

October - 19

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Dan Katz, former Chief of Staff at the United States Department of the Treasury, has assumed the role of First Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- ❖ Patients in Tamil Nadu will now be referred to as "medical beneficiaries" or "beneficiaries" as per a government order issued by the Health Department.

NATIONAL NEWS

Municipal Waste Roads Plan



- ❖ The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) plans to use all municipal waste for road construction by 2027.
- ❖ So far, NHAI has used 80 lakh tonnes of municipal waste in road projects across the country.
- ❖ The Ahmedabad–Pune Highway used 25 lakh tonnes, and the Mumbai–Delhi Highway used 40 lakh tonnes of waste.
- ❖ One road was constructed using bio-bitumen made from livestock waste, which was officially certified.

Government Litigation Tracker

- ❖ The Department of Legal Affairs launched a “Live Cases” dashboard under the Legal Information Management and Briefing System (LIMBS).

- ❖ The dashboard provides real-time data on government court cases and upcoming hearings.
- ❖ The system currently tracks 7,23,123 live cases from 53 ministries and departments.
- ❖ Over 13,000 ministry users and 18,000 advocates update case information regularly.
- ❖ The initiative aims to enhance government litigation management and promote data-driven decision-making.



New freight model



- ❖ Indian Railways has launched a door-to-door freight and parcel service.

- ❖ This service allows cargo movement from warehouses to final delivery points.
- ❖ Three logistics initiatives were launched to support this transformation.
- ❖ A logistics hub has been set up at Sonik in Unnao, managed by CONCOR (Container Corporation of India).
- ❖ A container train service between Delhi and Kolkata offers assured transit.
- ❖ A parcel service between Mumbai and Kolkata includes storage and small cargo handling.

SACHET

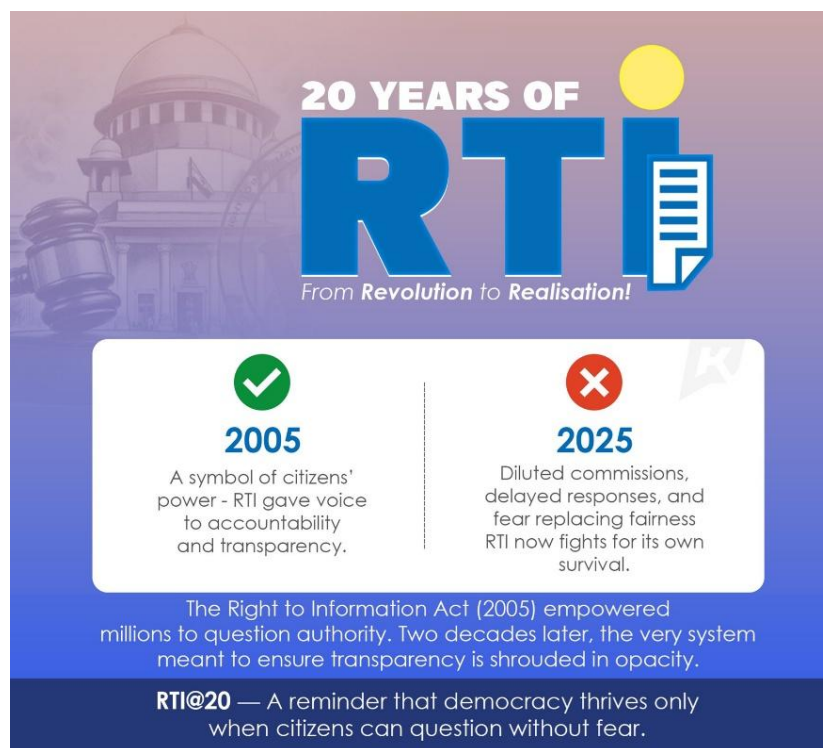


- ❖ Integrated Alert System (SACHET) is India's disaster early warning platform by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA).
- ❖ It provides real-time geo-targeted alerts using multiple channels like SMS, cell broadcast, mobile app, TV, radio, and social media.
- ❖ The system was developed by the Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) under the Department of Telecom.
- ❖ SACHET is operational across all Indian states and union territories, sending alerts to citizens in affected areas.
- ❖ The SACHET app offers disaster warnings and weather updates from the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD).

20 years of the RTI Act

- ❖ The Right to Information (RTI) Act completes 20 years since its implementation in 2005.

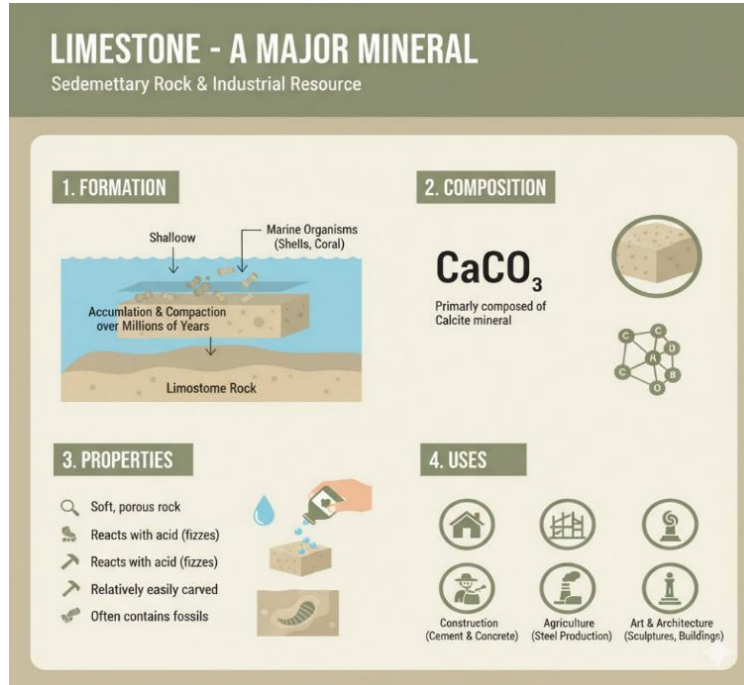
- ❖ The Right to Information (RTI) Act was enacted on 12 October 2005 to ensure transparency and accountability in governance.
- ❖ The RTI law emerged from grassroots activism led by the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) and public hearings in Rajasthan during the 1990s.
- ❖ The movement led to several state-level RTI laws before the national law was passed by Parliament on 12 May 2005.
- ❖ The RTI Act recognises the right to information as part of the right to freedom of speech and expression under Article 19 of the Constitution.
- ❖ Over 1.75 million RTI applications were filed in 2023–24, double the number from a decade ago, but with a record 67,615 rejections.



Limestone - A Major Mineral

- ❖ The Ministry of Mines reclassified all limestone as a major mineral.
- ❖ Limestone used in lime kilns is no longer considered a minor mineral under the new classification.
- ❖ The change removes end-use restrictions and allows leaseholders to sell limestone for any purpose.
- ❖ The decision followed recommendations by an inter-ministerial committee chaired by a Member of NITI Aayog.

- ❖ Existing minor mineral leaseholders must register with the Indian Bureau of Mines by 31 March 2026.
- ❖ Approved mining plans will continue until 31 March 2027 or until fresh approval is received from the Indian Bureau of Mines.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UNHRC Membership 2026-28

- ❖ India has been elected unopposed to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) for the 2026–2028 term.
- ❖ This marks India's seventh term on the Council since its creation in 2006.
- ❖ The UNHRC is an intergovernmental body responsible for promoting and protecting human rights globally.
- ❖ It was established in 2006 by the United Nations General Assembly.
- ❖ The Council is headquartered at the United Nations Office in Geneva, Switzerland.
- ❖ It comprises 47 Member States elected by the UN General Assembly through a secret ballot.
- ❖ Each member serves a three-year term, with seats distributed among five regional groups.

- ❖ India previously served in the periods 2006–2007, 2011–2014, 2014–2017, 2017–2020, 2022–2024, and now 2026–2028.
- ❖ The Council reviews countries' rights records, appoints experts, and authorizes fact-finding missions.



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Election results for membership of the Human Rights Council for 2026-2028

- Angola
- Chile*
- Ecuador
- Egypt
- Estonia
- India
- Iraq
- Italy
- Mauritius
- Pakistan
- Slovenia
- South Africa*
- United Kingdom
- Viet Nam

*second consecutive term

India–Mongolia Strategic Partnership



The visit of the President of Mongolia to
India after six years
**is taking place at a time when India
and Mongolia are celebrating 70 years
of their diplomatic relations and 10
years of their strategic partnership**



- ❖ India and Mongolia mark 70 years of diplomatic ties and 10 years of strategic partnership in 2025.
- ❖ A joint postal stamp was released to celebrate shared heritage and civilizational bonds.
- ❖ India is to send Buddhist relics and digitise 1 million ancient manuscripts.
- ❖ A \$1.7 billion Indian credit line supports Mongolia's oil refinery, with over 2,500 Indian professionals involved.
- ❖ A Sanskrit teacher will be deputed to Gandan Monastery to strengthen Buddhist scholarly ties.
- ❖ The Ladakh–Arkhangai MoU will boost regional cultural cooperation between India and Mongolia.

25th anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325

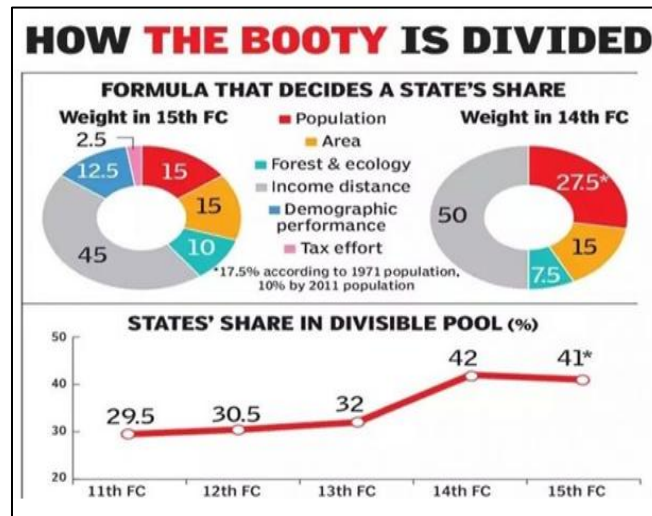


- ❖ 2025 marks the 25th anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 adopted in 2000.
- ❖ It established the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda.
- ❖ Resolution 1325 emphasizes the importance of women's participation in peacebuilding, conflict prevention, and post-conflict recovery worldwide.

- ❖ Namibia, as a Security Council member in 2000, played a key role in facilitating the adoption of Resolution 1325.

ECONOMY NEWS

16th Finance Commission Tenure Extension



- ❖ The government has extended the 16th Finance Commission's term till November 30, 2025.
- ❖ The commission was formed on December 31, 2023, with Arvind Panagariya as Chairman.
- ❖ It will recommend tax distribution between the Centre and states for 2026–2031.
- ❖ The original deadline for the report submission was October 31, 2025.
- ❖ It will also review disaster management financing under the Disaster Management Act, 2005.
- ❖ The commission has four members, including economists and senior officials.
- ❖ The 15th Finance Commission had recommended 41% tax devolution to states for 2021–2026.

ENVIRONMENT NEWS

New IUCN Red List

- ❖ The IUCN has updated its Red List, now tracking 172,620 species, of which 48,646 are threatened with extinction.

- ❖ The hooded seal has been moved from vulnerable to endangered, while bearded and harp seals are now listed as near threatened.
- ❖ Arctic seals are increasingly at risk due to global warming, maritime traffic, industrial fishing, and oil extraction.
- ❖ Ice-dependent seals are keystone species, playing a vital role in marine ecosystems by consuming fish and recycling nutrients.
- ❖ Bird populations are also declining, with 61 percent of bird species showing decreasing numbers, up from 44 percent in 2016.
- ❖ Of 11,185 bird species assessed worldwide, 1,256 species or 11.5 percent are now globally threatened.
- ❖ In Madagascar, 14 bird species were newly listed as near threatened and three more as vulnerable due to tropical forest loss.
- ❖ The green turtle is no longer endangered after a 28 percent population increase since the 1970s, due to decades of conservation.

More than 46,300 species are threatened with extinction

That is still 28% of all assessed species.



Low Genetic Diversity in Snow Leopards

- ❖ A new study by Stanford University found that snow leopards have the lowest genetic diversity of any big cat, even lower than cheetahs.
- ❖ Researchers attribute the low genetic diversity to a historically small population size rather than recent inbreeding.
- ❖ Snow leopards show effective purging of harmful mutations, maintaining health despite low genetic variation.
- ❖ The species has significantly less harmful homozygous gene load compared to other Panthera species.

- ❖ The global wild population is estimated between 4,500 and 7,500 individuals across 12 Asian countries.
- ❖ In India, 718 snow leopards were estimated in a recent survey, with Ladakh hosting the highest number at 477.
- ❖ India holds the third-largest population of snow leopards globally, after China and Mongolia.



Elephant Census 2025

- ❖ India's wild elephant population is now estimated at 22,446 according to the first DNA-based national count conducted in 2025.
- ❖ This marks an 18 percent decline from the 2017 estimate of 27,312 elephants.
- ❖ The survey was conducted by the Environment Ministry, Project Elephant, and the Wildlife Institute of India.
- ❖ Scientists collected 21,056 dung samples and used DNA fingerprinting to identify 4,065 unique elephants.
- ❖ The survey used the mark-recapture model to estimate the total population between 18,255 and 26,645 elephants.
- ❖ Karnataka has the highest number of elephants at 6,013, followed by Assam with 4,159 and Tamil Nadu with 3,136.
- ❖ The Western Ghats host 11,934 elephants, the highest among regions, followed by the Northeast with 6,559.
- ❖ The survey used a three-phase process: ground surveys using the M-Stripes (Monitoring System for Tigers - Intensive Protection and Ecological Status) app, satellite mapping, and genetic analysis.

- ❖ India holds over 60 percent of the global Asian elephant population.



India's Wild Elephant Population Shows a Shocking **25% Decline in the Nation's First DNA-Based Survey**

STATES' NEWS

India's Largest AI Data Hub



The Largest AI Hub Outside The U.S. - Coming Up In Visakhapatnam

With a 1-Gigawatt capacity, the hub will scale to multiple gigawatts - turning India into Google's AI command centre

- ❖ India's largest artificial intelligence (AI) data hub will be built in Andhra Pradesh.



- ❖ Google's 1-gigawatt (GW) hyperscale data centre in Visakhapatnam will generate ₹10,000 crore for the state.
- ❖ This centre will be India's first gigawatt-scale AI data centre and Google's first AI hub in the country.
- ❖ The project aims to position Andhra Pradesh as a digital hub and boost AI-driven transformation in India.

REPORTS AND INDICES

Henley Passport Index 2025

- ❖ India's passport ranks 85th in the 2025 Henley Passport Index with 57 visa-free countries.
- ❖ This ranking dropped from 77th earlier in 2025 and 62 visa-free countries last year.
- ❖ Singapore leads with visa-free access to 193 countries.
- ❖ The United States fell out of the top 10 for the first time, now ranked 12th with 180 visa-free countries.
- ❖ Neighboring countries ranked like Pakistan 103rd, Bangladesh 100th, Nepal 101st, and Bhutan 92nd.

WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL PASSPORTS 2025

1		Singapore	5		Denmark	6		Sweden
2		South Korea	5		Finland	7		Australia
3		Japan	5		France	7		Czechia
4		Germany	5		Ireland	7		Malta
4		Italy	5		Netherlands	7		Poland
4		Luxembourg	6		Greece	8		Croatia
4		Spain	6		Hungary	8		Estonia
4		Switzerland	6		New Zealand	8		Slovakia
5		Austria	6		Norway	8		Slovenia
5		Belgium	6		Portugal	85		India

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Day of the Girl Child 2025 – October 11

- ❖ This day is celebrated to raise awareness about gender inequality, discrimination, and challenges faced by girls.

- ❖ The United Nations General Assembly officially declared this day in 2011.
- ❖ The theme for 2025 is "The girl I am, the change I lead: Girls on the frontlines of crisis."



MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

Madagascar crisis 2025

Madagascar Erupts in Crisis

In September 2025, Madagascar was shaken by mass protests over power cuts, water shortages, and government mismanagement.

Causes	Events
> Constant power cuts (up to 8-12 hrs/day)	> Thousands marched in Antananarivo
> Water shortages & drought	> Organized by " Gen Z Madagascar " via social media
> Corruption and mismanagement at JIRAMA (state utility)	> Police used tear gas & rubber bullets
> Rising poverty (75% below poverty line)	> Barricades, looting, cable car stations & politicians' homes torched

A photograph showing a large group of people in a city square, some running and others crouching, amidst a cloud of white smoke or tear gas. The background shows buildings and a clear sky.

- ❖ Madagascar faces a military takeover after the president hid amid protests over corruption.
- ❖ Elite unit CAPSAT seized control, deepening the political crisis after parliament dissolution attempts.
- ❖ Madagascar is an island republic located 400 km east of Mozambique in the Indian Ocean.



- ❖ The capital is Antananarivo, and the country gained independence from France in 1960.

