

February - 04

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ International Zebra Day was observed on 31 January to spread awareness about zebra conservation and the threats of habitat loss, poaching, and population decline.

TAMIL NADU NEWS

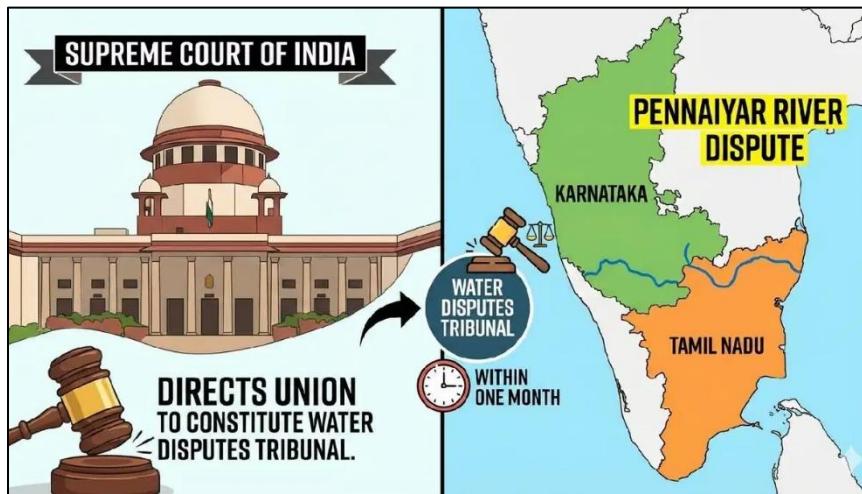
Budget 2026 - Adichanallur archaeological site



- ❖ The Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed the development of 15 archaeological sites across the country into vibrant and experiential cultural destinations.
- ❖ It will include Lothal, Dholavira, Rakhigarhi, Adichanallur, Sarnath, Hastinapur, and Leh Palace.
- ❖ Among the selected sites are Indus Valley Civilisation (IVC) sites such as Rakhigarhi in Haryana, and Dholavira and Lothal in Gujarat.
- ❖ It also includes Buddhist sites in Uttar Pradesh, such as Sarnath and Hastinapur.
- ❖ Adichanallur, one of India's oldest archaeological sites, is located in Tamil Nadu's Thoothukudi district along the banks of the Thamirabarani River.
- ❖ It offers insights into early Iron Age life and ancient Tamil Civilisation.

- ❖ It was the first site in India where the ASI installed walk-through ramps along the excavated area.
- ❖ Adichanallur is best known for its urn burials, large clay pots used to bury the dead, often accompanied by iron tools, ornaments, and pottery.
- ❖ These urns were first discovered in the late 19th century by British archaeologist Alexander Rea.

Tribunal for Pennaiyar river dispute

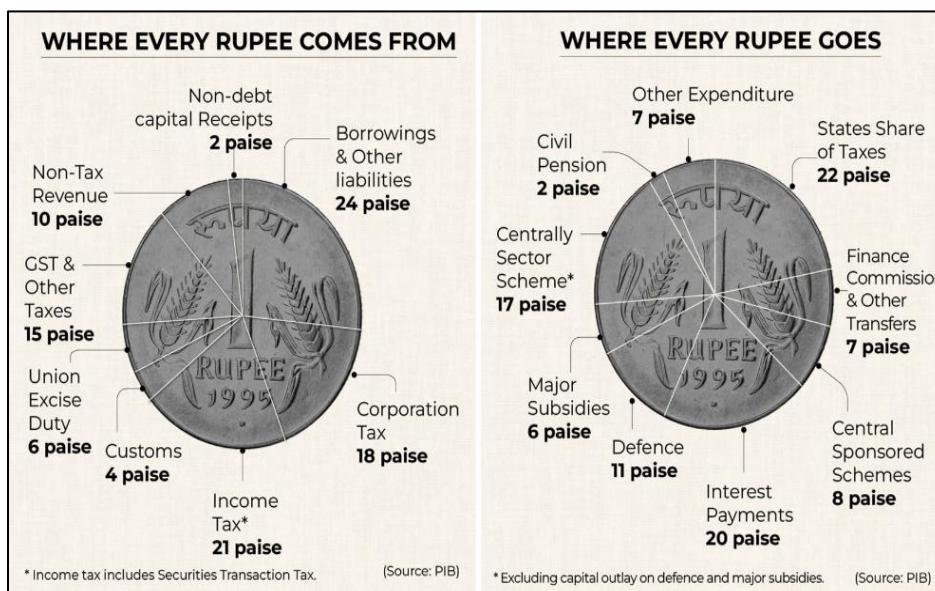


- ❖ The Supreme Court directs the Centre to constitute a tribunal to settle the Pennaiyar river dispute between T.N. and Karnataka.
- ❖ It directed the Central government to issue a notification to constitute the inter-State water disputes tribunal within a month.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu argued that the flow of water of an inter-State River is a national asset and no single state can claim exclusive ownership of its water.
- ❖ The state also said that an 1892 agreement over the river water was "valid and binding" on the party States.
- ❖ The State further said that a river even included the stream, tributaries and other streams contributing water directly or indirectly into it.
- ❖ The major tributary, Markandeyanadhi, which has its catchment area both in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, cannot be considered to be out of the purview of the Agreement.
- ❖ The South Pennar River is known as Thenpennai, Ponnaiyar or Pennaiyar in Tamil.
- ❖ It is the second longest river in Tamil Nadu, with a length of 497 km, after the Kaveri.

- ❖ The river originates in the Nandi Hills in the Chikkaballapura district of Karnataka and flows through Tamil Nadu before emptying into the Bay of Bengal.
- ❖ The largest dam on this river is Sathanur Dam near Tiruvannamalai.
- ❖ It splits into a delta on which Cuddalore town is located.

NATIONAL NEWS

India's Union Budget 2026



- ❖ Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Union Budget on February 1, 2026.
- ❖ This was the first time in India's history that the Budget was given on a Sunday.
- ❖ The Budget aims to boost self-reliance, create employment, and enhance India's global competitiveness.
- ❖ The total amount of money in the Budget is ₹53.5 lakh crore.
- ❖ The plan focuses on three 'Kartavyas' (Duties): economic growth, helping people's dreams, and giving everyone equal chances.
- ❖ The Budget focuses on scaling up manufacturing in seven strategic and frontier sectors, including Biopharma SHAKTI, semiconductors, textiles, chemicals, rare earths, and sports goods.
- ❖ The government expects the Fiscal Deficit to be 4.3% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
- ❖ The government will spend ₹12.2 lakh crore on building big things like roads and bridges, which is called Capital Expenditure (Capex).

- ❖ Net market borrowing for the Financial Year 2026–27 has been fixed at ₹11.73 lakh crore

Money and Taxes

- ❖ A new law called the Income Tax Act 2025 will start on April 1, 2026.
- ❖ There are no changes to the current income tax slabs for people.
- ❖ Foreign companies that provide cloud services using Indian data centres will get a Tax Holiday (no tax) until the year 2047.
- ❖ The Securities Transaction Tax (STT) for trading in futures and options (stock market bets) has been increased.
- ❖ Customs Duty (tax on imported goods) was reduced for 17 cancer medicines to make them cheaper.
- ❖ Basic Customs Duty was removed for parts used to make lithium-ion batteries and airplanes.
- ❖ Soaps, detergents, and umbrellas might become more expensive due to tax changes.

Transport and Infrastructure

- ❖ The Indian Railways will get a record investment of ₹2.93 lakh crore.
- ❖ The government will build seven new High-Speed Rail (HSR) corridors, including routes like Mumbai-Pune and Chennai-Bengaluru.
- ❖ Twenty new waterways will be opened over the next five years.
- ❖ A new East Coast Industrial Corridor will be built with a special centre at Durgapur.
- ❖ Chennai will get two of the new high-speed rail corridors.

Science and Industry

- ❖ The India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) 2.0 was launched to help India make its own computer chips.
- ❖ The Biopharma SHAKTI (Strategic Health and Knowledge Tracking Initiative) scheme will get ₹10,000 crore to help make medicines.
- ❖ The Department of Space was given ₹13,705 crore for its missions.
- ❖ The government will help 200 old industrial areas (Legacy Clusters) become modern and better.
- ❖ A special project for "Sports Goods" was announced to help India make better sports equipment.

Health and Education

- ❖ The Health Ministry will receive ₹1.06 lakh crore.

- ❖ A second National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS-2) will be built in North India.
- ❖ The government will set up five regional medical hubs to bring more people to India for healthcare.
- ❖ New schools and colleges will get special labs to learn how to make cartoons and games (AVGC - Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, and Comics).
- ❖ A new National Institute of Design (NID) will be opened in Eastern India.

Farmers and Rural Development

- ❖ A new Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool called Bharat-VISTAAR (Versatile Information System for Targeted Agricultural Assistance and Resources) was launched to help farmers.
- ❖ The government will help farmers grow more coconuts, cashews, cocoa, and sandalwood.
- ❖ "SHE Marts" will be opened to help women business owners sell their products.
- ❖ The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-Kisan) scheme for farmers was given ₹63,500 crore.

Safety and Others

- ❖ Defence spending (money for the army, navy, and air force) will rise by 15.3% to ₹7.84 lakh crore.
- ❖ The Home Ministry (MHA) will get ₹2.55 lakh crore to keep the country safe.
- ❖ The Khelo India Mission was launched to help young people become better at sports.
- ❖ Special "Rare-Earth Corridors" will be built in states like Odisha and Tamil Nadu to find special minerals used in technology.
- ❖ The Union Budget 2026–27 announced the establishment of five university townships to strengthen higher education and skill development.

Mahatma Gandhi Gram Swaraj Initiative

- ❖ The Mahatma Gandhi Gram Swaraj Initiative was announced in the Union Budget 2026–27 to strengthen khadi and handicrafts in India.
- ❖ The initiative aims to improve global market linkages and branding support for khadi and related products.
- ❖ It will streamline and support training, skill development, and quality of production for artisans and weavers.
- ❖ The scheme is expected to benefit weavers, village industries, the One District One Product (ODOP) programme, and rural youth.

- ❖ The initiative forms part of a broader integrated textile programme with five key components, including the National Fibre Scheme and Textile Expansion and Employment Scheme.



MAHATMA GANDHI GRAM SWARAJ INITIATIVE

Launch of Mahatma Gandhi Gram Swaraj initiative to **strengthen khadi, handloom and handicrafts**

It will help in **global market linkage and branding**

It will streamline and support training, skilling, quality of process and production

This will benefit our weavers, village industries, **One - District - One - Product** initiative and rural youth

Integrated Textile Program – Union Budget 2026/27

- ❖ The Integrated Textile Programme focuses on strengthening India's labour-intensive textile and apparel sector.
- ❖ The textile sector received nearly 25% higher budget allocation compared to the previous year.
- ❖ A National Fibre Scheme was proposed to promote man-made fibres, silk, wool, and other fibres.
- ❖ Mega Textile Parks will be developed to support technical textiles and value addition.
- ❖ A Textile Expansion and Employment Scheme will modernise traditional clusters with support for machinery and technology upgradation.
- ❖ A National Handloom and Handicraft Programme will provide targeted support to weavers and artisans.
- ❖ The Mahatma Gandhi Gram Swaraj Initiative will strengthen khadi, handloom, and handicrafts.

- ❖ The Tex-Eco Initiative will promote sustainable and globally competitive textiles and apparel.
- ❖ SAMARTH 2.0 will upgrade the textile skilling ecosystem across the country.

**Integrated Programme for
Textile Sector**

- **Mahatma Gandhi Gram Swaraj initiative** to be launched to strengthen khadi, handloom & handicrafts
- **Samarth 2.0** to modernize and upgrade textile skilling ecosystem
- **National Fibre Scheme** for self-reliance in natural fibres, man-made fibres, and new-age fibres
- Textile Expansion and Employment Scheme to modernise traditional clusters
- National Handloom and Handicraft programme to integrate & strengthen existing schemes
- **Tex-Eco Initiative** for globally competitive and sustainable textiles & apparels
- Mega Textile Parks to be set up in challenge mode



Divyangjan Welfare Initiatives – 2026/27

- ❖ Two new schemes were announced to promote skill-based employment and assistive support for Divyangjans.
- ❖ Divyangjan Kaushal Yojana will provide customised, industry-relevant training to Divyangjans in Information Technology (IT), AVGC (Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics), Hospitality, and Food & Beverages sectors.
- ❖ The scheme focuses on task-oriented and process-driven roles suitable for different categories of Divyangjans.
- ❖ Divyang Sahara Yojana aims to ensure timely access to high-quality assistive devices for eligible Divyangjans.
- ❖ Under the scheme, Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO) will be supported to scale up production, research and development (R&D), and Artificial Intelligence (AI) integration.

- ❖ The Budget proposes to strengthen PM Divyasha Kendras and set up Assistive Technology Marts as modern retail-style centres for Divyangjans and senior citizens.

Empowering Divyangjan

Divyangjan Kaushal Yojana:

- To ensure dignified livelihood opportunities through **industry-relevant and customized training** specific to each divyang group

Divyang Sahara Yojana:

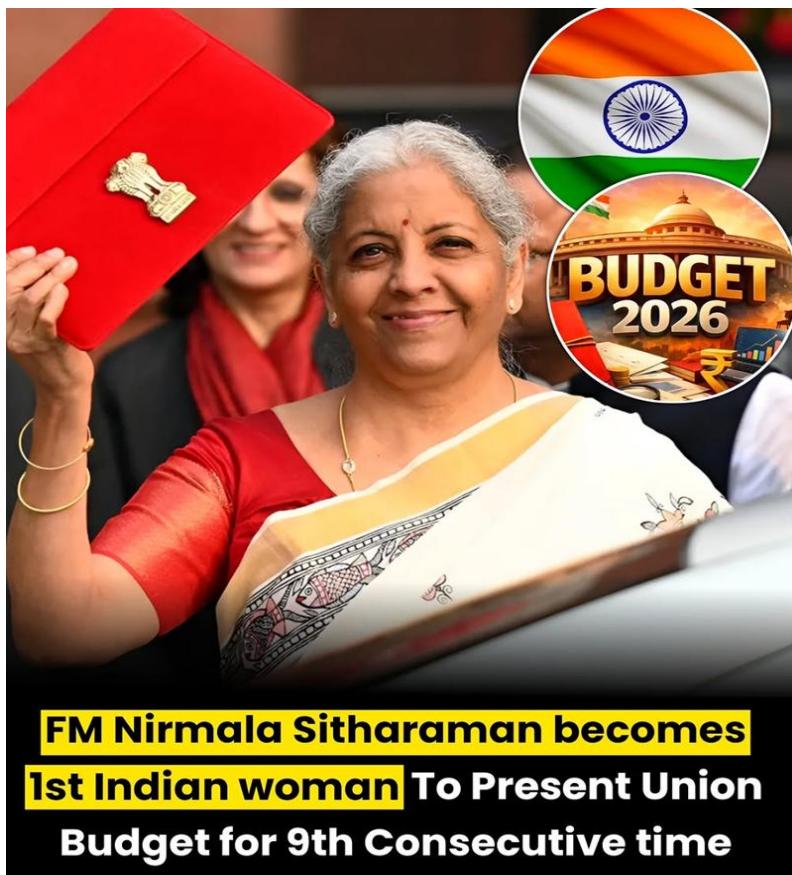
- Support the **Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India** (ALIMCO) to scale up production of assistive devices, invest in R&D and AI integration
- To strengthen **PM Divyasha Kendras** and support setting up of **Assistive Technology Marts** as modern retail-style centres



Significant of Union Budget 2026

- ❖ Nirmala Sitharaman was in 2019 appointed as India's first full-time woman finance minister when Prime Minister Narendra Modi won a decisive second term.
- ❖ After Modi came back to power in 2024 for the third time, Nirmala Sitharaman continued to retain her finance portfolio.
- ❖ Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday (February 1, 2026) presented her record ninth consecutive Union Budget for April 2026 to March 2027 in the Lok Sabha.
- ❖ It was presented on Sunday, a first in independent India's history.
- ❖ The finance minister also laid the 16th Finance Commission report for tax revenue devolution between the Centre and states for 2026-2031.
- ❖ With 9th Consecutive Budget, Nirmala Sitharaman Becomes Longest Serving Finance Minister.

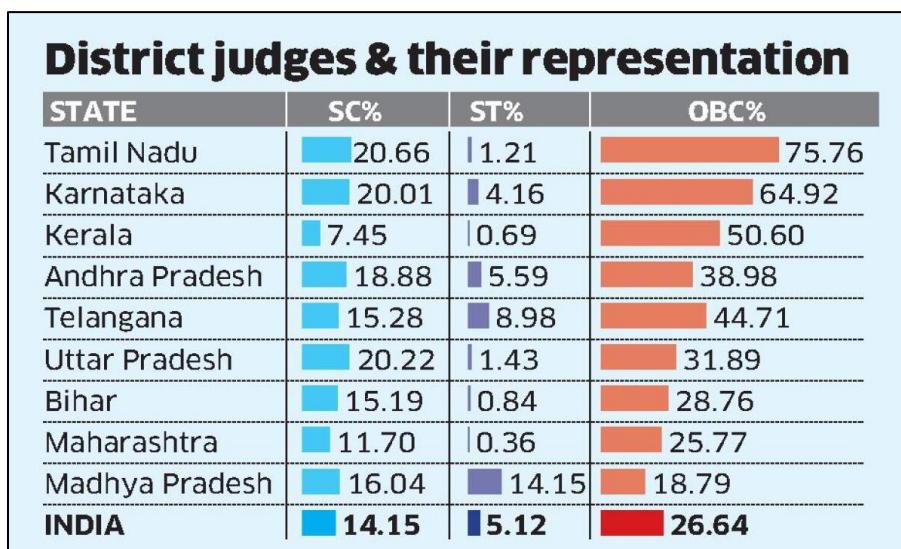
- ❖ This will take Nirmala Sitharaman closer to the record of 10 budgets that were presented by former Prime Minister Morarji Desai over different time periods.
- ❖ Former prime minister Morarji Desai had presented the Union Budget on 10 occasions, while P Chidambaram presented the Budget nine times, but both are not for consecutive years.
- ❖ Desai presented six budgets during his tenure as finance minister from 1959 to 1964, and four budgets between 1967 and 1969.
- ❖ Former finance ministers P Chidambaram and Pranab Mukherjee had presented nine and eight budgets, respectively, under different prime ministers.
- ❖ The other longest-serving Finance Minister at a stretch was C D Deshmukh.
- ❖ He took charge of the Ministry on June 1, 1950, and remained in office for about six years and two months.



- ❖ Manmohan Singh, known for pushing economic liberalisation, was Finance Minister for about five years between June 21, 1990, and June 16, 1996.
- ❖ Later, as Prime Minister, Singh held the additional charge of the Finance portfolio for a brief period once in 2008 and again in 2012.
- ❖ The first Finance Minister of Independent India was R K Shanmukham Chetty.

- ❖ The first-ever Union Budget of independent India was presented on November 26, 1947.
- ❖ Yashwant Sinha, the Finance Minister of India in the NDA government led by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, changed the longstanding tradition by announcing the 1999 Union Budget at 11 AM.
- ❖ The budget was previously presented at 5 PM, a colonial practice designed to align with British morning time.
- ❖ Nirmala Sitharaman holds the record for the longest budget speech when her presentation on February 1, 2020, lasted two hours and 40 minutes.
- ❖ Hirubhai Mulljibhai Patel's interim Budget speech in 1977 is so far the shortest at just 800 words.
- ❖ The Budget presentation date was in 2017 changed to the 1st of February to allow the government to complete the Parliamentary approval process by March-end and allow implementation of the Budget from the start of the fiscal year on April 1.
- ❖ Presenting the Budget on February 28 meant that the implementation could not start before May/June, after accounting for 2-3 months of the parliamentary approval process.

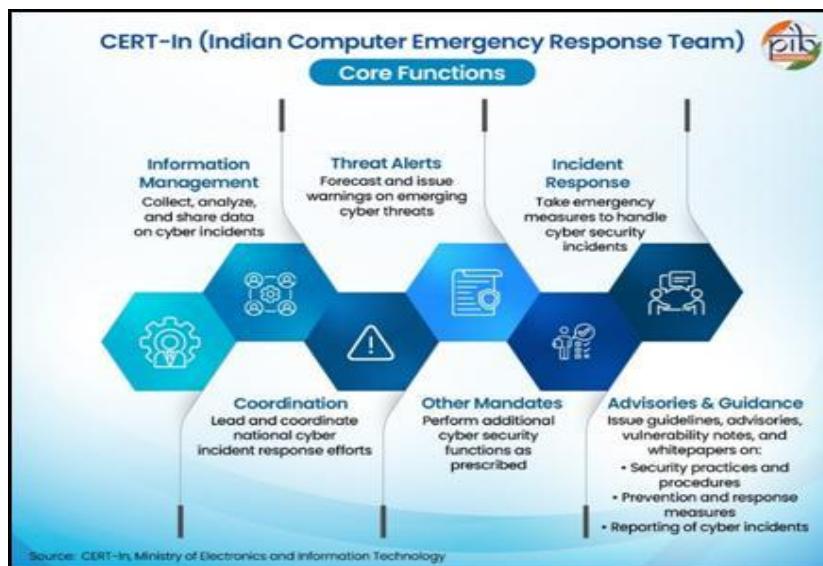
Judicial Reservation in India



- ❖ According to a written reply in parliament by the Union Law Ministry under the BJP-led Centre, Tamil Nadu has the highest representation of SC, ST, and OBC judges in district and subordinate courts anywhere in India.
- ❖ The district and subordinate courts in the country have 14.15% Dalits, 5.12% tribals and 26.64% OBCs as judges.

- ❖ With statistics showing that diversity among them is higher in South India, with Tamil Nadu and Karnataka leading the spot compared to the rest of the country.
- ❖ It showed that the lower judiciary is more representative compared to the High Courts.
- ❖ The appointments since 2018 showed only 3.89% of 847 judges were Dalits, 2% tribals and 12.27% OBCs.
- ❖ States like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh have impressive representation in lower courts.
- ❖ While the statistics placed in Parliament showed “zero” SC, ST and OBC judges in lower courts in West Bengal and Andaman Nicobar Islands.
- ❖ Among the big States, Tamil Nadu has 97.65% (1,205 of 1,234) from these categories – SC 20.66% (255), ST 1.21% (15) and OBCs 75.76% (935).
- ❖ While only those persons who are recommended by the Supreme Court Collegium are appointed as Judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts, the state governments, in consultation with the respective High Courts, frame the rules and regulations regarding the appointment and recruitment of judicial officers in the respective State Judicial Service.
- ❖ There is no reservation policy in the appointment of judges to district and subordinate courts.

30 lakh cyber incidents in 2025 - India



- ❖ The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) has emerged as India's frontline defence against cyber-attacks.

- ❖ It was established in 2004 under Section 70B of the Information Technology Act, 2000.
- ❖ CERT-In serves as the national agency for cyber incident response under the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology.
- ❖ In 2025, CERT-In handled over 29.44 lakh cyber incidents.
- ❖ By 2025, internet connections in India crossed the milestone of 100 crore, reaching 100.29 crore, compared to 25.15 crore in March 2014.
- ❖ In the Global Cybersecurity Outlook 2025 published by the World Economic Forum (WEF), CERT-In has been highlighted for its deployment of AI-driven situational awareness systems.

Shift in India's Pharma and Medical Devices Sector



**India's Pharma Sector
Ranks 3rd Globally in Volume**

**Leading Supplier of Affordable
Medicines Worldwide**

- Ranks **3rd** in global pharma volume, **14th** in value
- Largest supplier of generic drugs with **20%** of the global supply
- Renowned for affordable and accessible drugs

- ❖ India's pharmaceutical industry is sharpening its focus on complex generics, biosimilars and innovation.
- ❖ India is a global leader in low-cost vaccine supply.
- ❖ India currently ranks 11th globally in pharmaceutical exports by value, with a 3 per cent global share.
- ❖ India is the Third-largest by volume globally and meets around 20% of global generics demand, with exports to 191 countries in FY25.

- ❖ Over half of these exports are directed to highly regulated markets such as the United States and Europe.
- ❖ Beyond generic drugs, India is also providing a majority of the world's DPT, BCG and measles vaccines.
- ❖ India's medical devices sector is also rapidly becoming globally competitive, exporting to 187 countries in FY25.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Ban on Social Media for Under 15 – France



- ❖ France's National Assembly backed legislation to ban children under 15 years old from social media.
- ❖ If it is passed, young teenagers would not be able to use networks such as Snapchat, Instagram and TikTok.

- ❖ The French move is part of a growing trend of restricting social networks for children, triggered by increasing evidence of the damage they can cause to mental health.
- ❖ A similar law was passed in Australia late last year.

4B Movement - South Korea

The 4B movement, which began in South Korea in 2018 following the #MeToo movement, has become a powerful way for some women to stand up against misogyny, gender discrimination, and violence. The '4B' stands for four Korean words beginning with "bi" (which translates to no). The words are: "bihon" means no heterosexual marriage, "bichulsan" (no childbirth), "biyeonae" (no dating), and "bisekseu" (no heterosexual sexual relationships).



- ❖ Indians on the Internet rally to bring the 4B movement to India.
- ❖ 4B or "Four Nos" is a radical feminist movement that originated in South Korea.
- ❖ The name refers to its defining four tenets.
- ❖ All of which start with the Korean-language term bi, roughly meaning no.
- ❖ Its proponents do not date men, marry men, have sex with men, or have children with men.
- ❖ It has led to the lowest birth rate in the world and abstinence.
- ❖ The 4B movement is not a personal vendetta against the gender but a systemic opt-out from cultural norms, which prop up inequality.
- ❖ South Korea has the largest gender-based pay gap, nearly 31 per cent.

ECONOMY NEWS

SBI CHAKRA Initiative

- ❖ The SBI launched 'CHAKRA' on 31 January 2026 to strengthen financing of emerging industries.
- ❖ CHAKRA stands for Centre of Excellence for Sunrise Sectors.

- ❖ It aims to build institutional capability to assess and finance sunrise and high-technology sectors.
- ❖ SBI identified eight sunrise sectors, including renewable energy, electric mobility, green hydrogen, semiconductors, battery storage, decarbonisation, smart infrastructure, and data centres.
- ❖ These sectors are estimated to require ₹100 lakh crore capital over the next five years.
- ❖ CHAKRA will act as a knowledge and decision-support hub to convert complex technologies into bankable projects.



ENVIRONMENT NEWS

Sunabeda Wildlife Sanctuary - Maoist free status

- ❖ Sunabeda Wildlife Sanctuary is located in Odisha's Nuapada district.
- ❖ It was recently declared Maoist-free status.
- ❖ It is also witnessing a significant rise in leopard presence.
- ❖ Officials claim that over 70 leopards may inhabit the sanctuary.
- ❖ It is also a proposed tiger reserve.
- ❖ A 2016 state tiger census recorded four tigers.
- ❖ But the latest national report released in July last year found none.
- ❖ The sanctuary forms the catchment area of the Jonk River, a tributary of the Mahanadi.

- ❖ The sanctuary is also the source of the rivers of Sunder and Indra.



USA and Paris Climate Agreement

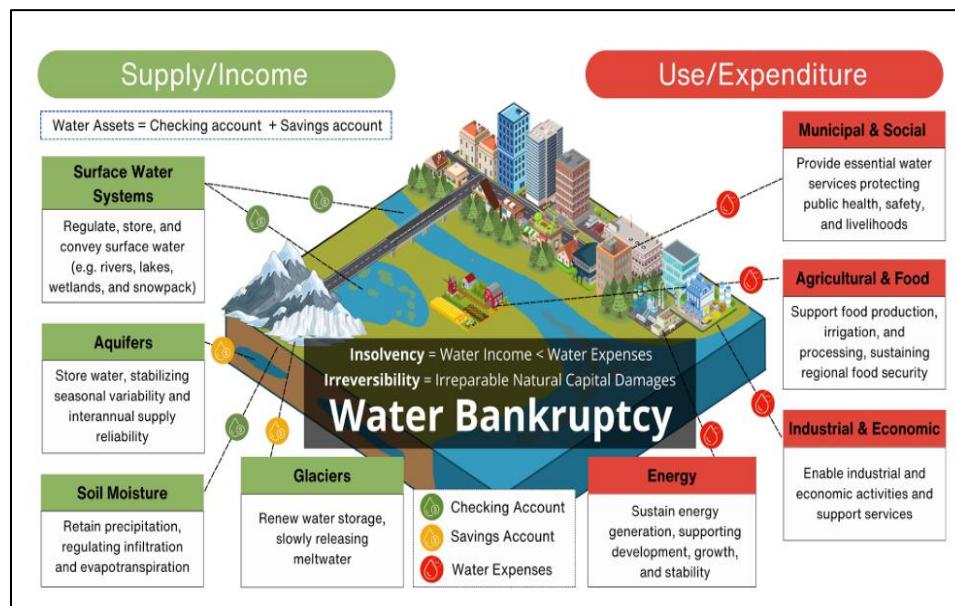


- ❖ The United States is officially out of the Paris Agreement under the administration of President Donald Trump.

- ❖ It was making it the only country to quit the historic climate pact twice.
- ❖ It makes the U.S. the only country to abandon the global pact, having previously rejoined in 2021 under President Biden after an initial 2017 withdrawal.
- ❖ The United States is the world's second biggest greenhouse gas emitter after China.
- ❖ The only other UN member states outside the Paris agreement are Iran, Libya and Yemen.
- ❖ The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty adopted in 2015 (COP21) by 195 parties to limit global warming to well below 2°C —ideally 1.5°C—above pre-industrial levels.
- ❖ It requires countries to submit increasingly ambitious, voluntary climate plans known as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) every five years.
- ❖ The 1.5 °C target is generally accepted to refer to a 20-year average, rather than a single year.

REPORTS AND INDICES

Water Bankruptcy Report 2026 - United Nations University (UNU-INWEH) report



- ❖ The United Nations published a landmark report on global water bankruptcy in January 2026.
- ❖ It was titled “Global Water Bankruptcy: Living Beyond Our Hydrological Means in the Post-Crisis Era.

- ❖ It defines 'water bankruptcy' as a condition in which repeated crises become chronic states, with persistent shortages or damages, meaning that many water systems can no longer return to their historical baselines.
- ❖ The report states that water bankruptcy is a condition "defined by both insolvency and irreversibility".
- ❖ Insolvency refers to withdrawing and polluting water beyond renewable inflows and safe depletion limits.
- ❖ Irreversibility refers to the damage to key parts of water-related natural capital, such as wetlands and lakes, that makes restoration of the system to its initial conditions infeasible.
- ❖ The UN argues that many countries have entered their 'water system overdrafts' through consistently overusing renewable water flows, which reduces the capacity of rivers and other watercourses to replenish themselves on normal timescales.
- ❖ More than half the world's large lakes have declined since the early 1990's, while around 35 per cent of natural wetlands have been lost since 1970.
- ❖ Nearly three-quarters of the world's population live in countries classified as water-insecure or critically water-insecure.
- ❖ Around four billion people experience severe water scarcity for at least one month each year.
- ❖ The world has lost roughly 410 million hectares of natural wetlands in the last five decades—an area almost the size of the European Union.
- ❖ India has only 4% of global freshwater resources.
- ❖ Per capita water availability has declined by 73% since 1951 in India.
- ❖ The Indo-Gangetic Plain is identified as a hotspot for severe groundwater depletion.
- ❖ Many Indian cities face "Day Zero" (total depletion) scenarios.
- ❖ 'Day zero' is a term that is commonly used to refer to the point at which a city or other location runs out of water entirely.
- ❖ It was popularised during the Cape Town water scarcity crisis in 2018
- ❖ Tehran in Iran is now in its sixth consecutive year of drought.

STATE NEWS

First Online Property Tax District - Dhamtari

- ❖ Dhamtari in Chhattisgarh became the first district in India to collect property tax through the SAMARTH Panchayat portal.

- ❖ The launch happened at Sankara Gram Panchayat in Nagri block using a UPI-enabled online payment system.
- ❖ Citizens can now pay property taxes from home, reducing manual work and delays.
- ❖ The system is rolled out across nearly 400-gram panchayats in Dhamtari and may expand to the whole state.
- ❖ SAMARTH portal improves transparency, revenue collection, and financial independence for panchayats.

