NATIONAL NEWS

ECI on proof of voter eligibility

Aadhaar, ration card not valid proof of voter eligibility: ECI to Supreme Court in Bihar electoral roll case
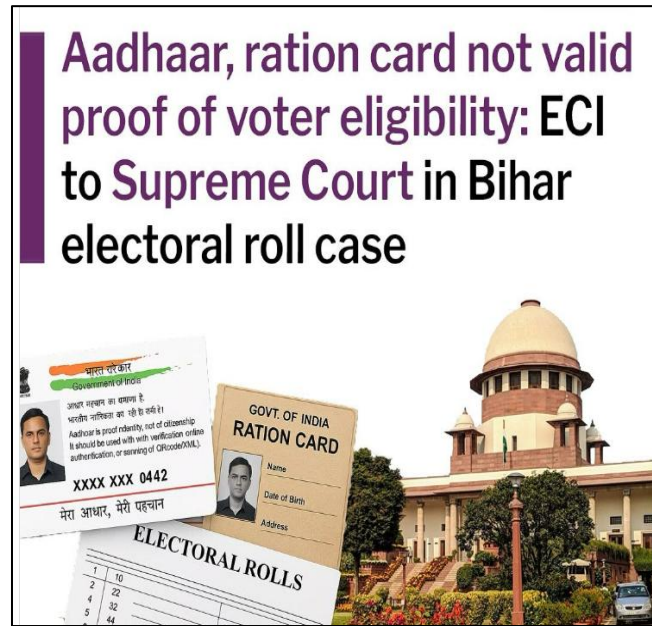
- ❖ The Election Commission (EC) assured the Supreme Court the following.

- ❖ A person will not cease to be a citizen merely on being found ineligible for registration in the electoral rolls under the Special Intensive Revision (SIR).

- ❖ It said electors whose names already feature in the electoral rolls of Bihar in 2003 were exempted from furnishing documents to prove their eligibility.

- ❖ The last intensive revision was held in 2003.

- ❖ The EC said it was vested under the law and Constitution (326) with the power to request proof of citizenship for "enabling the constitutional right to vote".

- ❖ Though the Supreme Court had asked the EC to consider including Aadhaar, voter ID and ration cards in the list of 11 indicative documents to register voters, the EC said they cannot be accepted as "standalone documents" for SIR.

- ❖ Aadhaar is merely a proof of identity.

- ❖ The Aadhaar card itself carries a disclaimer that it is not proof of citizenship.

- ❖ The poll body pointed to the "widespread issuance of bogus ration cards", making the document untrustworthy.

- ❖ As for the Electors Photo Identity Card (EPIC), it reasoned that they were prepared based on the electoral rolls.

NxtBanking - India's first fully AI-driven fintech platform

❖ Laraware Pvt Ltd has launched India's first fully AI-powered fintech software platform.

❖ It was developed by technology innovator Anvesh Tiwari.

❖ It enables banks, non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), aggregators, and fintech startups to instantly offer intelligent financial services with enterprise-grade compliance, real-time automation, and robust security.

Laraware Launches India's First Fully AI-Native Fintech Platform Nxtbanking

Bharat NCX 2025

❖ The Bharat National Cybersecurity Exercise 2025 (Bharat NCX 2025) was inaugurated in collaboration with Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU), Gandhi Nagar, Gujarat.

❖ The theme of the event is 'Enhancing the Operational Preparedness of Indian Cyberspace'.

❖ The exercise focuses on enhancing the operational preparedness of Indian cyberspace.

AI for India 2.0

❖ Ministry of Education and Skill Development and Entrepreneurship launched AI for India 2.0.

❖ It is a free online Artificial Intelligence (AI) training program inaugurated on World Youth Skills Day, July 15, 2023.

❖ The program is a joint initiative by Skill India and GUVI.

❖ AI for India 2.0 offers frontier AI skills training in nine Indian languages to improve accessibility, especially for youth in rural areas.

❖ The GUVI, an IIT Madras-incubated startup, provides tech learning platforms in vernacular languages to promote digital inclusion.

❖ The initiative aims to future-proof India's youth (Yuva Shakti) by expanding access to cutting-edge technology education across the country.

MSDE in Collaboration with GUVI launches
AI for India 2.0
A Free Online AI Skill Training Event for the Youth

Pollution Control Vessel Samudra Prachet

POLLUTION CONTROL VESSEL LAUNCHED IN VASCO

Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) launched Yard 1268, a Pollution Control Vessel for the Indian Coast Guard, in Vasco on Wednesday. The launch was done by Priya Paramesh with Director General Paramesh Sivamani in attendance. Built under 'Make in India', the vessel will help combat marine pollution, safeguarding India's coastal ecosystems.
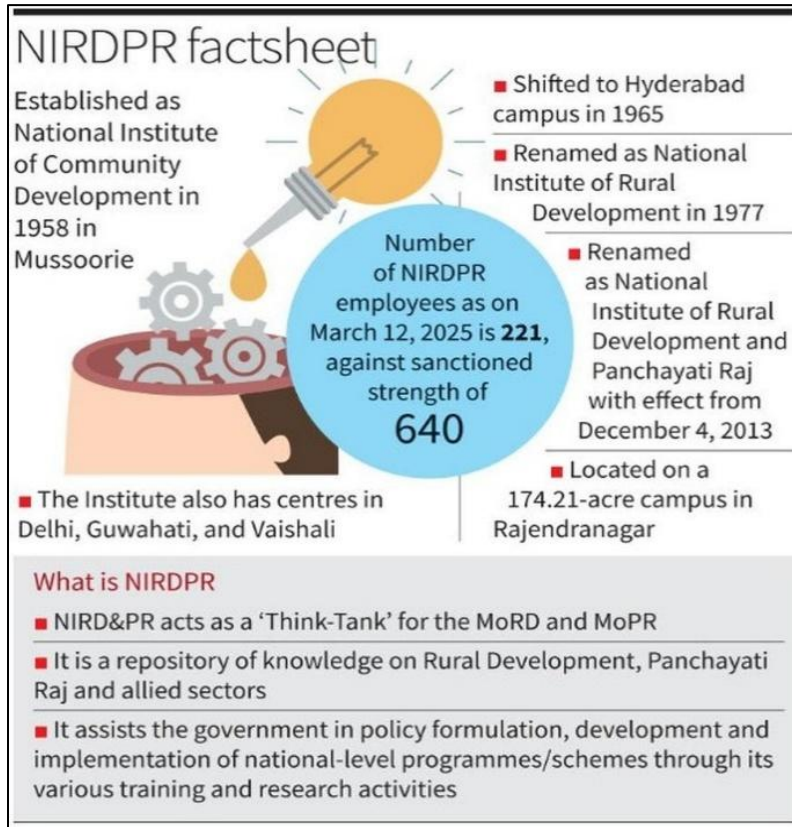
- The Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) has launched the second indigenously designed Pollution Control Vessel (PCV), Samudra Prachet, at Goa.

- Samudra Prachet follows the first PCV, Samudra Pratap, launched in August 2024.

- It has two side-sweeping arms for oil spill collection, modern radar for detecting oil slicks, and equipment to pump, analyse, separate, and store recovered oil onboard.

- The vessel was fully designed and built in-house by GSL, with 72% indigenous content.

National Crisis Management Committee

India sets up the National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC) to strengthen disaster response and coordination nationwide after recent monsoon-triggered calamities.

- The Government of India has constituted the National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC) under the newly amended Disaster Management Act (Amendment) Act, 2025.

- The amended Act, effective from April 9, 2025, gives legal status to key bodies, including the NCMC.

- The NCMC had functioned informally even before the Disaster Management Act of 2005.

- On July 23, the Ministry of Home Affairs released the Disaster Management National Crisis Management Committee (Procedure) Rules, 2025.

- The committee is designated as the apex body responsible for handling disasters with national ramifications.

- The committee will assess preparedness for any threatening or emerging disaster situation and issue necessary directions to strengthen response capabilities.

NIRDPR disengagement

NIRDPR factsheet

Established as National Institute of Community Development in 1958 in Mussoorie

- Shifted to Hyderabad campus in 1965
- Renamed as National Institute of Rural Development in 1977
- Renamed as National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj with effect from December 4, 2013

Number of NIRDPR employees as on March 12, 2025 is 221, against sanctioned strength of 640

- Located on a 174.21-acre campus in Rajendranagar

- The Institute also has centres in Delhi, Guwahati, and Vaishali

What is NIRDPR

- NIRD&PR acts as a 'Think-Tank' for the MoRD and MoPR
- It is a repository of knowledge on Rural Development, Panchayati Raj and allied sectors
- It assists the government in policy formulation, development and implementation of national-level programmes/schemes through its various training and research activities

❖ The Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) has decided to disengage from the National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR), Hyderabad.

❖ The parliamentary standing committee said this move marks a fundamental shift away from national rural development priorities.

❖ NIRDPR is globally recognised for building capacities of rural officials, elected representatives and community organisations.

❖ The panel warned that delinking could damage NIRDPR's credibility, weaken long-term research and shift focus to short-term work.

❖ It has been called the government's claim of "the minimum government and maximum governance" abrupt and harmful to a centre of excellence.

❖ The committee has recommended stronger collaboration, structural reforms, decentralised decision-making, greater autonomy, and adequate funding.

❖ It has urged MoRD to form a committee to address key administrative issues and called for immediate leadership change, with government grants continuing until stability is restored.

India – UK Free Trade Agreement

- ❖ The India–United Kingdom (UK) Free Trade Agreement (FTA), in July 2025, aims to double bilateral trade to $120 billion by 2030.

- ❖ The agreement removes tariffs on 99% of Indian exports to the UK and reduces tariffs on 90% of UK goods imported into India, with 85% becoming duty-free within ten years.

- ❖ It is expected to boost India's exports by $5 billion annually.

- ❖ The UK eliminated tariffs ranging from 4% to 70% on many Indian products.

- ❖ It will support rural and small-scale industries, especially in states like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal.

- ❖ The agreement enhances the competitiveness of Indian textiles and apparel against rivals like Bangladesh and Vietnam, with projected $5 billion gains in textile exports alone.

- ❖ Leather and footwear exports gain with the removal of up to 16% tariffs.

- ❖ Gems and jewellery exports enjoy zero duties.

- ❖ The Engineering goods, auto components, mechanical machinery, and organic chemicals will also benefit from tariff elimination.

- ❖ Tariffs on automobiles were reduced from over 100% to 10% under quota, aiding Indian auto parts and engine exports.

- Marine products like shrimp and frozen prawns get zero tariffs, opening a $5.4 billion UK market and benefiting coastal communities in Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Odisha.

- Agriculture and processed foods get tariff-free access to 95% of products.

- The UK eliminates tariffs on 99.3% of the animal products, 100% of marine goods, and the major industrial items like chemicals, plastics, electrical machinery, and base metals, expanding market access and lowering trade costs.

20 per cent ethanol blending achievement

- India has reached 20% ethanol blending in petrol in 2025, five years before the original 2030 target.

- Ethanol blending rose from 1.5% in 2014 to 20% in 2025, showing nearly 13-fold growth in 11 years.

- Ethanol production increased from 38 crore litres in 2014 to 661.1 crore litres by June 2025.

- Approximately ₹1.36 lakh crore has been saved in foreign exchange by reducing crude oil imports.

- Payments of ₹1.96 lakh crore made to distilleries, supporting the biofuel sector.

- ₹1.18 lakh crore disbursed to farmers, strengthening rural incomes and agricultural sustainability.

- Environmental gains include a reduction of 698 lakh tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions, aiding national climate commitments.

❖ Ethanol is primarily sourced from sugarcane and molasses, linking the programme directly to the Indian farming economy.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

GENIUS Act 2025

WHAT'S NEXT FOR THE GENIUS ACT?

HOUSE VOTE NEXT
After passing the Senate on June 17, the GENIUS Act now awaits approval in the House of Representatives. Lawmakers aim to vote before the August recess to avoid delays.

POSSIBLE RECONCILIATION
If the House amends the bill or advances the competing STABLE Act, a conference committee will reconcile differences. potentially pushing final passage to late Q3 or Q4 2025

LAW & IMPLEMENTATION
Once both chambers approve a unified version, President Trump is expected to sign. From enactment, regulators will have 180 days to finalize rules — placing full regulatory enforcement by early 2026

❖ The US House of Representatives has passed the Genesis Act.

❖ It is America's first federal framework for stablecoins pegged to the US dollar.

❖ The stablecoin bill would require tokens to be backed by liquid assets, such as US dollars and short-term Treasury bills.

❖ Stablecoins are a type of cryptocurrency designed to maintain a constant value.

❖ These are commonly used by crypto traders to move funds between tokens.

❖ It marks a major step for the crypto industry.

❖ The House also passed two other crypto bills.

❖ One creates a wider regulatory framework for digital assets, which is called the Clarity Act.

❖ And the other would ban a US central bank digital currency.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY NEWS

6 Crore Sickle Cell Anaemia Screening

❖ A total of six crore individuals have been screened for Sickle Cell Disease under the National Sickle Cell Mission.

❖ It was according to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

- ❖ The states, including Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Telangana, Karnataka, and Uttarakhand, have demonstrated significant progress by achieving a high percentage of screening relative to their targets.

- ❖ The highest incidence of diagnosed cases has been reported in the states of Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Gujarat.

- ❖ The National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission was inaugurated in 2023 by the Prime Minister in Shahdol, Madhya Pradesh.

- ❖ The mission aims to eliminate sickle cell anaemia from the country by 2047 with the universal screening of seven crore individuals aged 0 to 40 years in affected tribal areas.

Star HOPS - 315

Birth of a new solar system: For the first time, astronomers capture a real image of the formation of a planet around a star called HOPS-315.

- ❖ Astronomers observed early planet formation around baby star HOPS-315 in the Orion constellation.

- ❖ The NASA James Webb Space Telescope and Atacama Large Millimetre/sub-millimetre Array (ALMA) detected rock vapour cooling and forming crystals.

- ❖ Crystalline silicates and silicon monoxide gas were found within 2.2 astronomical units (AU) of the star, inside Mercury's orbit.

- ❖ Simulations confirmed temperatures around 1,300 kelvins, where dust begins to vaporise and later recondenses into solid minerals.
- ❖ Minerals like forsterite and enstatite matched those seen in primitive meteorites found on Earth.
- ❖ The crystals formed in the disc's rising atmosphere, confirming early solid matter formation.

ENVIRONMENT NEWS

Lantana Camara
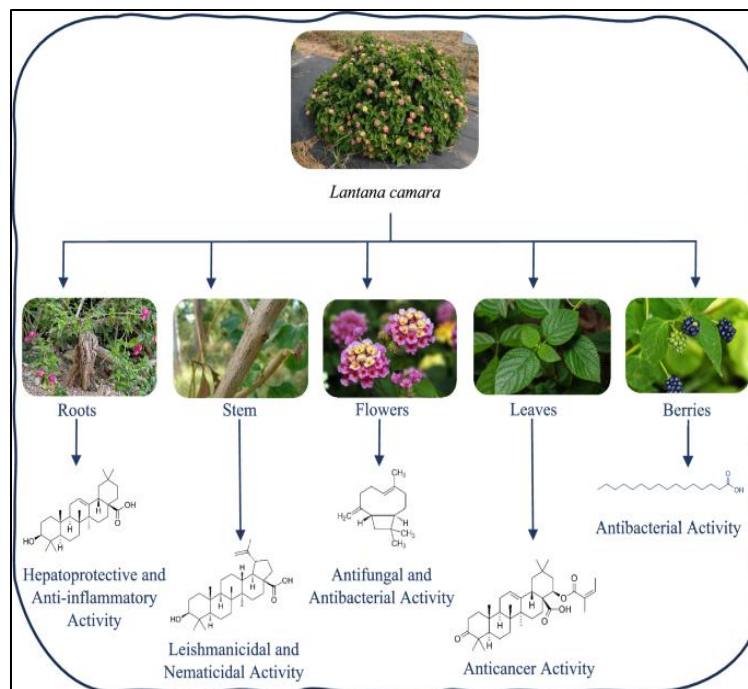
Lantana camara

- ❖ Lantana camara is now classified as an invasive alien species (non-native species causing ecological/economic harm).
- ❖ It is a pantropical weed species, is native to the tropical and sub-tropical regions of Central and South America.
- ❖ It was first introduced in India in the early 18th century as an ornamental plant.
- ❖ In Himachal Pradesh, it currently infests around 3,25,282 hectares (3,252.82 sq. km) of recorded forest area.
- ❖ Initial surveys in 2010–11 and 2015–16 showed infestation across 2,35,491.93 hectares in seven forest circles — Dharamshala, Nahan, Hamirpur, Chamba, Bilaspur, Mandi, and Shimla.

- The weed forms dense bush networks, often overtaking forest edges with sparse tree canopies.
- Lantana releases allelochemicals (growth-inhibiting compounds), suppressing other plant species and replacing native vegetation.

REPORTS AND INDICES

26th edition of the NeSDA Way Forward report
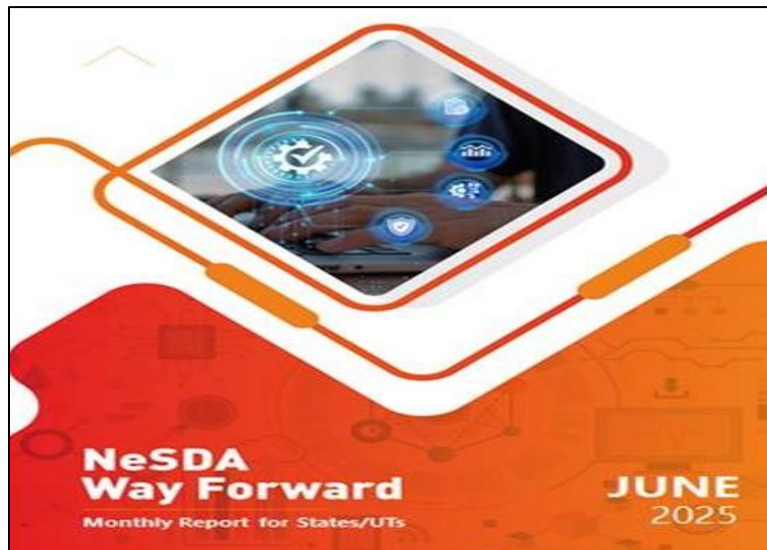
- The Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DARPG) has released the 26th edition of the NeSDA Way Forward report.
- It details the status of the very e-service delivery across India's States and Union Territories (UTs).
- This report marks progress in digital governance and citizen service accessibility.
- Eleven States and Union Territories have exceeded 90% saturation in mandatory e-service provision.
- Nine States, including Maharashtra, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Tamil Nadu, and Himachal Pradesh, have reached 100% saturation.
- Assam, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha, and Uttarakhand provide all services through portals such as Sewa Setu, e-UNNAT, Seva Sindhu, e-Sevanam, Odisha One, and Apuni Sarkar.
- Maharashtra's Right to Service Commission has implemented transformative measures to enhance service delivery and citizen satisfaction.
- Tripura's SWAAGAT portal is noted as a best practice example.

- City portals in Surat and Shimla demonstrate the impact of digitalisation at the municipal level.
- The report includes results from the AAKLAN assessment tool applied to the Northeastern and Hilly States.

Financial Inclusion Index 2025

India's Financial Inclusion Index Rises to 67 in FY25 – RBI Report

67 FY25

64,2 FY24

64,2 FY24

Traditional Banking

Mobile Banking

- RBI has reported that the Financial Inclusion (FI) Index for Financial Year (FY) 2025 improved to 67 per cent.
- This is an increase from 64.2 per cent recorded in FY 2024.
- The increase is attributed to the higher usage, improved quality, and ongoing financial literacy initiatives deepening financial inclusion.
- The composite FI Index, developed by RBI in consultation with stakeholders, was first published in August 2021 for the FY ending March 2021.
- The index also incorporates data from the banking, investments, insurance, postal services, and pensions, providing a comprehensive view of financial inclusion in India.

Henley Passport Index 2025

- India secured the 77th position in the Henley Passport Index 2025, improving from the 85th rank in 2024.
- Japan continues to hold the top position with visa-free access to 193 countries, followed closely by Singapore and South Korea.
- Afghanistan also remains at the very bottom of the index, with access to only 27 destinations without a prior visa.

India's Ranking on the Henley Passport Index

2025
India rises to 77th in Henley Passport Index

2024
India's passport ranked 85th
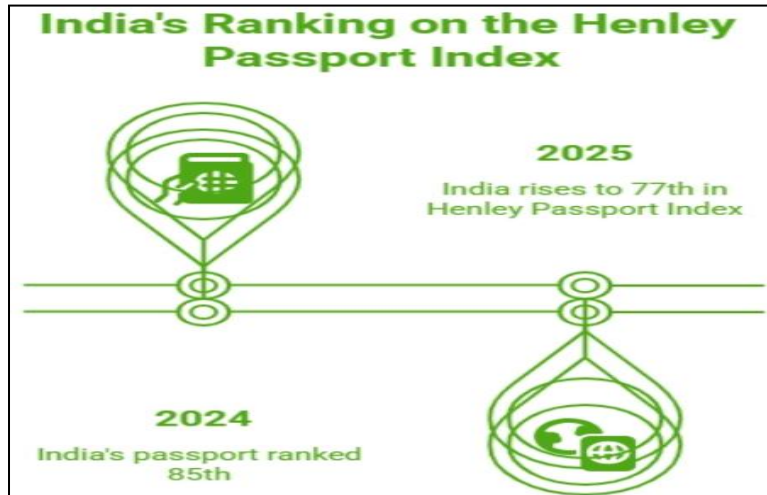
STATES' NEWS

Milk Subsidy Scheme – Assam

Assam Govt Launches Milk Subsidy Scheme, Dairy Farmers To Get Subsidy Of Rs 5 Per Litre

- ❖ The Assam government has launched a Milk Subsidy Scheme to provide a subsidy of 5 rupees per litre of milk to farmers in a bid to boost the dairy sector in the state.
- ❖ Milk production is made available through cooperative societies such as Purabi and Sitajakhala in Assam.
- ❖ The Panjabari plant is the largest dairy processing facility in the Northeast.
- ❖ It is operated by the West Assam Milk Producers' Cooperative Union Ltd (WAMUL) under the Purabi Dairy brand.
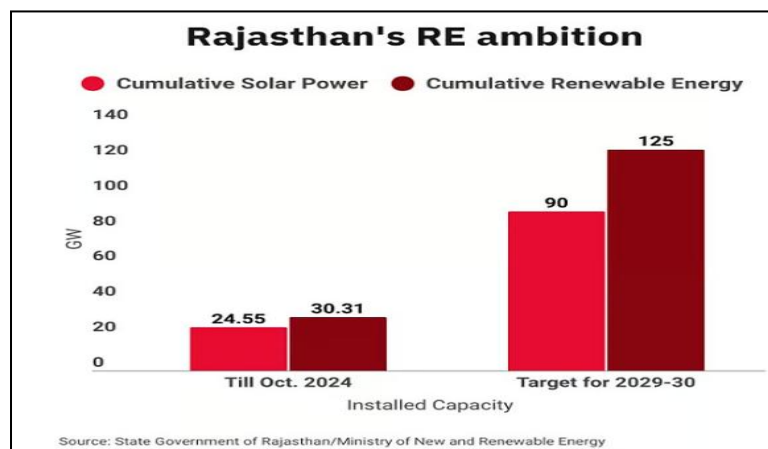
India's largest green hydrogen plant

- ❖ L&T is to set up India's largest green hydrogen plant at the Indian Oil Corporation (IOCL), Panipat, Haryana

- ❖ The project will operate on a build-own-operate (BOO) basis.
- ❖ It will be supplying 10,000 tonnes of green hydrogen annually to IOCL for 25 years.
- ❖ The initiative is aligned with the Centre's National Green Hydrogen Mission.
- ❖ And it is designed to decarbonise IOCL's refinery operations.
- ❖ The plant will operate around the clock using renewable power.
- ❖ And it features the high-pressure alkaline electrolysers manufactured by L&T Electrolysers Ltd at its Hazira facility in Gujarat.
- ❖ The project is a significant step towards building a self-reliant and low-carbon industrial ecosystem in India.

L&T Energy GreenTech to set up India's largest green hydrogen plant at IOCL Panipat Refinery in Haryana

Gorbea solar power project

Rajasthan's RE ambition

Source: State Government of Rajasthan/Ministry of New and Renewable Energy

- ❖ 435-megawatt (MW) Gorbea solar power project in Nokha, Bikaner, Rajasthan, was completed in under eight months.

❖ It will generate 755 gigawatt-hours (GWh) of electricity annually, powering about 128,000 households.

❖ The project will reduce around 705,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions each year.

❖ Rajasthan's total renewable energy capacity exceeds 35.4 gigawatts (GW), with 29.5 GW from solar and 5.2 GW from wind sources.

❖ India has achieved 50 per cent of its total installed power capacity from non-fossil sources, five years ahead of its 2030 target.

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

Leisure's 2025 World's Best Awards survey

Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) ranks 9th in Travel + Leisure's World's Best Awards 2025 with a reader score of 84.23—its third straight year on the list and the only Indian airport featured.

❖ Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) in Mumbai ranked 9th in Travel + Leisure's 2025 World's Best Awards survey.

❖ It is the only Indian airport in the top 10 and has earned the spot for the third consecutive year.

❖ Istanbul Airport (Turkey) is ranked at 1st, followed by Changi Airport (Singapore) and Hamad International Airport (Qatar).

❖ CSMIA is the world's busiest single-runway airport, handling nearly 1,000 air traffic movements daily.

❖ The airport recorded 55.12 million passengers in the financial year 2024–25.

Meri Panchayat App

❖ It has been internationally recognised with the prestigious World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Prizes 2025 Champion Award.

- ❖ It was under the 'Action Line Category: Cultural Diversity and Identity, Linguistic Diversity and Local Content'.

- ❖ The honour was conferred during the WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025.

- ❖ It was organised by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

- ❖ It was formally presented to the Union Minister of Panchayati Raj, Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh, at a ceremonial event held in New Delhi.

- ❖ The App has helped in advancing citizen-centric governance through digital means.

- ❖ It empowers over 25 lakh elected representatives and approximately 950 million rural residents across India's 2.65 lakh Gram Panchayats.

- ❖ It provides real-time access to the panchayat budgets, receipts, payments, and development plans, along with details of elected representatives, public infrastructure, and civic services.

- ❖ The app also offers access to the Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDPs), project tracking, the weather forecasts at the Gram Panchayat level, social audit tools, fund utilisation data, and grievance redressal with geo-tagged and geo-fenced features.

- ❖ It supports over 12 Indian languages.

- ❖ The app ensures inclusivity through its multilingual interface.

- ❖ Citizens can propose new projects, review and rate implemented works, and access Gram Sabha agendas and decisions.

- ❖ It is fostering greater civic engagement and transparency in rural governance.

- ❖ The WSIS+20 High-Level Event was held from July 7 to 11 in Geneva, Switzerland.

- ❖ It marked two decades since the original WSIS.

- ❖ It was co-hosted by ITU and the Swiss Confederation.

- ❖ It was co-organised by ITU, UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation), UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), and UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development).

- ❖ The forum served as a platform to evaluate progress and address challenges in building inclusive information societies.

"Meri Panchayat" App

☞ Downloading and using of "Meri Panchayat" app is very simple.

☞ Easy access to Gram Panchayat-related activities and information.

☞ Dissemination of digitized information on Panchayat decisions and actions.

☞ Providing transparency in reports, facts, and grassroots operations.

☞ Providing information on income and expenditure, development resolutions, weather forecasts, social audits, etc.

☞ Inviting suggestions and registering complaints.

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