discussions covered misuse of Artificial Intelligence (AI), nuclear warfare, declining public confidence in science and emotional well-being.



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY NEWS

Perseverance's World Record

- ❖ NASA's Perseverance rover set a new record for the longest distance driven on another world on October 11, 2026.
- ❖ It drove 45.22 km (28.10 miles) on Mars, surpassing NASA's Opportunity rover record of 45.16 km.
- ❖ The record was achieved on its 2,006th Martian day (sol), in about 5.5 years.
- ❖ AutoNav (Autonomous Navigation) enabled over 90% of its total driving by mapping hazards and selecting routes independently.
- ❖ Perseverance has collected 29 rock and regolith samples and is exploring ancient terrain in Lac de Charmes and Idubi for possible evidence of ancient hydrothermal systems.
- ❖ NASA's extended mission will continue until roughly 2028, with the rover heading toward Rainbow Falls.

**NASA's Perseverance Rover Sets
New Record For The Longest
Distance Driven On Another
World At 28.10 Miles**

ENVIRONMENT NEWS

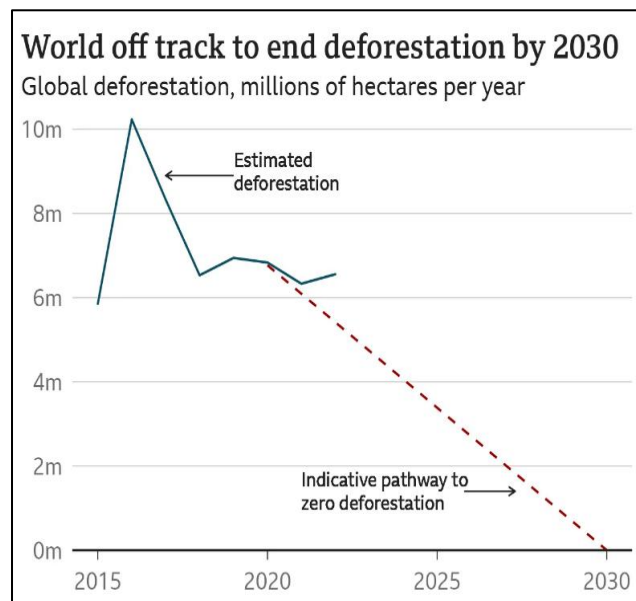
Giant Tortoise Population Recovery

- ❖ A 2026 survey estimated 180,000–183,000 Aldabra giant tortoises on Aldabra Atoll, more than Seychelles' human population.
- ❖ The survey was conducted by the Seychelles Islands Foundation and University of Exeter, using data collected from 2018–2022.
- ❖ The Aldabra giant tortoise (*Aldabrachelys gigantea*) is native to Aldabra Atoll, a coral atoll in the western Indian Ocean.
- ❖ Aldabra Atoll became a Strict Nature Reserve in 1981 and a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1982.

- ❖ The population had fallen to fewer than 1,000 in the 19th century but recovered due to conservation efforts; threats include drought, sea-level rise and invasive species.



Global Deforestation Trends 2026

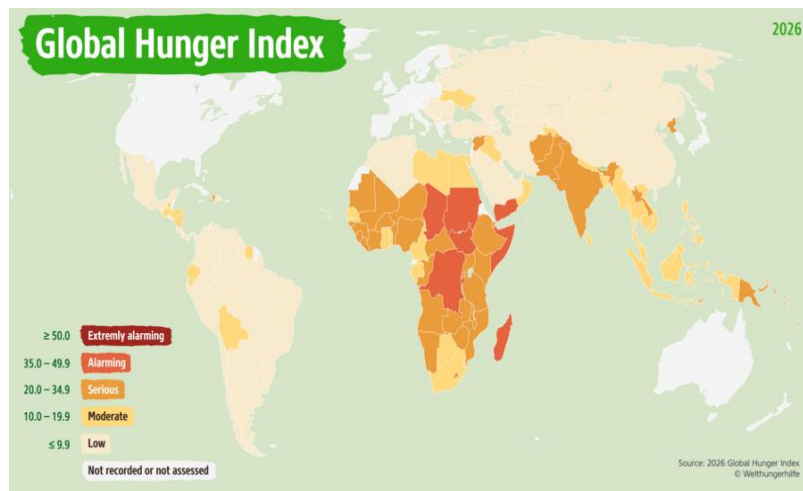


- ❖ The Forest Declaration Assessment 2026 reported that global deforestation fell by 15% in 2025, but the world remains off track to halt and reverse forest loss by 2030.
- ❖ Around 7 million hectares of forest were lost in 2025, leaving a cumulative shortfall of 10.7 million hectares against the reduction target since 2021.

- ❖ Tropical Latin America and the Caribbean reduced deforestation to 33% below the 2018–2020 baseline, while deforestation continued to rise in tropical Africa.
- ❖ In 2024, 65.4 million hectares of forest experienced a decline in ecological integrity, indicating damage to forest health and functioning.
- ❖ Forest protection and restoration received only US\$6 billion, or 0.3% of global climate finance, in 2024.
- ❖ Protected areas cover 17.33% of the world's land and inland waters, below the 30% conservation target by 2030 under the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

REPORTS AND INDICES

Global Hunger Index 2026



- ❖ The 2026 Global Hunger Index (GHI), released by Welthungerhilfe (WHH), Helvetas and the Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict (IFHV), reported a global hunger score of 18.1.
- ❖ The global score worsened from 17.6 in 2018 to 18.1 in 2026, remaining in the moderate hunger category.
- ❖ The GHI measures four indicators: undernourishment, child stunting, child wasting and child mortality among children under five years.
- ❖ Eight countries, including Somalia, Burundi, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Madagascar, were classified as having alarming hunger levels.
- ❖ Sub-Saharan Africa recorded a serious hunger level with a score of 27.5, while South Asia scored 23.5, also in the serious category.
- ❖ Armed conflicts, climate shocks and reduced aid funding worsen food insecurity, while Nepal, Uganda and Togo have made progress in reducing hunger.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty 2026 - October 17

- ❖ The day began on October 17, 1987, and was officially recognised by the United Nations General Assembly in 1992 through Resolution.
- ❖ The day aims to eradicate poverty, protect human dignity and promote access to safe housing, clean water, sanitation, healthcare and education.
- ❖ More than 2.8 billion people face inadequate housing, while 826 million people live in extreme poverty in 2026, surviving on less than US\$3 per day (2021 purchasing power parity).
- ❖ The 2026 focus supports Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1, 10, 11 and 16, covering poverty eradication, reduced inequalities, sustainable cities, and peace and justice.
- ❖ The 2026 focus is “Safe Homes for All” under the 2026–2028 theme “United for Peace and Human Rights.”

