

01 July 2025

1. ISRO Announces 'Shukrayaan-2' Mission; Eyes Venus for 2028 Launch

Source: Indian Express

News: Building on the monumental success of its lunar and Martian endeavours, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) today officially announced its next major interplanetary mission: 'Shukrayaan-2'. ISRO Chairman S. Somanath, in a press conference, confirmed that India's second mission to Venus is slated for a launch window in late 2028. This follows the originally planned Shukrayaan-1, which is now integrated into this more ambitious mission. The primary objective of Shukrayaan-2 will be to conduct a comprehensive investigation of the Venusian atmosphere, which is dominated by carbon dioxide with clouds of sulfuric acid, and to study its unique volcanic activity and surface features.



Analysis

- The orbiter is expected to carry an enhanced suite of scientific payloads, including a high-resolution synthetic aperture radar (SAR) to map the planet's surface beneath its dense clouds, and an atmospheric sounder to analyse its chemical composition.
- ISRO is also in talks with international space agencies, including France's CNES and Sweden's IRF, for potential collaboration on scientific instruments, continuing its tradition of international cooperation in space exploration.
- The mission is critical for understanding the "runaway greenhouse effect" on Venus, which provides valuable data for climate change models on Earth.
- The announcement comes as the Gaganyaan program's uncrewed flight tests reach their final stages, underscoring India's growing prowess as a major space-faring nation.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper 3: Science and Technology- developments and their applications and effects in everyday life; Achievements of Indians in science & technology; indigenization of technology and developing new technology.

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2. Panel on Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Submits Final Report; Recommends Phased Implementation, Source: Hindustan Times

News: The high-level government-appointed committee tasked with examining the implementation of a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) submitted its final report to the Union Law Ministry today. The panel, after extensive consultations spanning over 18 months with religious leaders, legal experts, and civil society, has reportedly recommended a phased and incremental approach to a common civil law. Sources suggest the report proposes a "Gender-Just Common Code" that focuses on standardizing personal laws related to marriage, divorce, inheritance, and adoption for all citizens, irrespective of religion.



Analysis

- The report emphasizes principles of equality, non-discrimination, and justice, particularly for women.
- Key recommendations are said to include setting a uniform minimum age for marriage at 21 for all, simplifying divorce procedures, and ensuring equal inheritance rights for sons and daughters.
- To address concerns from various communities, the panel has suggested that the code should not interfere with religious rituals and ceremonies but only with the legal rights and obligations that emanate from them.
- The government is expected to study the report in detail and may introduce a draft bill in the Winter Session of Parliament, setting the stage for a significant, and potentially contentious, legislative debate on one of the Directive Principles of State Policy.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper 2: Indian Constitution—historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure; Directive Principles of State Policy.

GS Paper 1: Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India.

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3. First Batch of 'Agniveers' Inducted into Regular Cadre; MoD Releases Performance Data, Source: PIB (Press Information Bureau)

News: The Ministry of Defence today announced the successful completion of the four-year tenure for the first batch of 'Agniveers' who were recruited under the Agnipath scheme in 2022. As per the scheme's provisions, 25% of these personnel have now been formally inducted into the regular cadres of the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force for a full term of service. The selection process was based on a comprehensive performance evaluation conducted over their four-year engagement, assessing their operational aptitude, physical fitness, and disciplinary record.



Analysis

- A detailed report released by the MoD highlighted the positive impact of the scheme, noting that the Agniveers have demonstrated high levels of technical proficiency and adaptability.
- The report states that the infusion of a young, tech-savvy workforce has enhanced the armed forces' operational readiness.
- The remaining 75% of the Agniveers have been demobilized with the 'Seva Nidhi' package, skill certificates, and bridge courses to facilitate their transition into civilian life.
- The Ministry is actively collaborating with other government departments and the private sector to ensure preferential employment opportunities for these trained and disciplined youth.
- This marks a critical milestone for the Agnipath scheme, with the government terming it a transformative reform for the armed forces' human resource policy.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper 3: Security challenges and their management in border areas; Various Security forces and agencies and their mandate.

GS Paper 2: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

4. India Launches Phase-II of 'Sagar Amrit' Initiative for Blue Economy Development, Source: Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways

News: The Government of India today launched the second phase of its flagship 'Sagar Amrit' initiative, reinforcing its commitment to developing the nation's Blue Economy. This new phase, with a sanctioned outlay of ₹15,000 crore, will focus on sustainable marine resource management, coastal community development, and technological innovation in the maritime sector. The announcement was made by the Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways, who outlined the key pillars of Phase-II. These include developing a national framework for seaweed cultivation and processing, promoting deep-sea fishing technologies, and establishing a network of coastal economic zones dedicated to marine biotechnology and aquaculture.



Analysis

- A significant component of this phase is the 'Marine-Tech Innovation Fund', designed to support startups working on solutions for marine pollution, ocean observation systems, and renewable ocean energy.
- The initiative also aims to modernize and expand minor ports to decongest major ports and improve last-mile connectivity under the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan.
- Furthermore, it will strengthen the National Maritime Domain Awareness grid to ensure the safety and security of India's vast coastline and exclusive economic zone (EEZ).
- The 'Sagar Amrit' initiative is central to India's vision of becoming a global leader in the sustainable utilization of ocean resources for economic growth.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper 3: Indian Economy (Blue Economy); Conservation, environmental pollution, and degradation.

GS Paper 2: Government policies and interventions for development.

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5. India and the African Union Announce 'Health-Connect' Partnership

Source: Indian Express

News: In a major boost to South-South cooperation, India and the African Union (AU) today announced the launch of the 'India-Africa Health-Connect' partnership. The initiative, unveiled during the India-Africa Forum Summit, aims to build resilient healthcare systems across the African continent through capacity building, technology transfer, and joint research. Under this partnership, India will provide technical and financial support to establish a Pan-African Centre for Disease Control and Prevention in Addis Ababa, modeled on India's National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC). The partnership will also leverage India's digital health expertise by assisting AU member states in implementing the 'e-AarogyaBharti' telemedicine and health education network.



Analysis

- The Indian government has committed a \$500 million line of credit for developing pharmaceutical manufacturing capabilities in Africa, aiming to reduce the continent's reliance on imported medicines and vaccines.
- Prime Minister of India, in his virtual address, highlighted India's role as the "pharmacy of the world" and reiterated the commitment to ensuring equitable access to healthcare for all.
- The 'Health-Connect' partnership is a key pillar of India's renewed Africa outreach strategy, focusing on shared priorities and sustainable development, and moving beyond traditional donor-recipient relationships to a model of genuine partnership and collaboration.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper 2: Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests; India and its neighborhood- relations.

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6. First Assessment Report on Women's Reservation Act Implementation Tabled **Source: Hindustan Times**

News: The first quinquennial assessment report on the implementation of the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (Women's Reservation Act) was tabled in Parliament today. The Act, which provides for 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies, is set to be implemented post the first census and delimitation exercise after its enactment. The report, prepared by a parliamentary committee, evaluates the preparedness of political parties and the Election Commission for this historic transition. It highlights a steady but slow increase in the number of women candidates being fielded by major political parties in recent state elections, a trend it terms "voluntary pro-activeness."



Analysis

- The report commends the Election Commission for its awareness campaigns but urges it to finalize guidelines for the rotation of reserved constituencies to ensure fairness and prevent the creation of permanent "women's seats."
- It also recommends that political parties institutionalize internal reservations for women in organizational posts to build a pipeline of women leaders.
- While the full implementation of the Act is still contingent on the completion of the delimitation process, which is expected to begin after the 2021 census data is fully processed, this report serves as a crucial blueprint and progress check for achieving genuine political empowerment for women in India.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper 2: Parliament and State Legislatures—structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges, and issues arising out of these.

GS Paper 1: Role of women and women's organization.

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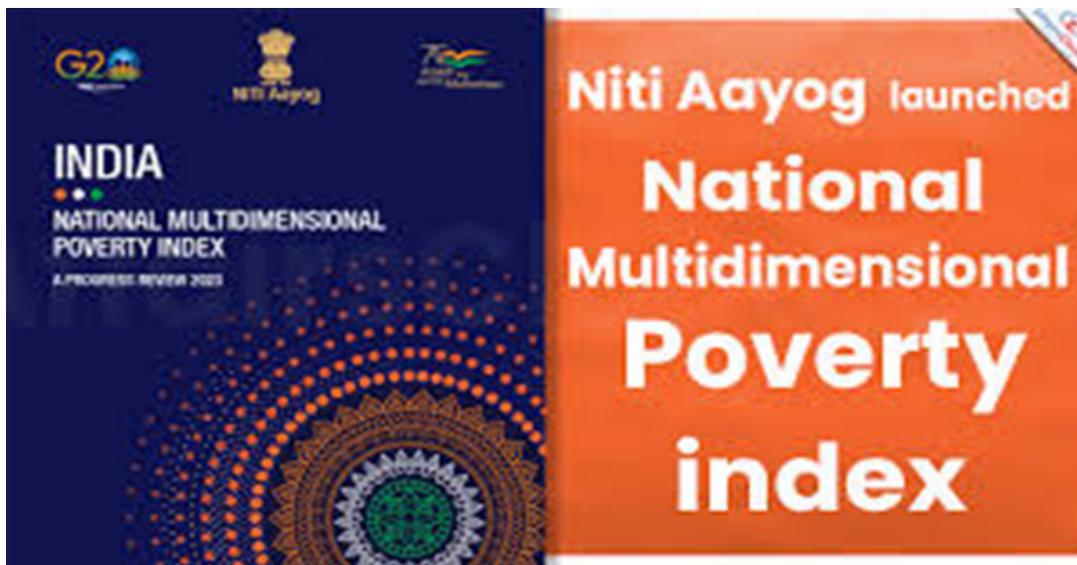
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7. NITI Aayog Releases Multidimensional Poverty Index 2025; Rural-Urban Gap Narrows, Source: PIB (Press Information Bureau)

News: NITI Aayog today released its National Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) Progress Report 2025, revealing a significant decline in poverty levels across India. The report indicates that the number of people living in multidimensional poverty has fallen to below 10% of the population for the first time, a testament to the success of targeted government interventions. The report uses the National Family Health Survey-6 (NFHS-6, 2024-25) data and measures poverty across three dimensions: health, education, and standard of living. The fastest reduction in poverty was observed in states like Bihar, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh, showcasing remarkable progress in closing the interstate disparity gap.



Analysis

- A key highlight of the report is the narrowing of the rural-urban poverty gap. The decline in rural poverty has outpaced that in urban areas, driven by improvements in indicators like access to cooking fuel (Ujjwala Yojana), electricity (Saubhagya scheme), and sanitation (Swachh Bharat Mission).
- The report identifies nutrition and years of schooling as areas that still require focused attention.
- The MPI serves as a powerful policy tool, enabling the government to identify specific deprivations and formulate targeted strategies.
- The findings are expected to guide resource allocation for various social sector schemes in the coming years.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper 2: Issues relating to poverty and hunger; Mechanisms, laws, institutions, and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections.

GS Paper 3: Inclusive growth and issues arising from it.

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8. Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor's Final Section Inaugurated; Cuts Logistics Time by 50%, Source: Economic Times

News: The final Sonnagar-Dankuni section of the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC) was inaugurated today, marking the full operationalization of the 1,875-km freight line from Ludhiana, Punjab, to West Bengal. This monumental infrastructure project, a cornerstone of the National Infrastructure Pipeline, is set to revolutionize freight movement in India. The EDFC is designed for double-stack container trains running at a maximum speed of 100 km/h, a significant upgrade from the congested Indian Railways network, where freight trains average speeds of 25-30 km/h. Officials from the Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India Limited (DFCCIL) stated that the fully functional corridor will reduce logistics transit times between the northern and eastern industrial hubs by nearly 50%.



Analysis

- The project will decongest the existing railway lines, allowing for more passenger trains to run on time.
- It is expected to shift a significant portion of freight from road to rail, leading to lower logistics costs, reduced carbon emissions, and improved efficiency for industries like coal, steel, and manufacturing.
- The EDFC, along with the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor, forms the backbone of India's new logistics architecture, integrating seamlessly with multi-modal logistics parks and industrial corridors being developed under the PM Gati Shakti Master Plan.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper 3: Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways, etc.

GS Paper 1: Economic Geography.

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9. Supreme Court Expands Scope of Article 21; Declares 'Right Against Climate Change' a Fundamental Right, Source: Indian Express

News: In a landmark judgement with far-reaching implications, the Supreme Court of India today explicitly recognized the "Right Against the Adverse Effects of Climate Change" as a distinct fundamental right. A five-judge constitution bench, while hearing a PIL related to coastal erosion and displacement, ruled that this right is intrinsic to the Right to Life and Personal Liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution. The Court observed that a clean and healthy environment is a prerequisite for a life of dignity, and the escalating climate crisis poses a direct threat to this. The judgment stated that the right also flows from the right to equality under Article 14, as the poor and vulnerable are disproportionately affected by climate disasters.



Analysis

- The Court directed the Union and state governments to establish a robust and time-bound framework for climate change adaptation and mitigation, emphasizing the "polluter pays" and "precautionary" principles.
- It mandated the creation of a national climate change adaptation fund and directed governments to conduct vulnerability assessments for all coastal and ecologically sensitive regions.
- This judicial activism places a new level of accountability on the executive to take concrete action against climate change and provides a powerful legal tool for citizens and environmental groups to demand climate justice.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper 2: Indian Constitution—significant provisions, basic structure; Judiciary.

GS Paper 3: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.

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10. 'PM-RISE' Scheme Launched to Upskill 10 Million Youth in Future-Ready Technologies, Source: Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

News: The Prime Minister today launched the 'Pradhan Mantri Reskilling and Upskilling for an Innovative Skilled Ecosystem' (PM-RISE) scheme. This ambitious new initiative aims to skill, reskill, and upskill 10 million Indian youth over the next five years in future-ready domains like Artificial Intelligence, drone technology, green mobility, and advanced manufacturing. The scheme, with a budget of ₹20,000 crore, will operate on a hub-and-spoke model, upgrading existing Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and establishing new 'Centres of Excellence for Future Skills' in partnership with the industry.



Analysis

- A key feature of PM-RISE is its strong industry linkage. The curriculum for each course will be co-created with industry partners to ensure relevance and employability.
- The scheme will also integrate a digital platform that provides access to online courses, virtual labs, and a dynamic job portal connecting skilled candidates with employers.
- Special emphasis will be placed on skilling women and youth from marginalized communities.
- The government stated that PM-RISE is a critical component of its strategy to harness India's demographic dividend and position the country as the global skill capital.
- The scheme aims to bridge the gap between education and employment, making the Indian workforce competitive for the jobs of the 21st century.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper 2: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation; Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Education, Human Resources.

GS Paper 3: Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development, and employment.

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