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2025

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Ebook



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Weekly: 24-29 Feb 2024 CA Q&A - English
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Weekly Top 60: 24-29 Feb 2024 CA Q&A - English
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February 29 2024 PIB News - English
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February 28 2024 PIB News - English
Article

AFFAIRSCLOUD TODAY

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Hand Written Notes

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

1)

Announced
Bhupender Yadav → 4 Wetlands from India → **Designated as** Ramsar Sites
MoEF&CC (Total in India ↑ to 89, Globally ↑ to 2529)

Name of Wetland	Location	Area (in hectares)
Khecheopalri Wetland	West Sikkim District, Sikkim	11.56
Udhwa Lake	Sahebganj District, Jharkhand	565
Therthangal Bird Sanctuary	Ramanathapuram District, TN	29.5
Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary	Ramanathapuram District, TN	230.49

Key points:

Top countries with Ramsar Sites

1. United Kingdom - 176 sites
2. Mexico - 144 sites
3. India - 89 sites (1st in Asia)

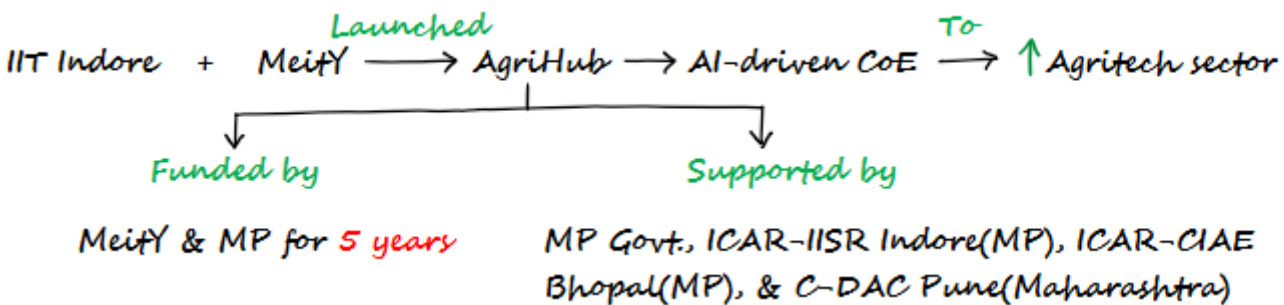
Top states in India with Ramsar Sites

1. Tamil Nadu - 20 sites
2. Uttar Pradesh - 10 sites

MoEF&CC - Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

TN - Tamil Nadu

2)



IIT - Indian Institute of Technology

MeitY - Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology

AI - Artificial Intelligence

CoE - Centre of Excellence

MP - Madhya Pradesh

ICAR- Indian Council of Agricultural Research

IISR- Indian Institute of Spices Research

CIAE - Central Institute of Agricultural Engineering

C-DAC - Centre for Development of Advanced Computing

3)

TROPEX-2025 (Biennial) → Military exercise of IN, IA & IAF ^{To} ↑ Coordination & test readiness for threats in IOR ^{Held} → IOR

TROPEX - Theatre Level Operational Readiness Exercise

IN - Indian Navy

IA - Indian Army

IAF - Indian Air Force

IOR - Indian Ocean Region

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

1)

X Corp + VISA ^{Unveiled} → X Money → ^{To} 1st Digital wallet of X Corp → Transfer funds instantly to users bank accounts through Visa Direct

^{Owned by} Elon Musk

BANKING & FINANCE

1)

Finvasia + YES Bank ^{Launched} → 'Jumpp' app ^{To} → Integrate banking, savings, payments, investments, & borrowing in platform
→ Open savings accounts with YES Bank in just minutes

2)

RBI ^{Injects} → USD 5.1 bn ^{Via} → FX Swap Auction (Dollar-rupee buy/sell) ^{To} → Infuse rupee liquidity into banking system

RBI - Reserve Bank of India

ECONOMY & BUSINESS

1)

Avaada Group + Casale, ^{To develop} → India's largest green ammonia plant ^{In} → Gopalpur, Odisha
^{Switzerland} (Production capacity - 1,500 TPD)

TPD - Tonnes per day

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

1)

University of Sussex ^{Honored} → Doctorate ^{To} → Noel Naval Tata
England, UK Chairman of Tata trusts, Trent,
Tata Investment Corporation

UK - United Kingdom

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

1)

Hero MotoCorp
 → Acting CEO → Vikram Kasbekar ^{Succeeds} → Niranjan Gupta ^{Effect from} → May 1, 2025
 → CBO → Ashutosh Varma ^{Succeeds} → Ranjivjit Singh ^{Effect from} → May 1, 2025

CEO - Chief Executive Officer

CBO - Chief Business Officer

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

1)

DRDO ^{Tests} → 3 Flight trials of VSHORADS ^{To} → Destroy low-flying drones ^{From} → Odisha
with reduced thermal signatures
 ↓
 About Developed by
 4th generation MANPAD DRDO's Research Centre Imarat,
 Weight - 20.5 kg Telangana
 Operational range - 250 m to 6 km

DRDO - Defence Research and Development Organisation

VSHORADS - Very Short-Range Air Defence System

MANPAD - Man Portable Air Defence System

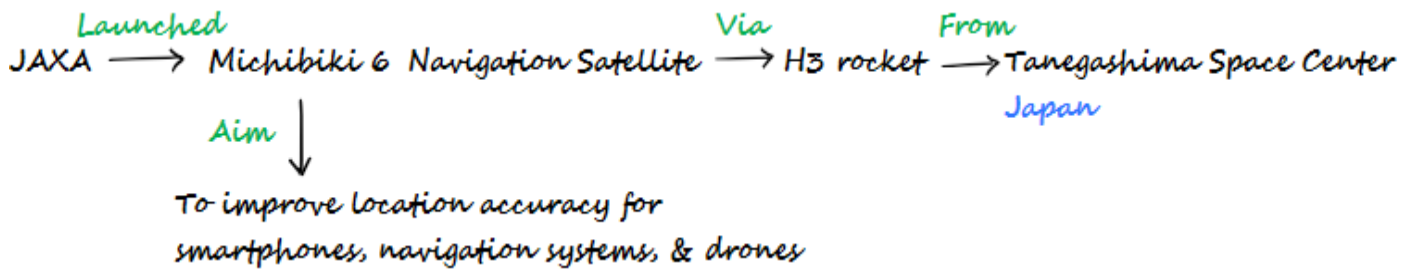
2)

Indian Navy ^{Launched} → LSAM 23 (Yard 133) → 9th ACTCM Barge ^{In} → Thane,
Maharashtra
Constructed by ↓
M/s Suryadipta Projects Pvt Ltd

LSAM - Landing Ship Ammunition

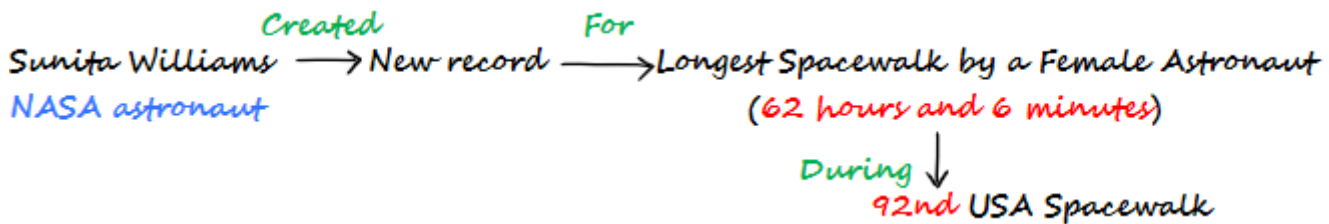
ACTCM - Ammunition Cum Torpedo Cum Missile

3)



JAXA - Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency

4)

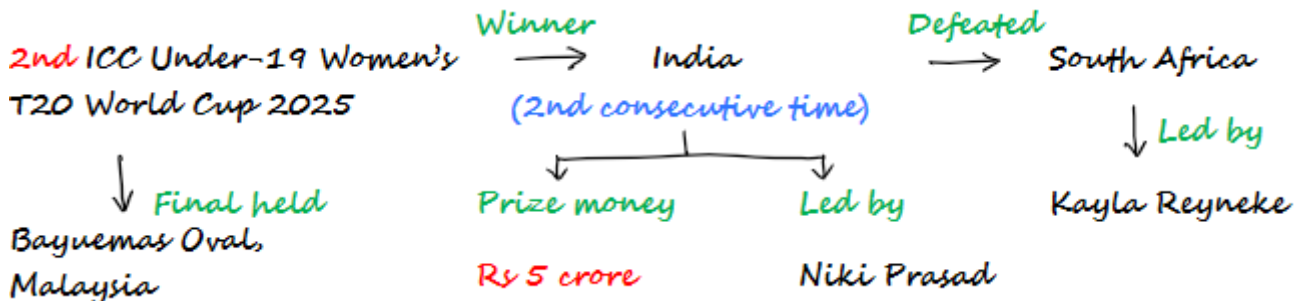


USA - United States of America

NASA - National Aeronautics and Space Administration

SPORTS

1)

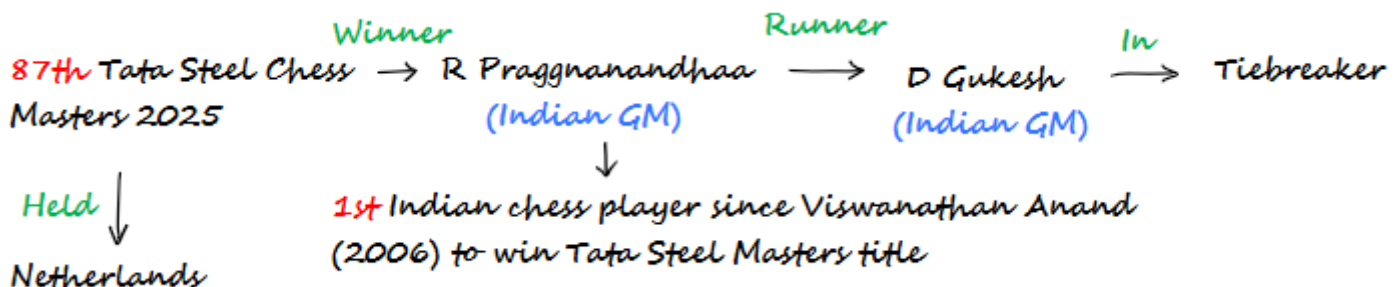


Note: In 2027, Bangladesh & Nepal to host 3rd ICC Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup

ICC - International Cricket Council

T20 - Twenty 20

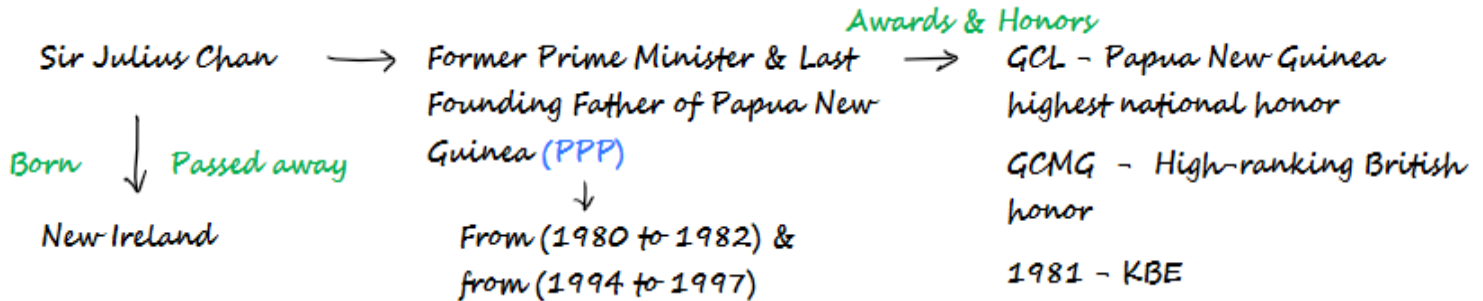
2)



GM - Grandmaster

OBITUARY

1)



PPP - People's Progress Party

GCL - Grand Companion of the Order of Logohu

GCMG - Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St Michael & St George

KBE - Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire

2)



MD - Managing Director

IMF - International Monetary Fund

IMPORTANT DAYS

1)



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- ▶ [Indigenously manufactured vehicles to reach Lebanon for use by Indian contingent in UNIFIL](#)
- ▶ [Swiggy HDFC Bank Credit Card expands benefits with Nykaa partnership](#)
- ▶ [Krishna Ella bags INSA Fellowship for 2025](#)
- ▶ [LG appoints new chief for Delhi Waqf Board](#)

Detailed Content

Current Affairs 4 February 2025 : Headlines



AFFAIRSCLOUD TODAY

ENGLISH





India thrashes South Africa to retain U19 Women's T20 World Cup crown

DRDO successfully conducts successive flight-trials of Very Short-Range Air Defence System off the Odisha coast



CURRENT AFFAIRS

4 FEBRUARY 2025

- 4 New Wetlands, 2 from Tamil Nadu, 1 from Jharkhand, and 1 from Sikkim Added to Ramsar List
- IIT Indore in Collaboration with MeitY Launched 'AgriHub' as a CoE for Agritech
- Indian Armed Forces conducts TROPEX 25 to test its combat readiness
- Elon Musk's X Corp to Launch 1st Digital Wallet with Visa Partnership
- Finvasia Partners with YES Bank Launched AI-Driven Super App 'Jumpp'
- RBI Injects USD 5.1 billion Liquidity via FX Swap Auction
- Avaada Group Partners with Casale to Develop India's Largest Green Ammonia Plant in Odisha
- Noel Naval Tata Honored with Doctorate by University of Sussex
- Hero MotoCorp Appoints Vikram Kasbekar as Acting CEO
- DRDO Successfully Conducted 3 Flight-trials of Indigenous VSHORADS from off the Coast of Odisha
- IN Launches LSAM 23, the 9th ACTCM Barge to Boost Logistics Capabilities
- JAXA Launches 'Michibiki 6' Navigation Satellite into Orbit
- Sunita Williams Sets New Record for Longest Spacewalk by a Female Astronaut During 92nd USA Spacewalk
- India won ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup 2025 by defeating South Africa for 2nd consecutive time
- R Praggnanandhaa won 'Tata Steel Chess Masters 2025', Defeats World Champion D Gukesh in Tiebreaker
- Former Papua New Guinea's PM Sir Julius Chan Passed Away
- Horst Koehler, Former German President & IMF's MD Passed Away
- World Wetlands Day 2025 - February 2

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

4 New Wetlands, 2 from Tamil Nadu, 1 from Jharkhand, and 1 from Sikkim Added to Ramsar List

On 31 January, 2025, Union Minister **Bhupender Yadav**, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (**MoEF&CC**) announced the inclusion of **four new wetlands** from India in **Ramsar Convention list**, bringing the total number of internationally recognized Ramsar sites in **India to 89**.



- The newly added sites are the **Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary** and **Therthangal Bird Sanctuary** in Tamil Nadu (TN), **Khecheopalri Wetland** in Sikkim, and **Udhwa Lake** in Jharkhand. This also marks the first Ramsar sites for both Sikkim and Jharkhand.
- Tamil Nadu now has 20 Ramsar sites, the highest number in India, followed by Uttar Pradesh (UP) with 10.

Note: Globally, there are **2,529** Ramsar wetlands. Wetlands are unique ecosystems that play a crucial role in supporting diverse species of plants and wildlife, both aquatic and terrestrial.

Newly added 4 Ramsar Sites of India:

Name of Wetland	Location	Area (in hectares)
Khecheopalri Wetland	West Sikkim District, Sikkim	11.56
Udhwa Lake	Sahebganj District, Jharkhand	565
Therthangal Bird Sanctuary	Ramanathapuram District, Tamil Nadu	29.5
Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary	Ramanathapuram District, Tamil Nadu	230.49
Total Area of the four Wetlands		836.55

Khecheopalri Wetland:

The Khecheopalri Wetland, located in the Demazong valley, West Sikkim District of Sikkim, covers an area of 11.56 ha.

- This unique wetland is a **glacier-formed Cirque lake**, situated at an elevation of 1,700 meters (m).
- It serves as an important habitat for various Trans-Himalayan migratory birds, including species like the Great Barbet and Long-tailed Shrike.

Udhwa Lake:

Udhwa Lake, located in the Sahebganj District of Jharkhand, spans an area of 565 ha.

i. The lake **consists of** two interconnected water bodies: **Patauran**, covering 155 ha, and **Berhale**, covering 410 ha.

ii. These water bodies are linked to the Ganga River through a water channel, which plays a vital role in maintaining the lake's ecosystem.

iii. Udhwa Lake is home to **83 species of birds**, both aquatic and terrestrial, making it an essential site for birdwatching and wildlife conservation.

iv. The sanctuary is home to several notable bird species, including the **Oriental White-backed Vulture**, **Pallas's Fish Eagle**, **Black-necked Stork**, **Lesser Adjutant**, **Oriental Darter** and **Oriental White Ibis**.

Therthangal Bird Sanctuary:

The Therthangal Bird Sanctuary, located in the Ramanathapuram District of Tamil Nadu, spans an area of 29.5 hectares.

i. Originally a man-made tank, it was **declared a bird sanctuary in 2010**.

ii. The sanctuary is home to **48 species of birds**, with many migratory species that follow the Central Asian flyway.

Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary:

The Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary, located in the **Ramanathapuram District** of Tamil Nadu, covers an area of 230.49 hectares (ha).

i. The sanctuary was initially created as a man-made tank in 1321 A.D. It was **designated** as a protected **bird sanctuary** in **2012**.

ii. It serves as a critical habitat for **116 species of birds**, including various migratory species that travel along the Central Asian flyway.

Key Points:

i. **India** has the **highest number** of Ramsar sites in **Asia** and ranks **third globally**, following the United Kingdom (UK) with 176 sites and Mexico with 144 sites.

ii. To be designated as a Ramsar site, a wetland must meet at least one of the nine criteria outlined in the Ramsar Convention of 1971.

iii. Over the past decade, the number of Ramsar sites in India has grown substantially, from 26 to 89, with 47 of these added in the last three years.

Note: World Wetlands Day is Celebrated Globally on February 2

What is the Ramsar Convention?

The Ramsar Convention is an **international treaty** aimed at protecting and conserving wetlands and their resources. It was signed in 1971 in Ramsar, a city in Iran, and came into effect in 1975.

i. This treaty is unique as it is the only international agreement focused on a single ecosystem. It has **172 member** countries, including India.

ii. **India joined** the Ramsar Convention in **1982**.

About Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC):

Union Minister– Bhupender Yadav (Constituency- Alwar, Rajasthan)

Minister of State (MoS)– Kirti Vardhan Singh (Constituency- Gonda, Uttar Pradesh, UP)



IIT Indore in Collaboration with MeitY Launched 'AgriHub' as a CoE for Agritech

In January 2025, Indian Institute of Technology Indore (IIT-I), Indore, Madhya Pradesh (MP) in collaboration with Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) launched 'AgriHub', an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-driven Centre of Excellence (CoE) to foster technological innovation, startup incubation, and industry collaboration in **agritech** sector.



- The CoE will utilize AI, Machine Learning (ML), and Deep Learning (DL) which will help in addressing the critical agricultural challenges such as: drought, floods, and low productivity and will also promote sustainable agriculture in India.
- It is supported by the MP government, ICAR-IISR Indore(MP), ICAR-CIAE Bhopal(MP), and C-DAC Pune(Maharashtra)

Key People:

- The inauguration event of AgriHub was graced by S. Krishnan, Secretary, MeitY, as the Chief Guest.
- K.K. Singh, Joint Secretary, Innovation and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Division, MeitY; Sanjay Dubey, Additional Chief Secretary(CS), Department of Science and Technology, MP; Dr. C.R. Mehta, Director, Indian Council of Agricultural Research – Central Institute of Agricultural Engineering(ICAR-CIAE) Bhopal; Magesh Ethirajan, Director General, Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC); and Dr. Kunwar Harendra Singh, Director, Indian Council of Agricultural Research – Indian Institute of Spices Research (ICAR-IISR) Indore were present at the event.

About AgriHub :

- It will act as a collaborative platform, which aims to bring together stakeholders from various sectors to develop innovative solutions for Indian agriculture.
- The project is jointly funded by the MeitY and the government of MP for a period of **5 years**.
- The project is led by **Professor Aruna Tiwari** and **Professor Pavan Kankar**, both are faculties of IIT-I.
- It will work to improve efficient utilization of resources and expertise, aligning technological advancements with the needs of farmers, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and other key stakeholders.
- The CoE will provide advanced research in areas like: drought-resistant crops, precision farming, and AI-driven disease diagnosis, utilizing big data analytics and genome research to promote data-driven agriculture.

Significance:

- The project aims to accelerate varietal development programme through an integrated platform for genome sequencing and big data analysis, which will help in developing new crop varieties which can tackle adverse climatic conditions and increase crop production

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- ii. Smart farm management approaches will be developed by using precision agriculture technologies, drone image analysis, and AI-powered support to farmers for demand forecasts.
- iii. The CoE will also conduct various training programmes and skill workshops for students and the technical community. This initiative will promote innovation in the agriculture sector and will create new job prospects in the IT and computing sectors.

About Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) :

Union Minister- Ashwini Vaishnaw (Rajya Sabha member- Odisha)

Minister of State (MoS)- Jitin Prasada (Constituency- Pilibhit, Uttar Pradesh, UP)

Indian Armed Forces conducts TROPEX 25 to test its combat readiness

In January 2025, the senior military officers observed the Theatre Level Operational Readiness Exercise (**TROPEX-2025**), joint operations aboard several Indian Navy Ship (**INS**) to witness the operations and readiness of Indian armed forces : Indian Navy (IN), the Indian Army (IA), and the Indian Air Force (IAF), in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). The exercise was held for 2 days from January 30-31, 2025.




- The senior military officers participated in the exercise are Lieutenant General **Johnson P Mathew**, Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (CISC); Lt Gen NS Raja Subramani, Vice Chief of the Army Staff (VCOAS); Vice Admiral Krishna Swaminathan, Vice Chief of the Naval Staff (VCNS); Air Marshal Sujeet Pushpakar (S.P) Dharkar, Vice Chief of the Air Staff (VCAS) and Lt Gen Ajay Kumar, Director General (DG) of Infantry.

About TROPEX:

- i. TROPEX is the Indian Navy's (IN) largest exercise, held every two years, to improve coordination among the armed forces and to test readiness in case of threats in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).
- ii. The previous exercise, TROPEX 23 involved extensive operational activities, including coastal defence operations (Sea Vigil) and amphibious maneuvers (AMPHEX).

About TROPEX 25:


- i. Senior officers onboard the India's first indigenous aircraft carrier **INS Vikrant** saw fighter jets and helicopters in action, with demonstrations that included bomb drops, rocket firing, and aerobatics.
- ii. On **INS Jalashwa**, the officers watched the Army soldiers and Navy Commandos carry out a series of amphibious landing drills. These included breaking through bunkers, jumping from planes in combat, and landing troops and vehicles on the shore using specialized boats.
- ii. **Air Marshal SP Dharkar** participated in a MiG-29K trainer, showcasing the joint capabilities of the IN, the IA, and the IAF.
- iii. Additionally, the officers visited the Naval Base at Karwar (Karnataka), where they were informed about the ongoing construction of new facilities to support future naval operations.



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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Elon Musk's X Corp to Launch 1st Digital Wallet with Visa Partnership

In January 2025, **Elon Musk** owned social media platform, **X Corp** (formerly known as Twitter, Inc.), a wholly owned subsidiary of X Holdings Corp, unveiled its 1st Digital Wallet , peer-to-peer (P2P) payment service '**X Money**' in partnership with Visitors International Stay Admission (**VISA**), to launch a real-time payment system aiming to create an "everything application (app)."

- **VISA**, one of the largest United States of America (USA) credit card networks, will be the 1st partner for X's Money Account service, set to launch later in **2025**.
- i.The company will utilize Visa Direct, Visa's real-time money transfer solution, to fund X Money's wallet, link to a debit card for payments to other users, and facilitate smooth transfers back to your bank account.
- ii.X Money will enable users to transfer funds instantly to their bank accounts through Visa Direct.

BANKING & FINANCE

Finvasia Partners with YES Bank Launched AI-Driven Super App 'Jumpp'

In January 2025, Chandigarh (Punjab) based **Finvasia**, a fintech company partnered with Mumbai (Maharashtra) based **YES Bank** Limited to launch '**Jumpp**', an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enabled super application (app) to simplify personal finance.

- The app integrates banking, savings, payments, investments, and borrowing into a seamless, all-in-one platform.
- It enables users to seamlessly open savings accounts with YES Bank in just minutes.
- i.Jumpp is designed for online shoppers in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, offering a seamless and convenient financial experience.
- ii.It connects with India's Account Aggregator (AA) framework, which has surpassed 100 million consents, ensuring secure and efficient financial data sharing.
- iii.It offers multilingual AI-driven assistance in English and Hindi, enabling voice-based interactions to support users with limited digital literacy.
- iv.It is powered by an AI chatbot that delivers personalized financial advice, while also incorporating advanced features for fraud prevention.
- v.It prioritizes data security, fully adhering to regulatory guidelines to safeguard user information and ensure privacy.
- vi.Finvasia plans to onboard one million users by January 2026, focusing on expanding digital financial services to areas beyond metro cities, thereby reaching a broader audience.

RBI Injects USD 5.1 billion Liquidity via FX Swap Auction

In January, 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra) based Reserve Bank of India (**RBI**), conducted a dollar-rupee buy/sell foreign exchange swap (FX swap) auction for **USD 5.1 billion**. The auction saw a significant oversubscription, with total bids amounted to USD 25.59 billion from 253 participants, exceeding the offered amount by five times.

- This move will infuse rupee liquidity into the banking system and is part of a broader strategy by the central bank to inject approximately **Rs.1.5 trillion** into the financial system.
- i.The transaction will be reversed on August 4, 2025, when the RBI will sell the USD 5.1 billion, obtained through 28 accepted bids, back to the market at the forward rate (currency exchange spot rate plus 96.71 paise) and take back Rs. 43,784 crores approximately

ii. In response to the auction's results, dollar-rupee forward premiums saw a slight dip, with the 1-year implied yield moderating its increase to settle at the last quote of 2.24%.

Note: In an FX swap, the RBI acquires dollars from financial institutions in exchange for rupees, simultaneously boosting rupee liquidity and reducing excess dollar circulation

ECONOMY & BUSINESS

Avaada Group Partners with Casale to Develop India's Largest Green Ammonia Plant in Odisha

In January 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra)- based **Avaada Group** partnered with Casale, a company fully owned by Casale Holding and headquartered in Lugano, Switzerland, to develop **India's largest** green ammonia plant in **Gopalpur, Odisha**.

- This project will help India transition away from fossil fuel-based ammonia production, aligning with the country's net-zero emission commitments.

i. The facility will have a production capacity of **1,500 tonnes per day** (TPD) and aims to drive clean energy adoption, reduce carbon emissions, and support sustainable industrial growth.

ii. Casale **will provide** the Green Ammonia Process License, engineering designs, key equipment, and technical expertise to establish the facility.

iii. Casale had licensed a total green ammonia capacity of 5,700 metric tonnes per day (MTD) in India till now.

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

Noel Naval Tata Honored with Doctorate by University of Sussex

In January 2025, England (The United Kingdom, UK) based the **University of Sussex** awarded an **honorary doctorate** to **Noel Naval Tata**, a prominent business leader from the Mumbai (Maharashtra)-based Tata Group and a distinguished alumnus of the university, for his exceptional contribution to global business leadership.

- Professor Sasha Roseneil, Vice-Chancellor and President of the University of Sussex, conferred the honorary doctorate upon Noel Tata during a private ceremony in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- Noel Naval Tata currently serves as the Chairman of Trent Limited, Tata International Limited, Voltas Limited, and Tata Investment Corporation Limited. Additionally, he holds the position of Vice Chairman at Tata Steel Limited and Titan Company Limited.

About Noel Naval Tata:

i. Noel Tata earned a degree in Economics from the University of Sussex in 1978.

ii. With over 40 years of leadership experience at the Tata Group, Noel Tata has played a key role in Trent Limited, the group's fashion retail arm, expanding its brands to include Westside, Star Bazaar, and Zudio.

iii. In 2024, **Noel Tata, Ratan Tata's half-brother**, was appointed Chairman of the Tata Trusts Limited, the philanthropic arm of the Tata Group.

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APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Hero MotoCorp Appoints Vikram Kasbekar as Acting CEO

In January 2025, New Delhi (Delhi) based **Hero MotoCorp** (HMC) Limited, India's largest two-wheeler manufacturer appointed **Vikram Kasbekar**, Executive Director (ED) of the company, as the **acting** Chief Executive Officer (**CEO**), effective from May 1, 2025.

- He will succeed **Niranjan Gupta**, who will step down as CEO of Hero MotoCorp, effective from April 30, 2025.

Other appointments:

i. **Ranjivjit Singh**, Chief Business Officer (CBO) of Hero MotoCorp, will complete his tenure on April 30, 2025. He will be succeeded by **Ashutosh Varma**, the current National Sales Head of India Business Unit (IBU), who will take over on May 1, 2025.

ii. The maker of the 'Splendor+' has also confirmed that **Ram Kuppuswamy**, Chief Procurement Officer (CPO), will take on the additional role of Chief Operations Officer (COO) for manufacturing, effective April 1, 2025. He will also oversee plant and quality functions.

- Hero's EV & Emerging Mobility Business Unit (EMBU) will transition into a fully independent unit by February 1, 2025.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

DRDO Successfully Conducted 3 Flight-trials of Indigenous VSHORADS from off the Coast of Odisha

On February 01 2025, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (**DRDO**) successfully conducted three consecutive flight-trials of the Very Short-Range Air Defence System (**VSHORADS**) from Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.



- These tests were conducted against high-speed targets flying at very low altitude.

About Flight Tests:

i. During these tests, the surface-to-air missiles intercepted and completely destroyed the targets having reduced thermal signature simulating low flying drones at different flying conditions.

ii. These flight-tests were carried out in final deployment configuration where in two field operators carried out weapon readiness, target acquisition and missile firing.

iii. Various range of instruments like: Telemetry, Electro-Optical Tracking System (EOTS), and Radar deployed by ITR, Chandipur, captured the flight data, which confirmed the exact accuracy and established the unique capability of VSHORADS missile in neutralizing drones along with other classes of aerial threats.

iv. The missile system has the capability to meet the requirements of all 3 branches of Indian Armed Forces i.e. Indian Army (IA), Indian Navy (IN) and Indian Air Force (IAF).

About VSHORADS:

i. It is a indigenous **4th** generation technically-advanced Man Portable Air Defence System (**MANPAD or MPADS**).

ii. It is designed and developed by DRDO's Hyderabad (Telangana)-based Research Centre Imarat (**RCI**) in partnership with other DRDO laboratories and Development cum Production Partners (DcPPs).

iii. The missile weighs 20.5 kilograms(kg) and measures 2 meters(m) in length. It has a diameter of 90 millimetre(mm) and a wingspan of 32 centimeter(cm). The warhead, weighing 2 kg, uses an adaptive proximity fuze.

- It has an operational range of 250m to 6 kilometers(km) and can travel at a maximum speed of Mach 1.5 (about 1,850 km/h). It is designed to be launched from the shoulder or mounted on a tripod, making it both portable and versatile for use in various combat scenarios.

iv. The missile system is an important requirement for IA as it provides close air defence protection for mobile formations, especially in the increasing threat of drones and loitering munitions.

About Defence Research and Development Organisation(DRDO):

It is the Research and Development (R&D) wing of the Ministry of Defence (MoD), Government of India (GoI).

Chairman- Dr. Samir Vankatpati Kamat

Headquarters- New Delhi, Delhi

Established-1958

IN Launches LSAM 23, the 9th ACTCM Barge to Boost Logistics Capabilities

In January 2025, the Indian Navy (**IN**) launched its **9th** Ammunition Cum Torpedo Cum Missile (**ACTCM**) Barge, named Landing Ship Ammunition 23 (**LSAM 23**) (Yard 133), at M/s Suryadipta Projects Private Limited in Thane, Maharashtra. The launching ceremony was presided over by Commodore (Cmde) **Rakesh Anand (Retd.)**, Group Head of Marine Division.



- The barges facilitate the transportation, embarkation, and disembarkation of articles and ammunition to IN platforms, both alongside jetties and at outer harbors.

i. The barges have been indigenously designed and constructed by the MSME Shipyard in collaboration with an Indian ship designing firm and the Indian Register of Shipping (IRS).

ii. Model testing was conducted at the Naval Science and Technological Laboratory (NSTL) in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh(AP), to ensure the seaworthiness of the barges.

iii. In March 2021, the contract was signed with the **M/s Suryadipta Projects Private Limited**, a Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Shipyard, for the construction of 11 ACTCM Barges.

- The shipyard has successfully delivered eight of these barges to date, which are being used by the IN for operational evolutions.

JAXA Launches 'Michibiki 6' Navigation Satellite into Orbit

On February 2, 2025, the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) based in Tokyo, Japan launched the 'Michibiki 6', a navigation satellite aboard its **H3 rocket** from the Tanegashima Space Center (TNSC) in Kagoshima Prefecture, Japan. This launch marks Japan's first satellite launch of 2025 and the **fourth** consecutive successful launch for the H3, reinforcing its role as Japan's new flagship launch vehicle.



About Michibiki 6:

- i. The 1,900-kilogram(kg) Michibiki 6 satellite, also known as the Quasi-Zenith Satellite (QZS-6), is part of Japan's Quasi-Zenith Satellite System (**QZSS**), a positioning satellite network designed to **improve location accuracy** for smartphones, navigation systems, and drones.
- ii. The QZSS, is operational from 2018, operates in multiple orbits to ensure continuous satellite coverage over Japan.
 - The newly launched satellite is the **fifth** in this system, with plans to expand it to seven satellites by March 2026 and eventually to 11 satellites by the late 2030s.
- iii. This expansion is expected to enhance positioning accuracy from 5-10 meters (m) to within 1 m.

Key Points:

- i. The H3 rocket, developed jointly by **JAXA** and **Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Limited** based in Tokyo, Japan is positioned to replace the **H-2A**.
- ii. H3 rocket, serves as a successor to the H2A series, and the Epsilon system, a smaller launch vehicle.

Note: In 2024, Japan carried out five rocket launches, including three H3s and two H-2As.

About Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) :

Administrator– Hiroshi Yamakawa

Headquarters– Tokyo, Japan

Established– 2003

Sunita Williams Sets New Record for Longest Spacewalk by a Female Astronaut During 92nd USA Spacewalk

In January, 2025, an Indian-origin astronaut from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) **Sunita "Sunni" Williams** set a new record for the longest total spacewalking time by a female astronaut, reaching **62 hours and 6 minutes**. This milestone was achieved during the **92nd** United States of America (**USA**) spacewalk.

- i. The spacewalk was **part of Expedition 72**, which began on September 23, 2024.
- ii. This marked **her ninth spacewalk**, breaking the previous record of 60 hours and 21 minutes held by former astronaut Peggy Whitson.
- iii. During this spacewalk, Sunita Williams, along with her mission partner Butch Wilmore, performed maintenance on the International Space Station (ISS) and collected material samples from the Destiny laboratory and Quest airlock for scientific analysis.

- Both astronauts have been on the International Space Station (ISS) since June 2024.

SPORTS

India won ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup 2025 by defeating South Africa for 2nd consecutive time

On February 02 2025, **India** won the 2nd edition of the International Cricket Council (ICC) Under-19 (**U19**) **Women's T20 (Twenty 20) World Cup 2025** for the 2nd consecutive time by defeating **South Africa** with 9 wickets in the final at Bayuemas Oval, Kuala Lumpur (KL), Malaysia.



- India's women cricket team was led by captain Niki Prasad and South Africa's women cricket team was led by captain Kayla Reyneke.

Note: Following this win, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) secretary **Jay Shah** has announced prize money of **Rs 5 crore** for the India's U-19 women's team.

Highlights:

- South Africa, batting first, had scored 82 runs in 20 overs.
- India completed the task by securing 84 runs in **just 11.2 overs**, winning with 52 balls to spare.
- Gongadi Trisha** earned 'Player of the Match 2025' and 'Player of the Series 2025' awards for her outstanding performance and contributions in the match.
 - She had an exceptional tournament, scoring 309 runs at an average of 77.25 and a strike rate of 147.14.
 - She scored an unbeaten 44 runs from 33 balls and took 3 wickets for 15 runs, leading India to victory.
- Sanika Chalke** provided solid support with an unbeaten 26 runs off 22 balls.
- Vaishnavi Sharma** leads the bowling with 17 wickets, followed by **Aayushi Shukla**.
- Vaishnavi Sharma**, **Aayushi Shukla**, and **Parunika Sisodia** all contributed by claiming 2 wickets each, making it a complete team effort in both batting and bowling.

About ICC Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup:

- It is an international cricket competition, organised by the ICC since 2023.
- The tournament was played in the T20 format, featured 16 teams, participated in 41 matches.
- In the first edition of ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2023, India defeated England by 7 wickets in the final in South Africa.
- The third edition of the Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup, scheduled to be hosted by **Bangladesh and Nepal** in 2027.

About South Africa:

President- Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa

Capitals- Cape Town (Executive), Pretoria (Legislative), Bloemfontein (Judicial)

Currency- South African rand (**ZAR**)

R Praggnanandhaa won 'Tata Steel Chess Masters 2025', Defeats World Champion D Gukesh in Tiebreaker

On February 2, 2025, Indian Chess Grandmaster **R Praggnanandhaa** won the 'Tata Steel Chess Masters 2025' trophy by defeating World Chess Champion of 2024, **D Gukesh** in the tiebreaker held in Wijk aan Zee, Netherlands.



- With this victory, Praggnanandhaa became the **1st Indian Chess player** since Viswanathan Anand in 2006 to win the Tata Steel Masters title.
- He previously reached a career-high World **Ranking of 8** in July 2024 and was a runner-up at the Chess World Cup 2023, where he lost to Magnus Carlsen in the final.

About Tata Steel Chess Tournament 2025:

i. The Tata Steel Chess Tournament 2025 was the 87th edition of the "Wimbledon of Chess," a classical tournament that has been previously won by World Chess Champions Euwe, Botvinnik, Tal, Petrosian, Spassky, Karpov, Kasparov, Kramnik, Anand, and Carlsen.

- The event was held from **17 January 2025 to 2 February 2025** in Wijk aan Zee, Netherlands.

ii. The tournament, the 1st elite chess event of the year, featured 5 out of 14 participants ranked in the top 10 globally.

iii. The event includes chess legends, showcasing a classical **14-player round-robin** format in both the **Masters** and **Challengers** categories.

Highlights:

i. Praggnanandhaa R, ranked 14th in the world, performed admirably, securing six wins, five draws, and two losses during the tournament, including a defeat to Germany's Vincent Keymer in the final round.

ii. Gukesh D, newly crowned World Chess Champion 2024, lost for the 1st time as World Champion, falling to Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi in 31 moves.

- **Tiebreaker:** The tournament was decided by a blitz tiebreaker, with each player playing two fast-paced games, ending with a 1-1 score.

OBITUARY

Former Papua New Guinea's PM Sir Julius Chan Passed Away

In January 2025, **Sir Julius Chan**, the former Prime Minister (PM) and the Last Founding Father of Papua New Guinea (PNG) passed away at the age of 85 in Huris, New Ireland Province, PNG. He was born on 29 August 1939, Tanga Islands, Territory of New Guinea (now New Ireland Province), PNG.

- He served as PM of PNG from 1980 to 1982 and from 1994 to 1997.

About Sir Julius Chan:

i. **Sir Julius Chan**, former PNG Defence Force (PNGDF) commander, was a prominent PNG longest serving politician who made significant contributions to the country's political landscape over several decades.

ii. He was the last founding father of PNG's independence in 1975 known as "Sir J," and the "last man standing" from PNG's 1st post-colonial government.



iii. His political career began in the 1960s, when he was elected to represent the Namatanai district, New Ireland Province, PNG in the pre-independence House of Assembly in 1968.

- He became the leader of the People's Progress Party (PPP) in 1970.

iv. He served as Deputy Prime Minister (PM) on four occasions (1976, 1985, 1986, 1992–1994) and Minister of Finance three times (1972–1977, 1985–1986, and 1992–1994).

- He served as the 1st Finance Minister in 1972, establishing PNG's banking and finance systems.

v. He was appointed as the PM on 11 March 1980, following a successful no-confidence motion against Michael Somare, the country's 1st PM.

vi. He was a member of the New Ireland Province and was elected to the National Parliament in 2007.

vii. He served as the Governor of New Ireland Province in 2007 and remained active in his role until his death.

Awards and Honors:

i. Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire (**KBE**): In 1981, he was knighted for his service as Finance Minister and PM to the country.

ii. Grand Companion of the Order of Logohu (**GCL**): He was awarded this PNG's highest national honor for his contribution to the country's independence and development.

iv. Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St Michael and St George (**GCMG**): He was awarded this high-ranking British honor for his outstanding service to the country on the global stage in diplomacy.

About Papua New Guinea(PNG):

Prime Minister (PM) – **James Marape**

Capital – Port Moresby

Currency – Papua New Guinean Kina(PGK)

Horst Koehler, Former German President & IMF's MD Passed Away

On February 1 2025, Former German President and the Managing Director (MD) of International Monetary Fund (IMF) **Horst Koehler** passed away at the **age of 81** in Berlin, Germany. He was born on 22 February 1943, Heidenstein, General Government (now Skierbieszów, Poland).



- He served as the MD of IMF in 2000, a position he held for 4 years.
- He served as the 9th President of Germany from 2004 to 2010.

About Horst Koehler:

- i. **Horst Köhler** was a distinguished German Politician and Economist, and Member of the Christian Democrats, who served as the Deputy Finance Minister under ex-Chancellor, Helmut Kohl in 1990.
- ii. He held influential roles in international financial institutions, including as President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) from 1998–2000.
- iii. He also held various Advisory and Leadership positions, including in the United Nation (UN) High-Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the African Development Bank Group.
- iv. He was widely respected for his efforts to promote international cooperation, development, and ethical leadership.

Awards and Honours:

- i. German Order of Merit of Baden-Württemberg (2002): Awarded for his contributions to economic policy and leadership.
- ii. Grand Cross of the Order of Saint Olav (2007): Awarded by Norway for his efforts in global peace and development.
- iii. Global Economy Prize (2017): Awarded for his outstanding contributions to global economic policy and sustainability.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Wetlands Day 2025 – February 2

The United Nations (UN's) **World Wetlands Day** is observed annually on **February 2** across the globe to raise awareness about the critical role wetlands play in supporting both people and the planet.

- The day commemorates the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (**Ramsar Convention**), an intergovernmental treaty signed on **2 February 1971**, in Ramsar, Iran along the shores of the Caspian Sea.



Theme 2025:

- i. The theme for World Wetlands Day 2025, “**Protecting Wetlands for Our Common Future**”.
- ii. The theme highlights the urgent need to protect wetlands for the benefit of all people for future generations.

Background:

- i. The World Wetlands Day observance began in **1997**, organized by the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands, and has been celebrated by the Convention's Contracting Parties since its establishment.
- ii. On **30 August 2021**, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) adopted resolution **A/RES/75/317**, declaring February 2 as World Wetlands Day every year to halt the loss of wetlands and promote their conservation and restoration.
- iii. The first UN-recognized World Wetlands Day was observed on **February 2, 2022**.

Significance:

- i. Every three years, representatives from Contracting Parties meet to discuss wetland conservation and plan the next 3 years.
- ii. This year, World Wetlands Day 2025 aligns with the theme of the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (**COP15**).
 - COP15 will be held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, from July 23-31, 2025.

What are Wetlands?

- i. Wetlands are diverse ecosystems where water plays a crucial role in shaping the environment and supporting plant and animal life.
- ii. These areas, including freshwater, coastal, and human-made wetlands, offer essential benefits like climate regulation, flood control, and water purification.

Keyfacts:

- i. Currently wetlands cover only around 6% of the Earth's land surface, 40% of all plant and animal species live or breed in wetlands.
 - Wetlands are disappearing three times faster than forests and are Earth's most threatened ecosystem. In just 50 years. Since 1970, 35% of the world's wetlands have been lost.
- ii. As of February 2025, there are 2,529 Ramsar sites in the World.
 - These sites are located in 172 countries that are part of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.
 - **The Cobourg Peninsula** in Australia was designated as the world's first Ramsar Site in 1974.
- iii. As of February 2025, India is home to **89 Ramsar sites**, the highest number in South Asia in wetland conservation which covers around 1.35 million hectares (h) of land for a Sustainable Ecosystem.
 - The first Ramsar sites in India were Chilika Lake (Odisha) and Keoladeo National Park (Rajasthan). Both were recognised in 1981.
 - Tamil Nadu (TN) leads with 20 Ramsar Sites, followed by Uttar Pradesh (10).
- iv. The surface-area covered by Ramsar Sites in India are around 13,32,746.24 hectares (ha).
 - Uttar Pradesh (UP) is home to 1,33,434 wetlands, covering 5.16% of the State's total geographical area.
 - The Sunderbans Wetland in West Bengal (WB) is the **largest** Ramsar site in India with an area of 423,000 ha.
 - Renuka Wetland, located in Himachal Pradesh (HP) is the **smallest Ramsar site** in India. It covers an area of only 20 ha.
- iv. According to National Wetland Inventory and Assessment (NWIA) the total area under wetland in India is estimated as 15.260 million hectares (mha), which accounts for 4.63% of the geographical area.
 - Gujarat has the largest area of wetlands (17,613 wetlands – 3.5 million ha), followed by Andhra Pradesh (AP), UP, and West Bengal (WB).

Wetland Conservation and Management Rules, 2017:

To enhance the protection of wetlands, India introduced the Wetland (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017. These rules have been issued under the Environment Protection Act, 1986.

These rules include:

- i. **Identification & Protection:** States must identify and designate wetlands of ecological significance.
- ii. **Prohibited Activities:** Banning harmful activities like industrial discharge, encroachments, and the conversion of wetlands.
- iii. **Sustainable Management Plans:** Promoting wise use of wetlands for agriculture, fisheries, and tourism to maintain ecological balance.
- iv. **Monitoring Committees:** Establishment of State Wetland Authorities to oversee conservation efforts.

2025 Events:

- i. On February 02 2025, Union Minister of State (MoS) , **Kirti Vardhan Singh**, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), chaired a Regional Workshop on the Conservation and Wise Use of Wetlands in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh (UP). The event, part of the 'Sahbhagita Mission' launched in 2022.
- The workshop also featured insights from Ramsar Site Managers from 5 States and 4 Union Territories (UT's), including Haryana, Himachal Pradesh (HP), Punjab, Uttarakhand, UP, New Delhi (Delhi), Chandigarh, Jammu & Kashmir (J&K), and Ladakh.
 - Union MoS Kirti Vardhan Singh also released a booklet and launched a poster on 'Seven Steps for Wetland and Pond Conservation'.
- ii. A national event was also held at the **Parvati Arga Bird Sanctuary**, Gonda, UP with Chief Minister (CM) of UP Yogi Adityanath as the Chief Guest.
- The event included the official handover of the Integrated Management Plan for the Parvati Arga Wetland to MoEFCC.

About Ramsar Convention on Wetlands:

The Ramsar Convention Secretariat is based at the headquarters of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in Gland, Switzerland.
Secretary-General (SG) – Dr. Musonda Mumba

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Current Static Banking	1	—	—	—
Current Static GK	2	1	—	—
Static Banking	—	—	—	—
Static GK	—	—	—	—
Total	45	38	29	16

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