

ONE YEAR ODISHA STATE SPECIAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

A Complete Guide on One Year Odishal State Special Current Affairs for OPSC and Other State Examination

State special current affairs March 2025 to March 2026



One Year Odisha State Special Current Affairs

A Complete Guide on One Year Odisha
State Special Current Affairs for OPSC and Other State Examination

Study IQ Education Pvt. Ltd.

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World Pakhala Dibasa Celebrated in Odisha with Cultural Zeal and Health Advocacy



Pakhala Diwas: Celebrating Odisha's Iconic Dish

Pakhala Diwas, celebrated on March 20th every year, is a unique cultural event dedicated to Odisha's beloved dish, Pakhala. This day highlights the significance of Pakhala, a traditional fermented rice dish, in Odia cuisine and its role in the daily lives of people, especially during the summer months.

The Essence of Pakhala

Pakhala is a simple yet wholesome dish made by soaking cooked rice in water and allowing it to ferment overnight. It is typically served with accompaniments like fried or mashed vegetables, badi chura, green chilies, curd, and fish fry. Due to its cooling properties, Pakhala is widely consumed during the scorching summers of Odisha to combat heat and aid digestion.

Origin and Cultural Significance

Pakhala has been a staple food in Odia households for centuries, deeply rooted in the agrarian lifestyle of the state. It is believed that the dish originated as a means to preserve rice and prevent wastage. Over time, it gained immense popularity across different sections of society, including being a part of the sacred offerings at the Jagannath Temple in Puri.

Celebration of Pakhala Diwas

To promote and preserve Odisha's culinary heritage, food lovers and cultural enthusiasts across the state observe Pakhala Diwas with great enthusiasm. Social media platforms are flooded with images and recipes of Pakhala, showcasing its variations such as Saja Pakhala, Basi Pakhala, Dahi Pakhala, and Jeera Pakhala. Restaurants and hotels also include special Pakhala platters on their menus to honor the occasion.

Conclusion

Pakhala Diwas is not just a celebration of a dish but a tribute to Odisha's rich cultural and culinary traditions. It reinforces the importance of simple, nutritious, and sustainable eating habits, making it a cherished part of Odia identity.

Lakhpati Didi: A Transformative Movement Towards Women Empowerment in Odisha



- The true measure of progress in a society is determined by the empowerment of its women. Aligned with this philosophy, the Government of Odisha, under the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, has diligently advanced women's empowerment through the groundbreaking initiative of 'Lakhpati Didi.' This flagship program is a manifestation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ambitious vision to create a robust network of women entrepreneurs,

making them financially independent and socially empowered.

- In a significant achievement, Odisha has secured the second position in implementing the Lakhpati Didi initiative, closely trailing Maharashtra. With over 9.36 lakh women already achieving the landmark of earning ₹1 lakh or more annually, Odisha is swiftly approaching the top position nationally, underscoring its focused commitment to this transformative scheme.
- The initiative's essence lies in its multidimensional approach, executed meticulously by the Odisha Livelihoods Mission (OLM). OLM's relentless efforts in financial inclusion, skill enhancement, market access, and capacity building have created a robust ecosystem where women entrepreneurs thrive.
- Odisha's performance in the Lakhpati Didi initiative is compelling, with significant milestones achieved across various districts. Sambalpur leads the state with 79% of its target already fulfilled, closely followed by Jagatsinghpur at 70% and Jajpur at 69%. Overall, as of March 19, 2025, Odisha has successfully created more than 9.36 lakh Lakhpati Didis against a yearly target of 16.19 lakh, marking an impressive progress of 58%.
- The success of this initiative is further enriched by strategic partnerships at both national and state levels. Technical and strategic support from several reputed national and state-level agencies has significantly enhanced productivity, livelihood diversification, and market linkages for these grassroots women entrepreneurs. Various expert organizations provide vital assistance, ranging from enhancing livelihood models to ensuring robust market strategies in diverse sectors including food and beverages, handicrafts, and micro-enterprise development.
- Central to enhancing the visibility and financial success of the Lakhpati Didi initiative is the Subhadra Shakti Mela, which recently concluded with resounding success. This mela served not just as a marketplace but as a powerful platform for women entrepreneurs from diverse sectors, offering them exposure, economic gains, and networking opportunities.
- One significant event illustrating the transformative impact of these efforts was the recent Subhadra Shakti Mela 2025, organized at State and at 4 regional levels. The mela provided an exceptional platform for women entrepreneurs across the state, hosting more than SHGs and Producer Groups (PGs), including 300 first-time participants. This event generated a remarkable business turnover exceeding Rs. 8 crore. Of the Potential Lakhpati Didis who attended the mela, an impressive 1000 transitioned into certified Lakhpati Didis.
- Women SHGs across Odisha have embraced diverse economic activities under the Lakhpati Didi framework. From traditional handloom and handicrafts to modern agribusiness and processed food enterprises, the women entrepreneurs have showcased innovation and tenacity. Millets-based products, terracotta crafts, golden grass items, and organic products have become symbols of economic independence, bridging traditional craftsmanship with modern market demands.
- An epitome of entrepreneurial spirit and success, the Maa Vaishno Devi Producer Group from Pandakamal in M. Rampur block, Kalahandi district, stands out as a beacon of transformation. The group, consisting of 20 dedicated members and supporting 120 skilled women from 26 SHGs, has turned its garment manufacturing unit into an impressive entrepreneurial success. With products ranging from uniforms, men's and women's wear, kids' clothing, and Sambalpuri sarees, their business generated a staggering turnover of Rs 78 lakh last year alone.
- Notably, during the recent Subhadra Shakti Mela, Maa Vaishno Devi PG showcased exceptional performance, achieving sales exceeding Rs 6 lakh. Their products have gained popularity beyond Odisha, reaching markets in Kolkata, Jharkhand, Bihar, and various local and national wholesalers. Fabrics sourced from Surat, Raipur, Ludhiana, Tamil Nadu, and Coimbatore indicate

the scale and strategic approach of their business operations.

- The success of Maa Vaishno Devi PG is symbolic of the transformational potential that the Lakhpati Didi initiative carries. By converting ordinary homemakers into thriving entrepreneurs, it has positioned Odisha as a frontrunner in women empowerment and livelihood innovation.
- A structured market linkage strategy is currently underway, aiming to strengthen value chains, expand market access, and significantly increase the earning potential of the Lakhpati Didis. Digital platforms, E-commerce, and international export linkages are being leveraged to introduce these grassroots entrepreneurs to broader and global markets. Collaborations with governmental export agencies, certifications such as ISO, Organic, and Fair Trade, and aggressive marketing campaigns on digital platforms and social media are being pursued rigorously to uplift the economic status of women entrepreneurs across the state.
- With more than 9.36 lakh women already achieving Lakhpati status in Odisha, including aspirational and tribal districts, the journey has just begun. Odisha's relentless commitment to the Lakhpati Didi initiative positions it to soon lead nationally, surpassing states like Maharashtra. This journey is not merely about economic growth, it embodies social empowerment, community transformation, and nation-building. With every empowered woman, Odisha moves closer to realizing the dream of an inclusive, equitable, and prosperous society.
- Indeed, Lakhpati Didi is not just an initiative; it is a movement towards a better, stronger Odisha, led by empowered women whose success stories inspire generations to come.

799 Lives Lost in Odisha to Human-Wildlife Conflict in 5 Years

- Odisha has witnessed a disturbing rise in human-wildlife conflicts over the past five years, claiming 799 human lives and injuring 1,962 people, Forest and Environment Minister Ganesh Ram Khuntia informed the Assembly .



- Responding to a query from MLA Padmalochan Panda, the Minister revealed that most incidents involved elephants straying into villages in search of food, leading to crop loss, property damage, and human casualties.
- Dhenkanal District Tops the List
  - Dhenkanal district emerged as the worst affected, recording 147 deaths — the highest in the state. Frequent elephant movement in the area is attributed to habitat loss and shrinking forest cover, forcing the animals into human settlements. Rapid urbanization and deforestation have further intensified these conflicts.
- Wildlife Deaths Also Rising
  - The data also revealed alarming wildlife mortality figures. In the last two years alone, Odisha recorded 832 wildlife deaths, including elephants and tigers.
  - Shockingly, 806 of these were due to poaching, highlighting the ongoing threats of illegal hunting and wildlife trafficking despite conservation efforts.
- Urgent Call for Action
  - The growing casualties among humans and animals underline the urgent need for stronger conservation measures.
  - Experts stress the importance of creating and protecting wildlife corridors to minimize human-animal encounters and reduce conflict.

– With rising deforestation, climate change, and human encroachment, Odisha faces a mounting challenge in safeguarding both its people and rich wildlife heritage.
– Coordinated efforts between the government, conservationists, and local communities are crucial to prevent further escalation of this crisis.

March 5 No Longer a Govt Holiday in Odisha: Here's Why



- In a recent decision, the Odisha government has announced that March 5 will no longer be observed as a public holiday in the state.
- Traditionally celebrated as the birth anniversary of former Chief Minister Biju Patnaik, this day will now be a regular working day.
- The change comes as the state aligns with the national observance of Panchayati Raj Day, celebrated on April 24 each year. This day marks the constitutionalization of Panchayati Raj through the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1993, which was a significant step towards decentralizing governance and empowering local self-government institutions.
- Despite the change in the holiday status, March 5 will continue to be recognized and celebrated as the birth anniversary of Biju Patnaik. The government has assured that the legacy and contributions of the former Chief Minister will continue to be honored through various state-wide programs and events.
- By shifting the holiday to April 24, the Odisha government aims to resolve any dissonance between state and national celebrations and ensure that the significance of both occasions is appropriately acknowledged.

Odisha declares 'Zero Tolerance Day' twice a week to enforce strict traffic rules

- In a bid to reduce road accidents, the Odisha government has designated Sundays and Wednesdays as 'Zero Tolerance Days' for strict traffic rule enforcement. The decision was made during the State Road Safety Council meeting, chaired by Commerce & Transport Minister Bibhuti Jena.
- On these days, there will be no leniency for traffic violators, with intensified vehicle checks and penalty collections.
- The government will take stringent action against offenses like over-speeding, drunk driving, and riding without helmets.
- Between July 2024 and January 2025, the state recorded 3,717 deaths from 6,327 road accidents, with speeding and negligent driving as major causes. Odisha reports an average of 16 road fatalities daily, with a severity rate of 47%, surpassing the national average of 37%.

Goodbye to Long Queues: Odisha's Mobile App for Caste, Income, Resident Certificates

- The Odisha government announced the launch of a mobile app in April designed to simplify the process of obtaining caste, income, and resident certificates.
- With this app, people can now apply for caste, income, and residence certificates without the need to visit the Tehsil offices.
- The app will record vital details such as the application date and purpose, ensuring a smooth and efficient process. The Revenue Department

has planned comprehensive guidelines to guarantee the timely issuance of certificates.

- To maintain service efficiency, Tehsildars will be responsible for uploading data via the app, enabling the state government to monitor and swiftly address any service delivery delays.
- Additionally, the app allows users to download certificates directly, virtually eliminating the need for physical office visits. This reflects the Odisha government's commitment to providing efficient and accessible services to its citizens.



Odisha Sees a Dolphin Population Boom in 2024-25



- Odisha, renowned for its rich biodiversity and scenic landscapes, has witnessed a notable surge in its cetacean population for the 2024-25 season.
- The recent dolphin census reveals a thriving community of these majestic marine mammals across various wildlife divisions in the state.
- The census documented a total of 710 dolphins across Odisha. The Irrawaddy Dolphin, with a count of 188, and the Humpback Dolphin, with 498 individuals, emerged as the most populous species.
- The Mangrove Wildlife Division in Rajnagar was a notable hotspot, boasting the highest number of dolphins, with 505 individuals. Chilika Wildlife Division also played a significant role, housing 174 dolphins, predominantly Irrawaddy Dolphins.
- Environmentalists and wildlife enthusiasts are elated with the findings.
- While the census results are promising, experts emphasize the need for continuous efforts to protect these species and their habitats.
- The state government is urged to implement stricter regulations and enhance conservation programs to ensure the sustained growth of the dolphin population.
- As Odisha celebrates this environmental milestone, residents and tourists alike are encouraged to visit these wildlife divisions to witness the splendor of these fascinating creatures in their natural habitats.

Odisha Aims for Zero Accidents with New Road Safety Campaign



- The Government of Odisha is set to launch a transformative campaign, Zero Accident Day (ZAD), aimed at enhancing road safety and fostering behavioral change.
- The campaign will deploy innovative, evidence-based interventions to minimize accidents, promote responsible driving behaviors, and cultivate a safety-first mindset among commuters. Women will play a pivotal role as ambassadors of

change, leading awareness drives, engaging with communities, and demonstrating leadership in mobility solutions.

Odisha Dy CM Pravati Parida Honoured with TAAI Scroll of Honour Award

- The Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), the country's premier travel and tourism association, honored Smt. Pravati Parida, Odisha Deputy Chief Minister & Minister of W&CD, Mission Shakti & Tourism, with the prestigious Scroll of Honour Award.



- This recognition acknowledges her exceptional leadership in promoting the travel and tourism industry in Odisha and her commitment to empowering women in the sector.
- Smt. Pravati Parida made history as the first woman to hold the position of Deputy Chief Minister of Odisha, marking a significant milestone in the state's political and social landscape.
- The award presentation was held at The Ashok, New Delhi, as part of TAAI's Women of Wonder (WOW) Awards 2025, a landmark initiative celebrating women pioneers shaping the future of travel, tourism, and hospitality.

Odisha to Launch Ayushman Bharat-Gopabandhu Health Scheme from April 1

- In a significant move to bolster healthcare access in Odisha, the state government has announced the launch of the combined Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) and Gopabandhu Jan Arogya Yojana (GJAY), alongside the Ayushman Bayobandana Yojana, starting April 1, 2025.



- Under the combined AB-PMJAY and GJAY schemes, more than 1.03 crore families will benefit, while the Ayushman Bayobandana Yojana will extend medical facilities to all citizens aged 70 and above, offering up to ₹15 lakh per family in healthcare coverage if senior citizens are included.
- The ambitious initiative aims to provide healthcare coverage to over 3.52 crore individuals across the state.
- Key Features of the Scheme:
  - Coverage: Approximately 67.8 lakh families will benefit under AB-PMJAY, while 35.84 lakh families will be covered under GJAY. Together, these schemes will reach over 3.46 crore individuals.
  - Financial Aid: Men will receive up to ₹5 lakh, women up to ₹10 lakh, and families with members over 70 years will get a maximum of ₹15 lakh in medical coverage.
  - Elderly Focus: The Bayobandana Yojana will cater to around 23.13 lakh senior citizens, with an additional 6 lakh beneficiaries included under this category.
  - Co-Branded Cards: Beneficiaries of AB-PMJAY and GJAY will receive a single co-branded card, while a separate card will be issued for the Bayobandana Yojana.
- The launch will be marked by events across all 1,438 primary health centers in Odisha,

accompanied by a statewide awareness campaign to ensure maximum outreach. Beneficiaries will be able to access treatment at over 29,000 empaneled government and private hospitals nationwide.

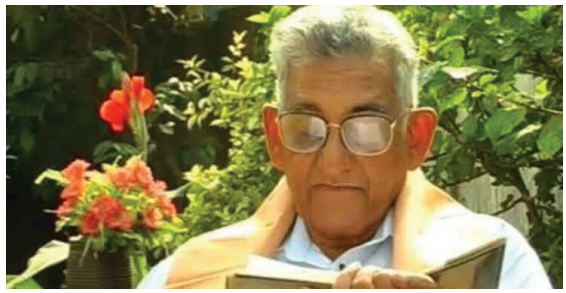
- The groundwork for this initiative was laid on January 13, 2025, when the Odisha government signed an agreement with the National Health Authority in New Delhi. Today's announcement builds on that commitment, aiming to make quality healthcare accessible to economically weaker sections and the elderly.

Odisha Reserves 25% Seats in Pvt Schools for Underprivileged Kids, Paradarshi Portal Opens March 18



- The Odisha government has reserved 25% of seats in private schools for underprivileged and economically disadvantaged children to provide them access to free education.
- A transparent online portal for applications will be launched on March 18, 2025, to facilitate this initiative, as announced in a directive issued by the Directorate of Primary Education on Thursday.
- To ensure convenience and timely processing for students, the Paradarshi Portal's launch date has been advanced from the earlier scheduled April 3 to March 18, 2025. According to the government's guidelines, school registrations and document verification will be completed by March 31.
- From March 18 to April 20, the first phase of student registration (applications) will be open. Document verification for the first-phase applications will take place from April 3 to April 23, followed by a lottery-based school allotment on April 24.
- Subsequently, the first phase of enrollment in schools will occur between April 25 and May 7. The second phase of registration for enrollment will begin on May 26, with eligible students able to enrol in selected schools starting May 27. Any remaining students can secure admission through a cut-off list on June 10, as per the directive.
- This initiative aims to bridge the educational gap for underprivileged children, ensuring they have access to quality education in private institutions and promoting equity in Odisha's education system.

Padma Bhushan recipient, renowned Odia poet Ramakanta Rath, passes away at 91



- Ramakanta Rath, one of the most renowned modernist poets in Odia literature, passed away at 91at his Kharvel Nagar residence in Bhubaneswar on Sunday.
- Some of his notable works include 'Kete Dinara', 'Aneka Kothari', 'Sandigdha Mrigaya', 'Saptama Ritu' & 'Sachitra Andhara'.
- Born in Cuttack, Rath obtained his MA in English Literature from Ravenshaw College before joining the Indian Administrative Services in 1957.
- However, he continued his writing career. He retired as Chief Secretary Odisha after holding several important posts in the Central Government, such as Secretary to the Government of India.

- He received the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1977, Saraswathi Samman in 1992, Bishuva Samman in 1990, and India's 3rd highest civilian honour, the Padma Bhushan, in 2006. He also served as the Vice President of the Sahitya Academy of India from 1993 to 1998 and the President of the Sahitya Akademi of India from 1998 to 2003, New Delhi.

Odisha to Launch 'Poshan Kendras' for Affordable Essential Commodities



- The Odisha government is set to introduce Poshan Kendras, modeled after Gujarat's successful initiative, to provide essential commodities at subsidized rates. The announcement was made by Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Krushna Chandra Patra.
- These centers will cater to both economically weaker sections and middle-class families, offering essential items like rice, pulses, flour, and cooking oil at reduced prices.
- The initiative will be jointly subsidized by the Central and Odisha governments to ensure affordability.
- Pilot Project & Expansion Plans
  - As part of the initial phase, 35 Poshan Kendras will be established. If the pilot proves successful, the government aims to extend the initiative to every panchayat across the state.
  - To ensure effective implementation, a team of officials will visit Gujarat to study its operational model and gather insights. Minister Patra stated that the government will finalize policies and make a conclusive decision regarding the statewide rollout soon.
- Meanwhile, the distribution of ration and essential supplies will continue with support from both the state and central governments, ensuring food security for citizens.

Odisha Adopts NEP 2020: Minimum Age for Class I Set at Six Years



- The Odisha government has announced that it will implement the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 from the academic session 2025-26.
- As part of this policy, the minimum age for admission to Class I has been fixed at six years or above, according to official sources.
- The National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 issued by the Ministry of Education (MoE) with its commitment to high-quality education for all, has envisaged landmark reforms in the education system for the 21st century.
- Odisha State has planned to undertake a phased intervention of NEP 2020 from the academic year 2025-26.
- The age of enrollment for grade 1 has been revised to be 6 + years as on 1st September of the concerned academic year and opening of "Shishu Vatika" in all primary schools for pre-school education for children who have attained the age of 5 and above, as envisaged in NEP 2020.
- NCERT has developed Jaadui Pitara based on National Curriculum Framework for the Foundational Stage. To accelerate the awareness, reach and impact of transformative idea of Jaadui

Pitara as a symbol of NCF-FS, NCERT has released e-Jaadui Pitara mobile app.

- There are stories, songs, Teacher Tara, Parent Tara and other activities available in odia language in this app. Teachers, Parents and Students use this app.
- In Odisha, Jaadu Pedi materials have been developed and contextualized by each DIET. SCERT has developed a training module 'Prayog' in which one session is there on the use of Jaadu Pedi materials.
- The State shall supply the education kit (Jaadu Pedi) for the students of class I-V to each Primary School.
- As part of the State's initial steps for policy implementation, Nipun Odisha was launched in September 2024, in alignment with the national policy guidelines underlining the commitment to universal acquisition of foundational literacy and numeracy.
- The Nipun Song and Logo were launched by the Hon'ble Chief Minister on September 5, 2024 through the Nipun Odisha program in the state. Nipun Mela programs have been organized at every cluster, block and district level of the state to create awareness among the group members. The Nipun Odisha program is still ongoing in various districts.
- After consultation with experts and various educationists and experts from different Education Boards, for the better educational development of students, the age of enrollment in class 1 has been fixed at 6 years or above in the National Education Policy 2020.
- For the convenience of students, the deadline for completing the age of 6 years has been fixed at 1st September instead of 31st March. Based on the NEP the 'Shishu Vatika' class for children of 5 to 6 years of age in our state will be functioning in every school from April 2 with the existing infrastructure and manpower.
- Teacher's handbook and workbook for children's developed by TE&SCERT will be provided. One teacher from each primary school has been trained to take Shishu Vatika class.
- Government of Odisha has also planned to introduce the new textbooks from class -1 to 8 aligns with those books prepared by NCERT as per National Curriculum Framework during the next academic year- 2026-2027.

Odisha Anchor it's Vision for Maritime Growth



- Odisha participated in the 4th National Sagarmala Apex Committee (NSAC) Meeting at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.
- The meeting, chaired by Sarbananda Sonowal, Union Minister for Ports, Shipping & Waterways, in the presence of Shri Nitin Gadkari, Hon'ble Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways, brought together Chief Ministers, Ministers, and senior officials from various states and the Central Government to discuss the future of India's maritime sector.
- The event featured key discussions on maritime infrastructure development under the Sagarmala Programme, including a review of project implementation, updates on the State Sagarmala Committee (SSC) and the State Maritime & Waterways Transport Committee (SMWTC), and deliberations on the Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047—a strategic blueprint for India's maritime expansion.
- A significant focus was given to the conceptualisation of Sagarmala 2.0, which envisions enhanced port modernisation, seamless multimodal connectivity, and holistic coastal community development. Odisha's ongoing maritime projects and strategic initiatives were prominently highlighted, showcasing its proactive

approach to port-led development and blue economy growth.

- Representing, the Government of Odisha, Smt. Usha Padhee, Principal Secretary, Commerce & Transport Department cum CEO, Odisha Maritime Board, commended the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways on a decade of transformative progress under the Sagarmala Programme and presented key projects from the state for inclusion in Sagarmala 2.0.
- Odisha underscored its commitment to advancing maritime connectivity and trade through the Odisha State Maritime and Waterways Master Plan (OSMWMP).
- The state also highlighted its efforts to preserve and promote its rich maritime legacy through the State Pavilion at the National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC), Lothal, Gujarat.
- Additionally, discussions emphasized the proposed India Maritime Centre (IMC), envisioned as a hub for maritime research, training, and capacity building. Odisha also reiterated its strategic focus on strengthening national waterways, fostering shipbuilding and repair facilities, and leveraging its coastline for sustainable economic growth.
- With a forward-looking approach, Odisha remains steadfast in its vision to emerge as a leader in maritime infrastructure, catalyzing regional trade and driving India's blue economy aspirations under the Sagarmala Programme.

Harish Tandon Sworn In as Chief Justice of Orissa High Court



- In a momentous ceremony held at the Orissa High Court premises in Cuttack, Justice Harish Tandon was sworn in as the Chief Justice of the Orissa High Court on March 26, 2025.
- Odisha Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati administered the oath of office in the presence of prominent dignitaries, including Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida, other cabinet ministers, high court judges, members of the Bar Association, and legal fraternity luminaries.
- Justice Tandon, who has a distinguished legal career, has served as a permanent judge of the Calcutta High Court since April 2010. A graduate of Calcutta University, Justice Tandon's vast experience in civil and constitutional matters and dedication to justice are widely recognized.
- This appointment marks a new chapter for Odisha's judiciary, with Justice Tandon bringing decades of expertise and integrity to his leadership role.

Odisha Government Boosts Hostel Facilities for Female Students



- The Odisha government has taken significant strides in enhancing hostel facilities for female students pursuing higher education. Currently, 77,722 female students are enrolled across various state universities and autonomous colleges.
- Excluding State Open University and Madhusudan Law University, 15 universities and autonomous colleges offer hostel accommodations for over 20,000 `girl students.

- To address the shortage, the state government has announced substantial funding for the construction, renovation, and expansion of hostel facilities.
- Major Allocations:
  - Utkal University Rural Campus – ₹9.60 crore for a new girls' hostel.
  - Utkal University Ladies Hostel – ₹5.06 crore for modernization and renovation.
  - Rama Devi Women's University Hostel – ₹1.46 crore sanctioned.
  - Manikeswari University SC/ST Ladies Hostel – ₹8.36 crore allocated for a 300-bed facility for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students.
  - Dharanidhar University Hostel – A 300-bed hostel to be built with ₹11 crore.
  - Khalikote Unitary PG Hostel – ₹31.83 lakh for renovation work.
- Higher Education Minister Suryabanshi Suraj, speaking in the Odisha Assembly, reaffirmed the government's commitment to women's education.
- By improving hostel infrastructure, the state aims to encourage higher enrolment, particularly among students from rural and underprivileged backgrounds.

Berhampur Circle Jail Achieves 'Eat Right Campus' Certification from FSSAI



- Berhampur Circle Jail, a 162-year-old prison in Odisha, has achieved the 'Eat Right Campus' certification from the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).
- This remarkable milestone underscores the prison's commitment to ensuring safe, healthy, and sustainable food practices for its inmates. With a three-star rating, this certification is valid for two years, from March 24, 2025, to March 23, 2027.
- As part of FSSAI's initiative to promote food safety and well-being in institutional settings, the certification process involved a rigorous audit evaluating the jail's food preparation, hygiene, and compliance with nutrition standards. Berhampur Circle Jail has set a shining example of adherence to these standards, with 50 staff and inmates completing the Food Safety Training and Certification (FoSTaC) program.
- This achievement highlights the broader impact of FSSAI's 'Eat Right India' movement, as nearly 100 prisons and over 2,300 workplaces across India have been recognized as 'Eat Right Campuses.' Berhampur Circle Jail joins this national effort to foster a culture of well-being through access to safe and nutritious food.

Krushi Vidya Nidhi Yojana: A Lifeline for Farmers' Families in Odisha



- The Odisha government has always given priority to agriculture and farmers. Not only farmers but also their sons and daughters have been given priority.

- CM-KISAN Yojana is a groundbreaking initiative under the Agriculture and Farmers Empowerment Department of Odisha Government.
- Under this, financial assistance is being provided to empower the farmers of the state. "Krushi Vidya Nidhi" yojana is a component of CM-KISAN in which scholarship assistance is being given to sons/daughters of CM-KISAN beneficiaries for their higher education.
- Under this scheme, annual tuition fees including hostel fees are being provided to the eligible students for technical and professional courses like medical, engineering, nursing, diploma engineering, agriculture and allied courses, BBA, BCA in government, private and national level educational institutions.
- For Govt. institutes, assistance for the actual course fee is granted whereas in the case of private institutes, the maximum annual capping amount has been fixed such as a sum of 60 thousand rupees per year for B Tech Engineering, 66 thousand rupees per year for M Tech Engineering, 65 thousand rupees for MBA course, 37,950 rupees per year scholarship for 4-5 years medical education, 35 thousand rupees per year for 4-year B Pharma, 19,450 rupees for nursing education, 58 thousand rupees per year for two-year medical education, 60 thousand rupees for architect course, etc. A student is getting the benefit of this till the end of the course.
- In the current academic year, a total of 13,923 students have benefited under this scheme, including 592 in medical, 4,592 in engineering, 4,574 in polytechnic, 1,417 in nursing, 510 in MCA, 174 in agriculture and allied sector students.
- Out of these, 55 students from prestigious educational institutions like NIT and IIM have been availed of the benefit. For this, a total sum of Rs. 53,57,94,405 financial grant has been provided by the Government of Odisha. Payment has been made directly to the Aadhar-linked bank account of the student.

India's First International University for the Blind to be Established in Odisha's Cuttack

- Odisha's Cuttack is set to host India's first international university for the blind, marking a significant step in inclusive education. A central government team recently visited the state and identified a 40-acre site near Baranga in Cuttack district for the institute's establishment.
- The government has expressed interest in naming the university after Santha Kabi Bhima Bhoi, a renowned blind poet and 19th-century social reformer from Odisha.
- Education & Vocational Training for the Visually Impaired The university will cater to blind students from India and abroad, offering:
  - General education from Class IX onwards
  - Vocational courses, including acupuncture and physiotherapy
  - A Centre of Excellence focused on technology for visually impaired individuals
- The institute will feature:
  - Cutting-Edge Facilities & Global Collaboration
  - Accessible residential facilities
  - An advanced digital lab to enhance learning experiences
- International collaboration, including discussions with Japan's University of Tsukuba, renowned for its expertise in special education.
- Addressing a National Need: India has over 50 lakh blind individuals, with Odisha alone home to more than 5.21 lakh, including 2 lakh young people. Recognizing the need for specialized education and skill development, Odisha is taking a pioneering step by establishing this historic institution.

CM Majhi Launches Antyodaya Gruha Yojana

- Chief Minister Mohan Majhi inaugurated the Antyodaya Gruha Yojana (AGY) today in Bhawanipatna, a scheme designed to address

the housing needs of marginalized communities in rural Odisha.

- The Chief Minister distributed work orders to 10 beneficiaries from different sections in the program.
- The Chief Minister's inauguration of projects worth Rs 617.51 crore in Kalahandi district marks a significant step towards regional development. With Rs 223.66 crore allocated for completed projects and Rs 393.85 crore for new initiatives, the focus is on improving essential infrastructure and services.
- Among the key projects is the Julco Instream Storage Structure, built at a cost of Rs 68.35 crore in Kesinga block, Bhawanipatna constituency.
- This initiative is set to provide drinking water to approximately 9,000 residents and support irrigation for Rabi crops. Additionally, a grid substation and KV line at Bandhabahal, developed for over Rs 52 crore, will enhance the region's power supply.
- Other projects include advancements in drinking water facilities, education, health centers, welfare pavilions, and road infrastructure.
- The initiative aims to provide pucca houses to households that are excluded from ongoing housing schemes, victims of natural or man-made disasters, and those displaced by development projects. Differently-abled individuals serving as the primary earners of their families and FRA beneficiaries are also eligible under this program.
- A unique feature of the AGY is its incentive structure, which rewards beneficiaries of any rural housing scheme for completing the construction of houses promptly.
- The scheme reflects the state government's commitment to improving the quality of life for vulnerable sections of society and ensuring housing security for all.
- Under the AGY, each beneficiary will receive Rs 1.20 lakh for house construction, along with essential facilities such as toilets, cooking gas, clean drinking water, and electricity connections, coordinated through various government schemes like Swachh Bharat Mission, Ujjwala Yojana, Jal Jeevan Mission, and Saubhagya Yojana.
- Beneficiaries will also be provided with paid work for 90-95 days under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

Odisha and Andhra Pradesh Lock Horns Over Kotia Panchayat Again

- The long-standing territorial dispute between Odisha and Andhra Pradesh has taken another contentious turn with Andhra Pradesh officials entering Neredivalsa village in the Kotia panchayat.
- These officials actively updated Aadhaar details for local residents, including pension beneficiaries and students, and promised extensive welfare benefits under Andhra Pradesh schemes.



- The strategic initiatives by Andhra Pradesh aim to win the support of Kotia's residents, raising concerns about Odisha's ability to maintain administrative control over the disputed region.
- This is not the first instance of such challenges, with Andhra Pradesh previously obstructing Odisha's infrastructure projects in the area, such as the construction of an electricity substation.
- The latest developments have reignited debates over the effectiveness of Odisha's governance and the growing influence of Andhra Pradesh in the region. The Kotia panchayat remains a crucial focal point in the territorial tussle, impacting the lives of local residents caught in the crossfire.

Architect of Modern Odisha: A Tribute to Parala Maharaja Krushna Chandra Gajapati Dev



- The Odisha Legislative Assembly premises witnessed a grand celebration of the Jayanti of Parala Maharaja Krushna Chandra Gajapati Narayan Dev, a visionary leader and the architect of modern Odisha.
- Dignitaries, including Speaker Surama Padhi, Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo, and other prominent leaders, paid floral tributes to his statue. Cultural programs and patriotic songs added to the solemnity of the occasion, with Sushree Rosalin Sahu coordinating the event.
- Maharaja Krushna Chandra Gajapati Narayan Dev's contributions to literature, education, and governance continue to inspire generations. His legacy as a benevolent ruler and a champion of Odia culture remains unparalleled.

Parala Maharaja Krushna Chandra Gajapati Dev

- Born on April 26, 1892, in Paralakhemundi, he played a crucial role in unifying Odia-speaking regions and establishing Odisha as a separate state.
- Parala Maharaja Krushna Chandra Gajapati Dev (1892–1974) is rightly honored as the "Architect of Modern Odisha."
- He played a central role in the creation of Odisha as a separate province based on the linguistic identity of its people, marking the first such instance in British India.
- His contributions laid the foundation for Odisha's political, economic, educational, and cultural development.

Champion of Odisha's Separate Identity

- Krushna Chandra Gajapati was a passionate advocate for the formation of a separate Odisha Province to unite the Odia-speaking regions.
- He was a key leader of the Utkal Sammilani Movement, which worked for the linguistic and cultural unity of Odias scattered across different provinces.
- Through tireless lobbying and organizational support, his leadership culminated in the historic formation of Odisha as a distinct province on 1st April 1936.

Role in the Formation of Modern Odisha

- As the ruler of the princely state of Paralakhemundi, Krushna Chandra Gajapati used his political stature and personal resources to strengthen the movement for Odisha's formation.
- He financed several delegations to London and Delhi to present Odisha's case before British authorities.
- His vision was rooted in linguistic unity and cultural integrity, anticipating the larger national policy of linguistic reorganization of states after independence.

First Prime Minister of Odisha Province

- After the formation of Odisha in 1936, Krushna Chandra Gajapati became the first Prime Minister (then called Premier) of the province under the Government of India Act, 1935.
- During his tenure, he worked for administrative consolidation and focused on reforms in education, agriculture, and infrastructure.
- His leadership provided the young province with stability and vision during its formative years.

Contributions to Education and Modern Institutions

- Krushna Chandra Gajapati understood the importance of education in building a strong society.
- He founded and funded several educational institutions, including the Krushna Chandra Gajapati College at Paralakhemundi.
- He was also a patron of Utkal University and SCB Medical College, which became premier institutions in Odisha.
- His advocacy for women's education was particularly progressive for his time.

Visionary in Economic Development

- Recognizing that economic growth was essential for social development, he supported initiatives in agriculture, irrigation, and rural welfare.
- He encouraged land reforms, the formation of cooperative societies, and the adoption of modern agricultural practices.
- Krushna Chandra Gajapati also emphasized the development of roads, railways, and communication infrastructure to connect the remote and underdeveloped parts of Odisha.

Patron of Odia Language, Literature, and Culture

- As a true son of the soil, Krushna Chandra Gajapati took significant steps to protect and promote the Odia language, which was at risk of marginalization.
- He provided financial support and encouragement to poets, writers, and scholars of Odisha.
- He also championed the preservation and promotion of Odisha's rich cultural heritage, including its ancient temples, art forms, and festivals.

Legacy and Enduring Relevance

- The unification of Odia-speaking regions and the creation of Odisha owe a great debt to Krushna Chandra Gajapati's vision and efforts.
- Today, Odisha's identity, pride, and regional development strategies continue to reflect his ideals.
- April 1st, celebrated as Odisha Day, is a living tribute to his unparalleled contributions.
- His vision of unity, education, and development remains deeply relevant even in the twenty-first century.

Odisha Pays Tribute to 'Utkal Gourav' Madhusudan Das on His 177th Birth Anniversary



- Odisha on Monday observed the 177th birth anniversary of 'Utkal Gourav' Madhusudan Das, with political leaders, social organisations, and citizens paying rich tributes to the legendary leader.
- **Madhusudan Das**, known as **"Utkal Gourab"** (The Pride of Odisha), was a great leader, lawyer, and reformer of Odisha.
- He was born on **28 April 1848** in **Satyabhamapur village** near Cuttack.
- He was the **first Odia** to obtain a **B.A., M.A., and L.L.B.** degree from Calcutta University.
- He devoted his entire life to the political, economic, social, and cultural upliftment of Odisha.

Early Life and Education

- Madhusudan Das was born into a Zamindar family but chose the path of education and service.
- He completed his early schooling in Odisha and pursued higher studies in Calcutta.
- His exposure to the Indian Renaissance and nationalist ideas deeply influenced his vision for Odisha.
- He became the first Odia advocate, inspiring future generations to pursue higher education.

Contributions to Political Awakening

- Madhusudan Das realized that Odia-speaking people were divided among different provinces.
- He believed that political unification was essential for Odisha's progress.
- In **1903**, he founded the **Utkal Sammilani** (Utkal Union Conference) to unite Odias.
- He worked tirelessly to promote the demand for a **separate Odisha province**, which was realized in **1936**, after his death.

Role in Legal and Constitutional Fields

- Madhusudan Das had a brilliant legal career as the first Odia lawyer.
- He defended the rights of Odia people through his legal practice.
- He served as a member of the **Bengal Legislative Council** and raised Odisha's concerns in legislative forums.
- His efforts highlighted the need for administrative and linguistic recognition for Odisha.

Social Reforms and Advocacy for Marginalized Sections

- Madhusudan Das worked to eradicate caste-based discrimination in society. He strongly advocated for the education of women and lower caste communities.
- He believed that without social equality, true progress was impossible.
- His social reform work aimed at building an inclusive and progressive Odisha.

Economic Initiatives

- Madhusudan Das understood the importance of economic empowerment for Odisha's growth.
- He established the **Orissa Art Ware Works** and **Utkal Tannery** in Cuttack.
- These industries promoted local craftsmanship and created employment opportunities.
- He encouraged Odias to adopt industrialization and economic self-reliance.

Contribution to Education and Culture

- Madhusudan Das supported the establishment of schools and colleges in Odisha.
- He promoted the use of the Odia language in education and administration.
- He encouraged Odia writers, poets, and artists to enrich the region's culture.
- He believed that education and cultural pride were essential for Odisha's overall development.

Legacy and Remembrance

- Madhusudan Das is regarded as one of the founding fathers of modern Odisha.
- His birthday is celebrated as **Lawyers' Day** in Odisha every year.
- Numerous educational institutions, statues, and public places have been named in his honor.
- His vision of a united, strong, and self-reliant Odisha continues to inspire generations.
- of selfless service, visionary leadership, and dedication to the motherland.

Similipal Earns National Park Status After 45 Years of Efforts



- In a landmark development that resonates with ecological pride and historical fulfilment, Similipal has officially been declared a National Park, bringing to life a vision first articulated in 1980.
- The process gained momentum under the guidance of the Minister of Forest, Environment & Climate Change, Ganesh Ram Singh Khuntia. The approval was made today by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi.
- With this declaration, Similipal becomes India's 107th National Park, Odisha's second National Park, after Bhitarkanika and the largest National Park in the state, covering 845.70 sq km.
- This long-awaited recognition brings national attention to Similipal's unparalleled biodiversity, rich tribal legacy, and ecological value, making it a proud symbol of Odisha's green soul.
- First proposed in 1980, the intention to declare Similipal as a National Park remained pending for over four decades. Today, that aspiration has finally been fulfilled — not just as an administrative decision, but as a tribute to generations of forest-dwelling communities, conservationists, and citizens who have cherished this living landscape.
- The final notification acknowledges Similipal's multi-layered significance — as a Wildlife Sanctuary, Project Tiger, UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, and Elephant Reserve — now united under the highest national ecological recognition.
- To secure the newly designated National Park and its surrounding ecological corridors, the Forest Department is implementing the Greater Similipal Landscape Programme, which includes AI-powered camera towers and trail guard camera systems, V-SAT communication networks for surveillance in remote zones and a dedicated security force including one company of trained police personnel and ex-servicemen.
- Recognising that conservation succeeds only with community involvement, the Government of Odisha has launched the Ama Similipal Yojana — an integrated programme for Livelihood enhancement and skill training for local communities, Promotion of eco-tourism and cultural tourism and Infrastructure upgrades in health, education, and resource access.

Harnessing Odisha's Natural Resources for Sustainable and Inclusive Development

Odisha, located on the eastern coast of India, is endowed with vast natural resources—rich mineral deposits, fertile land, dense forests, and a long coastline. Despite this wealth, large sections of its population, particularly the tribal and rural communities, face poverty, underdevelopment, and displacement. The challenge lies in **balancing economic growth with environmental sustainability and social equity**.

Odisha's Natural Resource Wealth – A Snapshot:

1. **Mineral Resources:**
   - Odisha holds **over 35% of India's iron ore**, **98% of chromite**, **30% of manganese**, and significant reserves of coal and bauxite.
   - Mining contributes significantly to the GSDP and export revenue.
2. **Forests and Biodiversity:**
   - Forests cover **over 30% of the state's area**, with rich biodiversity.
   - Home to several sanctuaries and species like the Olive Ridley turtles and elephants.
3. **Water Resources:**
   - Major rivers: **Mahanadi**, Brahmani, Baitarani.
   - Hydro-electric potential and irrigation base for agriculture.
4. **Coastal and Marine Resources:**
   - 480 km coastline supports fisheries, tourism, and port infrastructure (e.g., Paradip).
   - Potential for blue economy development.

Key Issues in Resource Utilization:

1. Environmental Degradation:

- Mining leads to deforestation, soil erosion, and water pollution.

- Cyclones like Fani and Amphan have shown Odisha's vulnerability to climate change.

2. Displacement and Tribal Marginalization:

- Over **23% of Odisha's population is tribal**, often residing in resource-rich areas.
- Mining and infrastructure projects have led to large-scale **displacement and loss of traditional livelihoods**.

3. Economic Inequality and Underdevelopment:

- Districts like **Koraput, Malkangiri, and Kandhamal** remain underdeveloped despite resource wealth.
- Weak implementation of **District Mineral Foundation (DMF)** funds.

4. Illegal Mining and Poor Governance:

- The **Shah Commission Report (2013)** highlighted rampant illegal mining and revenue loss.
- Weak regulatory oversight and lack of transparency.

Opportunities for Sustainable and Inclusive Development:

1. Sustainable Mining Practices:

- Enforce **environmental clearances** and **scientific mining**.
- Use of **Mine Closure Plans** and eco-restoration measures.
- Promote **value-added industries** in mineral-based sectors.

2. Effective Use of DMF and CSR:

- DMF funds should be used for health, education, and infrastructure in mining-affected areas.
- Ensure participation of local Gram Sabhas and transparency.

3. Agro-Forestry and Forest-Based Livelihoods:

- Support **Minor Forest Produce (MFP)** value chains like tendu leaves, sal seeds, and honey.
- Leverage **Van Dhan Vikas Kendras** and SHGs.

4. Blue Economy and Coastal Development:

- Sustainable fisheries, port-led development under **Sagarmala**.
- Promote **eco-tourism**, especially in Chilika Lake and Bhitarkanika.

5. Tribal Empowerment and Land Rights:

- Implement **Forest Rights Act (FRA)** effectively.
- Respect PESA provisions for Gram Sabha consultation.

6. Renewable Energy and Green Economy:

- Tap into solar and wind potential.
- Develop **green industrial corridors** near mineral zones.

Policy and Governance Recommendations:

1. **Integrated Resource Planning:** Align industrial policy with environmental and social impact assessments.
2. **Participatory Governance:** Involve local communities, particularly tribals and women, in planning and decision-making.
3. **Technology for Transparency:** Use **GIS mapping, satellite monitoring** to track illegal mining and land use changes.
4. **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** For eco-tourism, afforestation, and skill development in resource-rich but poor regions.
5. **Disaster Resilience:** Invest in early warning systems and climate-adaptive infrastructure.

Government Initiatives to Leverage:

- **Make in Odisha**: Promoting investment in mineral processing.
- **Odisha Industrial Policy Resolution (IPR)**: Focus on sustainable industrialization.
- **Odisha Mineral Bearing Area Development Corporation (OMBADC)**: Channelizing mining funds.
- **Mission Shakti**: Empowering rural women in SHGs.
- **Odisha Renewable Energy Policy**.

Case Studies from Odisha: Ground-Level Examples

1. **Niyamgiri Hills (Vedanta Case):**
   - The proposed bauxite mining project was opposed by local Dongria Kondh tribes.

- **2013 Supreme Court judgment** empowered Gram Sabhas under FRA to reject the project.
- This became a **national model** for community rights over natural resources.

2. **Malkangiri District – Bamboo-Based Livelihoods:**
   - Forest dwellers trained to create bamboo crafts and furniture.
   - Supported by **Van Dhan Vikas Kendras**, improving incomes while protecting forests.
3. **Chilika Lake – Eco-Tourism and Livelihoods:**
   - Shift from prawn cultivation to eco-tourism.
   - Involves community-managed boat services, birdwatching, and conservation activities.
   - Balanced **livelihood generation** with **wetland protection**.
4. **Kalinganagar Industrial Hub:**
   - A major industrial region for steel and metal industries.
   - Faced tribal protests in 2006 due to displacement and inadequate rehabilitation.
   - Led to a rethinking of **R&R policies** in Odisha.

Economic Strategy for Odisha's Natural Resources

Downstream Industries Development:

- Focus on setting up **aluminium parks, steel clusters**, and value-addition units.
- Reduces export of raw minerals and increases local employment.

Skilling and Capacity Building:

- Develop tribal youth skills in mining safety, environmental auditing, and renewable energy.
- Collaborate with institutions like **Skill Development Authority of Odisha (OSDA)**.

Promotion of Organic and Millet Farming:

- Odisha is a **leader in millet cultivation**.
- Sustainable agriculture can reduce over-dependence on mining and boost nutrition.

Linkages to Global Goals & National Schemes

Global/National Goal	Odisha's Relevance
SDG 1 (No Poverty)	DMF & CSR to uplift tribal regions
SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption & Production)	Sustainable mining and forestry
SDG 13 (Climate Action)	Coastal zone resilience and afforestation
National Mineral Policy 2019	Emphasizes transparency, sustainability, and tribal welfare
CAMPA Funds	Used for afforestation but must be made more accountable

Ethical Dimensions & Governance Challenges:

- **Equity vs. Efficiency**: How to ensure fair distribution of mineral wealth while maintaining economic efficiency?
- **State vs. Community Ownership**: Who truly owns the forests and minerals—the government or the tribal communities?
- **Intergenerational Equity**: How can we extract resources without compromising the rights of future generations?

Way Forward – A Vision for Odisha:

1. **'Odisha Resource Charter'**: Create a visionary document for sustainable use of natural resources with community consultation.
2. **Green GDP**: Shift from just tracking economic output to measuring environmental cost and sustainability.
3. **Odisha Green Fund**: Set up a dedicated fund for renewable energy and conservation efforts.
4. **Social Impact Bonds (SIBs)**: Partner with private investors for tribal welfare projects, where returns are based on social outcomes.

Odisha's journey toward development must no longer be measured merely in tonnes of ore extracted or GDP growth, but in the **smiles on tribal faces**, **the resilience of its forests**, and the

sustainability of its growth. With the right balance of policy innovation, community participation, and ecological mindfulness, Odisha can emerge not just as a resource powerhouse—but a **model of inclusive and green development**.

Urbanization in Odisha: Opportunities, Challenges, and the Road to Smart and Sustainable Cities

Introduction

Odisha, a state known for its deep rural roots and cultural heritage, is gradually transitioning into an urban economy. Although the urbanization rate remains below the national average, the expansion of cities such as Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Rourkela, and Berhampur signals a shift in settlement patterns. Urbanization in Odisha presents a unique opportunity to stimulate economic growth, yet it also raises concerns about sustainability, inclusivity, and resilience.

Urbanization Trends in Odisha

- Urban growth in Odisha has been relatively slow, with a modest rise in urban population over the past decade.
- Emerging urban clusters like Bhubaneswar-Cuttack-Puri and Chatrapur-Berhampur-Gopalpur are beginning to take shape as regional economic centers.
- Infrastructure projects and industrial corridors are contributing to the growth of urban regions.

Opportunities in Urbanization

1. **Economic Growth and Industrialization:** Urbanization serves as a driver of economic activity, employment generation, and entrepreneurship. Cities offer a more diversified job market, better infrastructure, and access to modern services, which together can uplift the standard of living.
2. **Improved Infrastructure and Services:** Government initiatives have led to upgrades in urban roads, drainage systems, water supply, and sanitation. Smart city projects are also introducing integrated systems for traffic, safety, and public services.
3. **Public Transport and Mobility:** Enhanced transport networks such as city bus services have improved urban mobility. These systems are often equipped with modern features like GPS tracking and eco-friendly fuel usage, helping to reduce urban pollution and congestion.
4. **Digital Governance:** The push toward smart governance has enabled digital platforms for service delivery, citizen feedback, and urban planning. E-governance tools can make administration more transparent and accountable.

Challenges in Urbanization

1. **Environmental Degradation:** Unplanned expansion has led to the loss of green cover, waterlogging, and urban heat island effects. The reduction in vegetation and rising construction without regulation have harmed the urban environment.
2. **Slums and Informal Settlements:** A significant number of the urban poor live in slums with inadequate access to clean water, sanitation, housing, and health services. These settlements are often located on vulnerable land and lack legal protection.
3. **Infrastructural Gaps:** Despite visible progress, basic urban infrastructure still lags in many cities and towns. Poor waste management, insufficient drainage systems, and traffic congestion remain major issues in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities.
4. **Urban-Rural Migration Pressure:** The influx of migrants from rural areas in search of better livelihoods places immense pressure on existing urban infrastructure and services, leading to overcrowding and strain on resources.

Initiatives for Smart and Sustainable Urban Development

1. **Slum Upgradation and Land Rights:** State-led missions have aimed at granting land rights

to slum dwellers and improving their access to housing, sanitation, and electricity. These initiatives seek to ensure dignity, security, and inclusion.

2. **Smart City Projects:** Cities like Bhubaneswar have implemented smart city plans focused on integrated development, retrofitting of old areas, and the creation of pedestrian-friendly and digitally enabled urban spaces.
3. **Urban Mobility and Green Transport:** Modern public transportation systems have been introduced to improve connectivity and reduce dependency on private vehicles. These projects also help mitigate pollution and traffic congestion.
4. **Affordable Housing and Infrastructure:** Efforts are underway to develop affordable housing under various central and state schemes. Urban local bodies are also being empowered to take up large-scale development works through mission-mode programs.

Way Forward for Sustainable Urbanization

- **Integrated Urban Planning**: Cities should adopt a comprehensive urban planning approach that balances economic development, environmental sustainability, and social inclusion.
- **Community Participation**: Urban development must involve local communities, especially marginalized groups, in decision-making and planning processes to ensure that benefits reach all sections of society.
- **Technological Solutions**: The use of digital tools in traffic management, waste disposal, and water supply can enhance urban service delivery and efficiency.
- **Disaster Preparedness**: Given Odisha's vulnerability to cyclones and floods, urban infrastructure must be resilient and climate-adaptive.
- **Capacity Building of Urban Local Bodies**: Urban governance can improve through training, better funding mechanisms, and autonomy for municipal institutions.

Conclusion

Urbanization in Odisha is both an opportunity and a responsibility. It has the potential to drive economic transformation, reduce rural distress, and improve quality of life. However, to reap these benefits, the state must focus on planned growth, inclusive policies, and ecological sustainability. By investing in smart infrastructure, resilient systems, and citizen-centric governance, Odisha can pave the way toward cities that are not just engines of growth but also models of sustainability and equity.

Climate Change and Coastal Odisha: Challenges, Adaptation, and Resilience Strategies

Introduction

Odisha, with its extensive coastline along the Bay of Bengal, is increasingly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. The state faces frequent cyclones, rising sea levels, and coastal erosion, which threaten both the environment and the livelihoods of its coastal communities. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach that combines traditional knowledge, modern technology, and community participation.

Challenges Facing Coastal Odisha

1. **Frequent Cyclones and Storm Surges:** Odisha is prone to severe cyclones, such as Fani, Amphan, and Yaas, which cause significant damage to infrastructure, agriculture, and human settlements. These events disrupt lives and economies, necessitating robust disaster preparedness and response mechanisms.
2. **Sea-Level Rise and Coastal Erosion:** Rising sea levels contribute to the erosion of Odisha's coastline, leading to the loss of land and displacement of communities. Villages like Satabhaya have experienced complete inundation, highlighting the urgent need for effective coastal management strategies.
3. **Salinization of Agricultural Land:** The intrusion of saline water into agricultural fields reduces

soil fertility and crop yields, adversely affecting the livelihoods of farmers. This salinization poses a significant threat to food security in coastal regions.

4. **Threats to Biodiversity:** Coastal ecosystems, including mangroves and seagrass beds, are under threat due to climate change and human activities. The degradation of these habitats affects biodiversity and diminishes the natural protection they offer against storms and erosion.

Adaptation and Resilience Strategies

1. **Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM):** Odisha has implemented ICZM projects to restore and protect coastal ecosystems. Measures include the construction of geosynthetic tube barriers to prevent erosion and the relocation of vulnerable communities to safer areas.
2. **Mangrove Restoration:** Restoring mangrove forests serves as a natural defense against storm surges and erosion. Mangroves also support biodiversity and provide livelihoods through fisheries and ecotourism.
3. **Climate-Resilient Agriculture:** Promoting salt-tolerant crop varieties and sustainable farming practices helps farmers adapt to changing conditions. Training and support for alternative livelihoods, such as aquaculture, diversify income sources and enhance resilience.
4. **Community Engagement and Education:** Involving local communities in planning and implementing adaptation measures ensures that strategies are culturally appropriate and sustainable. Educational programs raise awareness about climate risks and empower individuals to take action.

5. Policy and Institutional Frameworks: Odisha's State Action Plan on Climate Change outlines sector-specific strategies for adaptation and mitigation. Collaborations with research institutions and international organizations enhance the state's capacity to address climate challenges.

Conclusion

Coastal Odisha faces significant challenges due to climate change, but through integrated management, ecosystem restoration, resilient agriculture, community engagement, and strong policy frameworks, the state is working towards building resilience and securing the well-being of its coastal populations.

Odisha Celebrates Utkal Divas with Pride; Odia Paksha Observed from April 1 to 14



- Odisha marked Utkal Divas with grand celebrations, paying tribute to its rich history, culture, and the struggle that led to its formation as a separate state on April 1, 1936.
- The occasion was observed with flag hoisting, cultural performances, and tributes to the state's founding leaders.
- Adding to the patriotic fervor, Odia Paksha—a two-week-long initiative from April 1 to 14—has begun, aiming to promote the Odia language, heritage, and identity. Various events, including literary discussions, traditional music and dance programs, and awareness campaigns, have been organized across the state to encourage pride in Odisha's linguistic and cultural roots.
- With vibrant parades, illuminated monuments, and a renewed focus on Odia traditions, Utkal Divas and Odia Paksha together reinforce Odisha's cultural resurgence and unity.

Significance of Utkal Diwas

- Utkal Diwas is celebrated on **1st April** every year to mark the **formation of Odisha as a separate province** in **1936**.
- It commemorates the **political unification** of Odia-speaking regions, which were earlier scattered under different provinces.
- The day honors the efforts of **visionary leaders** like Madhusudan Das, Gopabandhu Das, Krushna Chandra Gajapati, and others who fought for Odisha's identity.
- It symbolizes the **preservation and promotion of the Odia language, culture, and heritage**.
- Utkal Diwas reminds people of the **struggles faced by Odias** for administrative recognition and linguistic pride.
- It highlights Odisha's **rich historical and cultural contributions** to India.
- The day inspires the younger generation to **value unity, leadership, and pride in their roots**.
- Various programs like parades, cultural shows, seminars, and competitions are organized to **celebrate Odisha's achievements**.
- It promotes a spirit of **regional pride combined with national integration**.
- Utkal Diwas is a day of **reflection on Odisha's progress** and a **renewed commitment** toward building a stronger, prosperous future.

Surge in Farmer Enrollments: PMFBY Gains Traction in Odisha

- The Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) has seen a massive surge in farmer enrollments in Odisha for the Kharif season of 2023–24, following the state government's landmark decision to cover farmers' insurance premium costs.
- According to recently published figures, farmer applications skyrocketed from 80.21 lakh in the 2022–23 season to a staggering 1.41 crore in 2023–24, marking a 76% growth. This significant increase highlights the growing trust in the crop insurance scheme, aimed at shielding farmers from crop loss risks due to natural calamities.

PMFBY

The **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)** is a **central sector scheme** launched to provide **financial protection** to farmers against **crop failure** caused by natural disasters, pests, or diseases.

Key Features:

- **Eligibility:**
- All farmers, including **sharecroppers** and **tenant farmers**, growing the **notified crops** in **notified areas**, are eligible for coverage.
- Farmers' participation is **voluntary**, and notably, **non-loanee farmers** account for **55%** of the total coverage under PMFBY.
- **Risk Coverage:**
- PMFBY offers **extensive insurance coverage** against a wide range of agricultural risks.
- **Natural Calamities:** Covers crop loss due to **floods, droughts, cyclones, hailstorms, landslides**, and **unseasonal rains**.
- **Pests and Diseases:** Covers **crop damage** due to pest infestations and plant diseases.
- **Post-Harvest Losses:** Provides protection against losses **within 14 days** of harvest, especially for crops kept in **cut and spread** conditions in the field.
- **Prevented Sowing:** If adverse weather prevents sowing, farmers are entitled to receive up to **25% of the sum insured** as indemnity.

- **Affordable Premiums:**
- Farmers pay only a **2% premium** for **Kharif crops**, **1.5%** for **Rabi crops**, and **5%** for **commercial and horticultural crops**.
- In **North-Eastern States**, **Jammu & Kashmir**, and **Himachal Pradesh**, the **entire premium** is borne by the **government**, ensuring free insurance coverage for farmers in these regions.

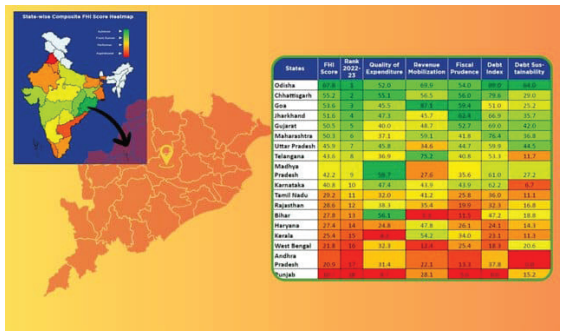
Odisha Launches 'Shishu Vatika' to Strengthen Early Childhood Education

- The Odisha government has officially rolled out the 'Shishu Vatika' programme across schools, aiming to provide a structured and engaging learning environment for young children beginning their education journey.
- Aligned with the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the initiative seeks to enhance early childhood education across the state.
- To make the first day of school memorable and encourage early learning engagement, the government organized 'Prabesh Utsav' and 'Khadi Chhuan' on Wednesday, welcoming children with special activities.
- Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi emphasized the importance of collective efforts in shaping a bright future for children.
- The Shishu Vatika programme is expected to play a vital role in building a modern, self-reliant, and empowered future for children in Odisha by strengthening early education and creating a nurturing school environment.

Odisha Celebrates Paridhan Dibasa: A Tribute to Traditional Handloom Attire

- The Odisha government's ongoing 'Odia Pakhya' celebrations spotlighted the state's vibrant handloom tradition today through 'Paridhan Dibasa.'
- Observed on the third day of the 14-day cultural initiative, this event urged residents to proudly wear traditional handloom attire as a mark of cultural pride and heritage preservation.
- The Handlooms, Textiles, and Handicrafts department is spearheading the campaign, themed "Ama Poshak, Ama Parichaya" (Our Ethnic Wear, Our Identity), to showcase Odisha's textile legacy.
- State-run outlets, including Boyanika, Utkalika, and Sambalpuri Bastralaya, are offering special discounts to encourage purchases of handloom products.
- By celebrating Odisha's exquisite handloom tradition, 'Paridhan Dibasa' aims to bridge the gap between modern fashion and cultural identity, reaffirming the state's commitment to preserving its rich heritage.

Odisha Tops Fiscal Health Index 2025



- In a landmark assessment by NITI Aayog, the Fiscal Health Index (FHI) 2025 has showcased the economic resilience and fiscal management capabilities of Indian states. Odisha emerged as the frontrunner, thanks to its robust debt sustainability measures and innovative revenue generation strategies.
- The FHI evaluated states based on five key indicators: tax buoyancy, revenue mobilization, debt-to-GSDP ratio, expenditure prioritization, and fiscal deficit management. Odisha's leading position is attributed to its ability to balance developmental expenditure with fiscal discipline,

particularly excelling in non-tax revenue mobilization from mining premiums.

- Meanwhile, states like Punjab and West Bengal face challenges such as high fiscal deficits and low capital expenditure, raising concerns about long-term sustainability. The FHI report underscores the critical need for efficient fiscal practices and tailored interventions to address state-specific challenges.
- The report aims to promote fiscal transparency and accountability, offering a roadmap for sustainable economic growth. It has been shared with all states and union territories to encourage the adoption of best practices in fiscal governance.

CAG Report Highlights Alarming Revenue Loss in Odisha's Mining Sector



- The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report on Odisha's mining sector has shed light on startling operational inefficiencies and significant revenue losses.
- The report, covering 2015–2022, highlights the state's struggles in managing its minor mineral resources and combating illegal mining.
- Odisha garnered ₹2968.75 crore from minor minerals during the period under review, making it a vital source of non-tax revenue. However, inefficiencies loom large, with 373 out of 520 mineral sources lying inactive. Meanwhile, ineffective efforts to curb illegal mining resulted in a revenue loss of ₹864.46 crore, the report revealed.
- Adding to the state's challenges, mining leaseholders owe ₹3966 crore in unrealized revenue—a sum accrued over six years and yet to be recovered despite court directives.
- The CAG report calls for stricter enforcement measures, including asset attachment, to address these alarming issues.
- The findings not only underscore the need for operational reforms but also emphasize the urgency for a revamped enforcement strategy to curb losses and ensure optimum revenue generation.

Odisha CM's Mission Delhi: Focus on Economic Growth

- Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi is gearing up for a two-day official trip to Delhi starting on April 7, 2025.
- The visit is aimed at strengthening Odisha's industrial growth and attracting fresh investments.
- The highlight of the trip is his participation in the Delhi Investors Summit on April 8, where he is set to engage with influential business leaders and Union ministers. A landmark agreement is expected to be signed with Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL) for establishing a naphtha cracker project in Paradip, a move anticipated to boost the region's economy significantly.
- During the visit, the Chief Minister will also explore avenues to foster collaborations that align with Odisha's vision for sustainable development. The delegation, led by Majhi, will return to Odisha on April 9, 2025.



Amrit Bharat Station Scheme Brings World-Class Facilities to Odisha's Rail Network

- In a significant step toward revolutionizing railway infrastructure, the Indian Railways has launched redevelopment projects under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme in the northern regions of Odisha.
- This ambitious initiative aims to elevate key railway stations with modern facilities, offering passengers a seamless and enhanced travel experience while fostering regional economic growth.
- The comprehensive redevelopment plan focuses on improving infrastructure, integrating advanced technology, and introducing state-of-the-art amenities to support passenger comfort and commercial development. The selected railway stations in northern Odisha will undergo substantial changes in design, connectivity, and service quality, aligning with the broader mission of modernizing the Indian Railway network.
- By blending contemporary design with functional efficiency, the redevelopment of these railway stations is expected to significantly improve passenger satisfaction and stimulate local economies. This initiative further underscores the government's commitment to establishing a more efficient, inclusive, and user-friendly travel system across the nation.

Key Features of Redevelopment:

- Modern Infrastructure: Stations will feature modern platforms, upgraded ticketing facilities, waiting areas and improved cleanliness standards, ensuring convenience and comfort for all passengers.
- Increased Accessibility: The redevelopment will include FOBs with lifts and escalators to improve accessibility for senior citizens, differently-abled passengers, and families with children.
- Sustainable and Eco-Friendly Design: The stations will adopt green building principles, integrating renewable energy solutions, water conservation practices, and waste management systems, in line with Indian Railways' commitment to sustainable development.
- Improved Circulating areas in the premises: Through these Redevelopments, a perceptible improving in the Station Circulating areas have been planned with Drop-on and Drop-out lanes along with adequate parking places.
- State-of-the-Art Passenger Amenities: Amenities like Wi-Fi, digital displays, advanced security systems, improved catering services, and modern waiting lounges will enhance the overall travel experience.
- Economic Growth: The redevelopment project aims to stimulate local economies by boosting tourism, improving connectivity and creating employment opportunities in the region.
- The Northern Odisha region, with its rich cultural heritage and diverse landscapes, will benefit significantly from these upgrades. The railway stations at major hubs like Rairangpur, Baripada, and Keonjhar will soon offer enhanced travel experiences, making it easier for passengers and tourists to explore the region's vast heritage and eco-tourism potential.
- The Indian Railways is committed to ensuring the timely completion of these projects, and work is set to commence in phases. The redevelopment project is expected to be completed in the coming few years.
- The stations undertaken in this redevelopment initiative include Kendujhargarh, Barbil, Jaroli, Baripada, Rairangpur, Betnoti, and Badampahar. Here's an update on the progress of these stations:
  - **Kendujhargarh Statio**
  - **Barbil Station**
  - **Jaroli Station**
  - **Baripada Station**
  - **Rairangpur Station**
  - **Betnoti Station**
  - **Badampahar Station**
- The ongoing redevelopment of the Amrit Stations in Northern Odisha is a vital part of

Indian Railways' commitment to modernizing its infrastructure and improving passenger services across the country. With the progress seen in these stations, the project is on track to offer enhanced travel facilities and bolster local economies.

- Indian Railways is confident that the completion of these station redevelopment projects will significantly enhance the travel experience for the people of Odisha and contribute to the state's growth. We look forward to the timely completion of these projects and are committed to delivering world-class infrastructure.

Revival of Odisha's Gobari river on the anvil



- The Kendrapara division of the Water Resources department has recently sent a proposal to the state government to give the Gobari ariver a facelift at a cost of Rs 701 crore.
- According to the proposal, the banks of the 113-km-long river will be renovated. The project will include cleaning, widening and dredging to maintain the river's cross-section for flood mitigation and navigation.
- Gobari river originates from Mahanga in Cuttack district and flows 91 km through Kendrapara before joining the Bay of Bengal at Jamboo. However, it is now covered with weeds and has turned into a nullah due to years of neglect.

Odisha rolls out Ayushman Bharat



- The scheme is dedicated to around 3.46 crore people from about 1.03 crore families under which they will get the benefit of free treatment up to Rs 5 lakh per annum while an additional Rs 5 lakh has been provisioned for women members of the family. Under this scheme, each member of the beneficiary families will get health cards.
- The Ayushman Vay Vandana Yojana is designed for senior citizens aged 70 years and above. The scheme provides Rs 5 lakh free health cover to all senior citizens of the age 70 years and above irrespective of their socio-economic status.
- The women beneficiaries will get additional assistance of Rs 5 lakh per year. The beneficiaries will now have access to free and quality treatment in over 29,000 government and private empanelled hospitals across India.

'Shakti Peetha' corridor plan to boost spiritual tourism in Odisha

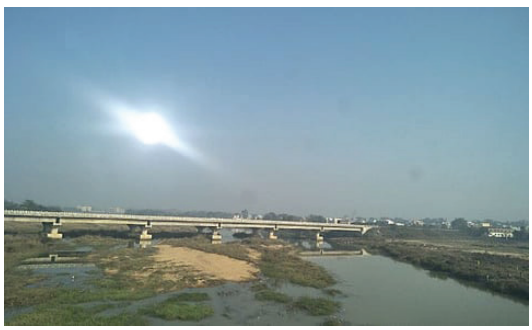


- In a bid to boost spiritual tourism in Odisha, the government had decided to establish a corridor to

enhance connectivity to all the eight prominent Shakti Peethas across the state.

- The corridor will begin from Biraja temple in Jajpur and include Maa Mangala temple in Kakatpur, Maa Bhagabati temple in Banapur, Maa Ugratara temple in Khurda, Narayani, Maa Bhairavi and Tara Tarini temples in Ganjam, besides Kalijai temple in Chilika lake, informed Parida who also holds the Tourism portfolio.
- While Ganjam has received over Rs 60 crore for development of tourist amenities at all its shrines and Taptapani springs, similar funds will be sanctioned for the purpose at all the other Shakti Peethas.
- Odisha's primary tourism draw so far has been Shri Jagannath temple at Puri, one of the most revered pilgrimage destinations in India. Tourists coming to the state have been mostly concentrated in Bhubaneswar, Puri and Konark. Officials of the Tourism department said new religious corridors will further enhance the spiritual experience of tourists.
- In another development, the Tourism department has decided to develop key destinations like Deomali, Dhauli, Chilika, Khandagiri-Udaygiri, Khiching, Satkosia and Similipal in this financial year through integrated master planning. These destinations will get state-of-the-art infrastructure and niche products to strengthen tourism activities.

Hope brightens for revival of dying Jeera river as work on anicut begins



- The long-awaited on Jeera river in Bargarh is finally starting to take shape with technical assessment by a state-level expert team.
- Jeera which was once a vital source of water is now struggling with degradation, pollution, and illegal sand mining. The new structure is expected to rejuvenate the river, increase groundwater level, and support commercial and recreational activities for the city.

NIT-Rourkela selected as PAIR hub under Anusandhan Foundation's research initiative



- National Institute of Technology-Rourkela (NIT-R) has been selected as one of the seven hub institutions under the prestigious Partnerships for Accelerated Innovation and Research (PAIR) programme of Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) of the Central government.
- It is the only NIT across the country and only hub institute from eastern India to earn the recognition. The PAIR initiative is a transformative step toward fostering a collaborative, inclusive and high-impact research ecosystem across higher education institutions in India. It is designed to enhance the research capabilities of institutions where research is currently at a nascent stage but holds significant potential.
- Out of 30 proposals evaluated nationally, only seven institutes were selected for funding in the first phase. Besides the NIT-R, the other selected institutions are three Indian Institutes of

Technology (IITs), the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and two Central Universities.

- NIT-R was selected after a rigorous review process and a final presentation before the apex review committee in Bengaluru. The presentation was led by NIT-R director Prof K Umamaheshwar Rao along with senior faculty members Prof SK Pratihar, Prof HB Sahu, Prof SK Behera and others.
- In its first phase, the PAIR programme focuses on institutions with demonstrable or promising research potential while also ensuring regional diversity. Each PAIR comprises one hub and a network of seven spoke institutions to promote interdisciplinary collaboration on nationally-relevant research themes aiming to deliver tangible and measurable outcomes.

Odisha DGP unveils mascot 'Asha' for All-India Police Hockey Championship 2025



- Odisha DGP YB Khurania on Sunday unveiled the official logo and mascot 'ASHA' of the 73rd edition of the All-India Police Hockey Championship 2025, which is scheduled to begin at Kalinga Stadium on Monday and continue till April 15.
- Inspired by the true story of an injured elephant calf which was rescued by the Forest department and is now being taken care of at the Nandankanan Zoo, the mascot 'ASHA' embodies resilience, compassion, and Odisha's commitment to wildlife conservation. "ASHA is more than just a mascot, she represents Odisha's spirit of strength and sustainability," said Khurania.
- This is the second time Odisha Police is going to host this championship.
- Organised under the aegis of the All-India Police Sports Control Board, the championship marks the beginning of one of the most prestigious tournaments in the Indian Police Sporting Calendar. The men's defending champion Punjab and women's defending champion SSB teams are all set to retain their titles.

Khelo India Centres Sprout Across Odisha to Empower Young Athletes



- In a monumental step toward nurturing sports talent at the grassroots level, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, in collaboration with the State Sports and Youth Affairs Department, has inaugurated Khelo India Centres across every district in Odisha.
- Under the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Shri Mohan Majhi, these centres aim to provide structured training and world-class infrastructure for various sports, including football, volleyball, hockey, athletics, kho kho, and kabaddi. Ensuring comprehensive development, the centres will offer top-notch facilities and guidance to budding sportspersons.
- Odisha Sports Minister Suryabanshi Suraj announced that each Khelo India Centre will receive an annual government grant of Rs 5 lakh for proper management and development. This initiative is set to strengthen the foundation of sports in Odisha, offering a bright future to talented athletes.

Tribal festival Chaitra Parab celebrated in Koraput district



- Chaitra Parab has kicked off in Koraput district with tribal communities involved in series of cultural and traditional rituals.
- Referred as the Nuakhai of tribal communities, the festival is celebrated over 10 days. Four days ago, the communities of Paraja, Kondh, Bhatra, Penthia, Soura, Bhumiya, Gadava and other tribes began the festival by eating mangoes and offering new grains at the village altar.
- During the celebrations, the communities participate in cultural events and community feasts. All village activities including agricultural work have come to a halt and will resume after the festival ends.

Odisha Approves New OISF Battalion with 1,040 Posts to Boost Industrial Security



- In a significant move to enhance security for Odisha's rapidly growing industrial sector, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi has approved the formation of a new battalion for the Odisha Industrial Security Force (OISF).
- The CM announced the creation of 1,040 new posts to support the operational needs of the new battalion, reinforcing the state's commitment to safeguarding its industrial and commercial infrastructure.
- The OISF, established to provide specialised security to industrial establishments and critical commercial zones, currently operates with one battalion comprising 1,807 personnel.
- With the addition of the new battalion, the total strength of the OISF will rise to two battalions, with a combined workforce of 2,847 personnel. This expansion is a strategic response to the increasing demand for robust security measures as Odisha witnesses a surge in industrial investments and new business ventures.
- Odisha has emerged as a key destination for industrial growth in India, with sectors such as steel, mining, and manufacturing driving economic progress. The state government has prioritised industrial development, attracting both domestic and international investors. However, with this growth comes the need to ensure the safety of industrial units, warehouses, and other commercially significant locations.
- The new OISF battalion will play a pivotal role in addressing these security challenges, providing dedicated protection to critical infrastructure and fostering a safe environment for business operations.

Odisha CM Felicitates Sudarsan Pattnaik for Winning Sand Master Award in UK

- Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi felicitated internationally acclaimed sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik at Lok Seva Bhawan in Bhubaneswar for his remarkable achievement of winning the prestigious Fred Darrington

Sand Master Award at the Sandworld 2025 International Sand Art Festival in Weymouth, Dorset, United Kingdom.

- Pattnaik, a Padma Shri recipient from Puri, Odisha, made history as the first Indian to receive this coveted honour, further elevating Odisha's cultural presence on the global stage.
- The Sandworld 2025 festival, held at Lodmoor Park, is renowned for its intricate sand sculptures created using only sand and water.



Odisha and Spain to Forge Strategic Industrial Partnership



- Odisha is strengthening its industrial ties with Spain as Ambassador Juan Antonio March Pujol met Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi at Lok Seva Bhawan.
- The discussions explored avenues of collaboration in renewable energy, metallurgy, textiles, and automobiles, setting the stage for a high-value partnership.
- Odisha, known for its mineral wealth and thriving steel clusters, welcomed recent investments such as TIMAB Magnesium India Pvt. Ltd. The French-Spanish company is investing ₹90 crore in a refractory manufacturing unit in Khordha, creating over 300 jobs. The CM emphasized further opportunities in sustainable metallurgy technologies.



- Odisha's Renewable Energy Policy took the spotlight as the CM invited Spanish firms like Siemens Gamesa, Acciona, and Iberdrola to explore investment prospects. The focus was on floating solar parks, offshore wind farms, and green hydrogen projects, underlining Odisha's commitment to clean energy.
- CM Majhi extended an invitation to leading Spanish apparel brands such as ZARA, Desigual, and Mango to consider Odisha's integrated textile parks for sourcing and innovation. The state's skilled workforce and progressive policy framework were highlighted as major advantages.



- Ambassador Pujol appreciated Odisha's dynamic industrial ecosystem, expressing Spain's keen interest in fostering long-term, technology-driven partnerships. Odisha's push towards global collaborations reflects its emergence as a future-ready investment destination.
- With senior officials such as Additional Chief Secretaries Nikunj Bihari Dhal, Satyabrata Sahoo, and Hemant Kumar Sharma present, the meeting laid the foundation for a new chapter in industrial, technological, and cultural cooperation between Odisha and Spain.

Dr. Achyuta Samanta Receives Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma Award 2025



- Odisha's renowned educationist and social reformer, Dr. Achyuta Samanta, has been conferred with the prestigious Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma Award 2025 in Assam's Kokrajhar.
- The award, presented by the Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma Trust, recognises his exceptional contributions to education and social empowerment.
- Named after the revered Bodo community leader Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma, also known as the 'Mech Gandhi of Assam,' this award celebrates distinguished individuals excelling in various fields. Dr. Samanta was honoured on the occasion of Brahma's 166th birth anniversary, receiving a citation, a memento, and a cash prize of ₹1 lakh, which he generously donated for the Trust's development.
- Expressing gratitude, Samanta reaffirmed his commitment to advancing education and fostering societal progress. His relentless dedication to empowering underprivileged communities through institutions like KIIT & KISS has earned him widespread admiration and recognition.

Viksit Odisha goal: Govt readies master plan for developing 35 strategic road corridors by 2036

- In a major move for transforming the state's road infrastructure in tune with the projected traffic growth and economic development priorities, the state government has decided to develop at least 35 strategic corridors across Odisha, stretching over 6,100 km, by 2036.
- Under the ambitious target to achieve Viksit Odisha by 2036, connectivity assumes top priority and the government has charted a master plan to comprehensively expand and upgrade the road network in the next decade.
- This network includes 2,700 km non-national highway (NH), 2,800 km NH arterial roads and 600 km inter-corridor links, besides additional 1,500 km of last-mile and first-mile feeder roads.
- This massive infrastructure initiative aligns with Union Road Transport minister Nitin Gadkari's announcement to bring Odisha's highways on par with American standards.
- The master plan would, however, prioritise access-controlled highways and improve connectivity to centres with economic activities, production hubs and socially important regions. It will also help decongest urban areas through ring roads and bypasses in all towns with populations over one lakh.
- The state cabinet has already approved the proposal to constitute Odisha State Highway Authority (OSHA) which will be entrusted with the development and execution of the master plan. The government will delegate adequate power to OSHA for expediting the works.
- "Powers for project-level approvals, cost sanctions and time extensions will be delegated to OSHA. Dedicated project implementation unit (PIU) and Centre of Excellence (CoE) for design, land

acquisition, tolling, and quality control will also be established under OSHA," sources said.

- Although the fund estimate for the identified corridors is yet to be made, it is likely to come under the provision of Rs 75,000 crore under the road infrastructure head for next five years.
- Plans are afoot to create unified laboratory facilities by integrating existing labs of both Works and Rural Development departments. A state-of-the-art referral laboratory will also be set up in collaboration with premier institutions like IMMT, IIT-Bhubaneswar, NIT-Rourkela, VSSUT-Burla, and OUTR-Bhubaneswar.

Odisha government to follow Kerala model in bridging sex gap



- Expressing concern over the skewed sex ratio in the state affecting gender equality and social stability, Chief Minister Mohan Majhi on Saturday called for creating massive public awareness to address the societal biases for male children.
- Addressing the state-level Poshan Paksh 2025 event at the State Institute for Women and Children (SIWC) in the state capital, Majhi said the need of the hour is to address the underlying societal attitudes and beliefs that contribute to preference for sons.
- Citing Kerala which stands out among states on sex ratio and gender equality, the chief minister said it is because the state has the highest literacy rate.
- Though the situation in Odisha is changing but slowly. With improvement in the sex ratio (1,000 males to 979 females), efforts should be towards increasing access to quality education and economic opportunities for girls to empower them and reduce the preference for sons.
- Emphasising the importance of collective awareness in making Odisha malnutrition-free, a key priority for building a prosperous state, Majhi said the objective of the Poshan Paksh 2025 celebration to raise awareness about nutrition and promote healthy practices. Anganwadi workers and supervisors play a crucial role in this effort, providing nutrition and basic education to children.
- Highlighting key initiatives of the state government for improving the children's health and well-being, the chief minister said a Rs 100 crore-funded Odisha Pusti Mission will be launched while Rs 284 crore has been allocated in the current year's budget to provide nutritious food to women and children and assistance under Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana for families with two daughters has been increased from Rs 10,000 to Rs 12,000.
- The chief minister also stressed that a whole of government approach is crucial for the success of the campaign promoting a unified and coordinated effort across departments.
- He inaugurated an 84-bed hostel, a modern library and anganwadi training centre on the premises of SIWC. Eight buildings of the institute were named after renowned women personalities of the state.

Odisha launches second phase of gharial conservation project in Mahanadi



- Keeping up with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's national gharial conservation programme, the Odisha government on Wednesday rolled out the second phase of its 'gharial species recovery project' to revive the population of the fish-eating crocodiles in Mahanadi river system.
- PCCF (wildlife)-cum-chief wildlife warden Prem Kumar Jha said as part of the project, seven adult captive-bred gharials - two males and five females - from Nandankanan and Gharial Research and Conservation Unit (GRACU), Tikarpada were released in the fresh waters of Mahanadi near Satkosia gorge.
- While five gharials - one male and four females, were released from Nandankanan, another male and a female were released from GRACU.
- Three of the gharials have been tagged with GPS-VHF transmitters programmed to give their GPS and VHF locations while the remaining four gharials have been tagged with double VHF transmitters.
- The GPS locations from the GPS transmitters can be viewed in a designated web portal while VHF signals from the VHF transmitters can be received using Yagi antenna and receiver from a distance of 1.5 to 3 km based on the terrain. Three postgraduate research fellows have been engaged in post-release monitoring of the gharials.
- Fewer than 250 gharials remain in the wild, mainly in India with Odisha being their southernmost habitat.
- There were only about eight gharials in Mahanadi when the project was launched in 2019 with the release of 19 crocodiles in five rounds.
- Despite challenges pertaining to their survivability, 16 gharials have been spotted in the river system in the latest census in 2025.

Berhampur's Budhi Thakurani Yatra: A Celebration of Art and Devotion

- Berhampur, also known as the Silk City, is alive with the spirit of the Budhi Thakurani Yatra, a 25-day festival celebrating the cultural heritage of the region.



- Commencing on April 3 and concluding on April 28, the festival marks the visit of the goddess Maa Budhi Thakurani to her father's house at Desibehera Street.
- Visitors to the city are greeted with dazzling lights, grand pandals, and intricately decorated chariots showcasing the skills of Odisha's artisans.
- Among the highlights are 28 chariots, including unique creations like 'Boita,' representing ancient maritime activities, and 'Jwalamukhi,' an idol carved from neem wood and displayed since 1939.
- The festival is also a canvas for storytelling arts, with the tale of Sri Rama Leela depicted through 113 frames of paintings at the coconut market. This tradition, over 70 years in the making, is a testament to the enduring craftsmanship and narrative artistry of the people.

Odisha Set to Lead India's Steel Revolution: CM Majhi at Steel India 2025



- Odisha is poised to make a significant mark at the India Steel 2025 Conference, a premier

international event organized by the Ministry of Steel, Government of India, in collaboration with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

- Held from April 24 to 26, 2025, at the Bombay Exhibition Centre in Goregaon, Mumbai, the three-day conference brings together global and national stakeholders to shape the future of the steel industry. Odisha's delegation, led by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, arrived in Mumbai on the evening of April 24 to participate in this pivotal summit.
- The India Steel 2025 Conference was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in the presence of global dignitaries, industry leaders, and policymakers.
- The event focuses on critical themes such as sustainable steel production, raw material security, digital transformation, and global partnerships, aligning with India's ambitious Viksit Bharat 2047 vision.
- As the world's second-largest steel producer and consumer, India is experiencing a robust steel demand growth of 8-10% annually, according to the India Steel Expo website, making this platform a vital opportunity for collaboration and innovation.
- Speaking at the 'Steel India 2025' conference, jointly organised by the Ministry of Steel and FICCI, CM Majhi emphasised Odisha's robust investment environment and rapid economic rise.

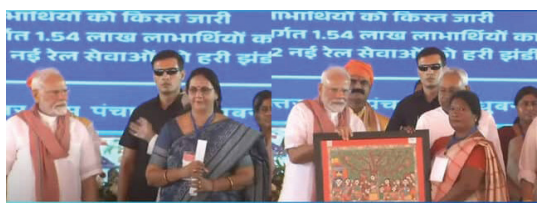
Similipal Tiger Count Rises to 40, Includes 18 Rare Black Tigers

- Just a day after Similipal was officially declared a national park under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, Odisha has more reason to celebrate.
- Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), Prem Kumar Jha, announced a remarkable rise in the park's Royal Bengal tiger population.
- According to the latest camera trap survey conducted this year, Similipal is now home to 40 Royal Bengal tigers, including six cubs—a notable increase driven by successful breeding programs and enhanced protection efforts.



- The offspring of famed tigresses Zeenat and Yamuna have played a key role in boosting numbers.
- Among the recorded tigers are 13 adult males, 17 tigresses, and two adults whose gender is yet to be determined.
- Even more striking is the presence of 18 melanistic (black) Royal Bengal tigers, a rare genetic variant found only in Similipal. This includes an equal count of 9 male and 9 female black tigers, reinforcing the park's global ecological significance.
- These encouraging figures come in the wake of Odisha's first dedicated tiger census in 2024, which had recorded 27 adult tigers and 8 cubs. The fresh data signals a positive trend in both population growth and successful breeding cycles.
- The state forest department has now set an ambitious target: to increase Similipal's tiger population to 100 within the next decade. This will be pursued through intensified conservation initiatives, habitat enhancement, and strict anti-poaching actions.

National Panchayat Awards: Odisha Scripts History with Hat-Trick Win



- Odisha has once again captured national attention by winning the prestigious National Panchayat Award for the 2023-24 cycle, marking the third consecutive year of this achievement.
- This recognition showcases the state's unwavering commitment to strengthening grassroots democracy and promoting inclusive development.
- The National Panchayati Raj Day was celebrated this year in Madhubani, Bihar, where the Prime Minister of India presented awards to the winning Panchayats and institutions.
- Adding to this moment of pride, the State Institute for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (SIRD&PR), Odisha, was awarded the 2nd Prize in the "Panchayat Kshamata Nirman Sarbottam Sansthan Puraskar" category.
- This accolade recognises its excellence in capacity building, mentoring, and providing support to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) throughout the state.



- The model Gram Panchayat, Hatbhadra GP, located in the Kusumi Block of Mayurbhanj District, has also received national recognition as the 2nd Best Gram Panchayat in the "Atmanirbhar Gram Panchayat" category.
- This award celebrates its exceptional achievement in enhancing Own Source of Revenue (OSR), promoting self-sufficiency, and embracing financial sustainability at the grassroots level.



- With 7 national awards in 2022-23 (the highest monetary allocation to any state) and 8 awards in 2021-22, Odisha continues to lead by example in transforming Panchayati Raj into a vibrant, accountable, and self-reliant governance model.

Goa wins 2025 Kalinga Super Cup & Qualifies for AFC Champions League 2

- FC Goa defeated Jamshedpur FC 3-0 in the final, winning the 5th edition of the Kalinga Super Cup football tournament 2025. FC Goa has also qualified for the playoff stages of next season's Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Champions League 2. If FC Goa fail to win that playoff game, they will play in the AFC Challenge League. The Kalinga Super Cup 2025 final was played at Bhubaneshwar, Odisha, on 3 May 2025.
- The tournament name is Super Cup, but as the Odisha government sponsors it, it has been known as the Kalinga Super Cup since the 2024 edition. It is held at Kalinga Stadium, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

First team to win the Super Cup twice

- FC Goa, also known as Gaurs, became the first team in the Kalinga Super Cup history to win it twice. It won the Kalinga Super Cup in 2019. FC Goa was playing its second final of the Kalinga Super Cup, while it was the first final for Jamshedpur FC.



About Kalinga Super Cup

- The All India Football Federation (AIFF) organises the Kalinga Super Cup. Its first edition, which replaced the Federation Cup, took place in 2018. Sixteen teams participate in the Super Cup, and the winner qualifies for the AFC Champions League
- Top teams of the Indian Super League and the I-League are eligible to play the Super Cup. Sixteen teams were divided into four groups, with the winners of each group qualifying for the semi-finals.

Mukhyamantri Bus Seva (MBS) scheme

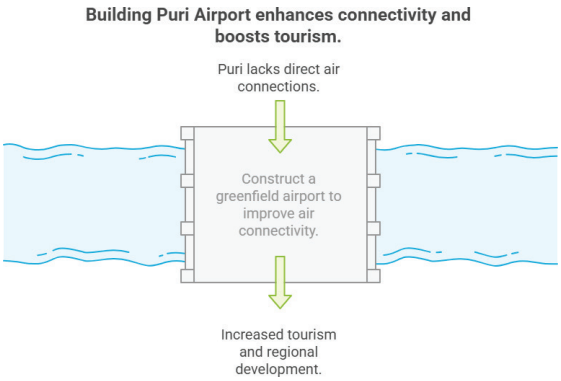
- The Odisha government has launched the Mukhyamantri Bus Seva (MBS) scheme to improve rural transportation.
- This scheme aims to provide safe, affordable, and efficient bus services in rural areas. The MBS will offer a 50% fare concession to women, transgender individuals, students, and senior citizens.
- The scheme will also feature safety enhancements like CCTV cameras and GPS tracking.

Key features of the Mukhyamantri Bus Seva:

- Improved Rural Connectivity: The MBS will strengthen existing rural connectivity by connecting key areas and providing better access to public transport.
- Affordable and Accessible Transport: The scheme will offer affordable fares and a 50% concession for eligible individuals, making public transport more accessible.
- Safety Enhancements: The buses will be equipped with CCTV cameras and GPS tracking for enhanced safety and monitoring.
- Gross Cost Contract Model: The scheme will operate under a Gross Cost Contract Model, which aligns with national guidelines.
- Stakeholder Consultation: The scheme is designed to incorporate better stakeholder consultations for a more inclusive and coordinated transport system.

The "Shree Jagannath International Airport"

- It is a proposed greenfield airport in Puri, Odisha, India, intended to enhance connectivity to the famous Jagannath Temple. The airport is expected to be a major boost for religious tourism, regional development, and overall connectivity. The project is planned over 1,164 acres and is estimated to cost ₹5,631 crore.



Key points

- Purpose: To improve air connectivity to Puri and the Jagannath Temple, a major Hindu pilgrimage site.
- Location: Puri, Odisha.
- Greenfield Airport: The project is a new airport built on a previously undeveloped site.
- Scale: The airport will be developed over 1,164 acres.
- Cost: The estimated cost is ₹5,631 crore.
- Government Approval: The project has received in-principle approval from the central government.
- Benefits: It is expected to boost religious tourism, regional development, and improve connectivity.
- Connectivity: The airport aims to enhance direct connectivity between Puri and major Indian cities.
- Land Acquisition: Land acquisition for the project is ongoing, with the goal of completing it within a specific timeframe.
- Public Hearings: Public hearings have been conducted for land acquisition.
- Development: The state government is actively pursuing the development of the airport, including approaching the Airports Authority of India (AAI) for participation in the bidding process.
- Environmental Concerns: The project has also raised some environmental concerns, with some local residents and activists voicing their concerns.

Animesh Kujur

- Animesh Kujur stormed to victories in the men's 100m and 200m races at the Indian Grand Prix 2 2025 athletics meet held at the Lakshmibai National College of Physical Education in Trivandrum, Kerala.
- Animesh, who broke the national record in men's 200m with a time of 20.40s at the Federation Cup last month, clocked 20.55s in the event at Trivandrum. He was followed by Vishal TK (21.06s) and Ragul Kumar G (21.10s).
- Animesh Kujur is part of the Indian squad that will compete at the Asian Athletics Championships 2025, which will be held in Gumi, the Republic of Korea, from May 27. He will compete in the men's 200m and men's 4x100m events.



Indian Grand Prix 2 2025 athletics winners

- Men's 100m - 1. Animesh Kujur (10.31s); 2. Lalu Prasad Bhoi (10.565s); 3. Dondapati Mrutyam Ja (10.569)

- Women's 100m - 1. Abinaya Rajarajan (11.55s); 2. Sneha S (11.60s); 3. Nithya Gandhe (11.61s)
- Men's 200m - 1. Animesh Kujur (20.55s); 2. Vishal TK (21.06s); 3. Ragul Kumar G (21.10s)
- Women's 200m - 1. Sneha K (23.59s); 2. Vithya Ramraj (23.72s); 3. Angel Silvia M (23.87s)
- Women's long jump - 1. Mubassina Mohammed (6.17m); 2. Lakshanya SN (5.75m)
- Women's 100m hurdles - 1. Nithya Ramraj (13.27s); 2. Pragyan Prasanti Sah (13.27s); 3. Sabita Toppo (14.20s)
- Men's 400m hurdles - 1. Subhas Das (50.61s); 2. Natarajan Kalainithi (51.51s); 3. Akhilbabu Akhilnivas (56.99s)
- Women's 400m hurdles - 1. Vithya Ramraj (57.45s); 2. Anu R (58.41s); 3. Deekshita Ramakrishn (1:00.50)
- Men's triple jump - 1. Vimal Mukesh Thamizh164 (15.83m); 2. Boby Sabu (15.56m); 3. Naveen K P (15.44m)
- Women's javelin throw - 1. Runjun Pegu (42.96m); 2. Pooja (41.47m)
- Men's 800m - 1. Satyam Chauhan (1:51.87); 2. Harshdeep Singh (1:52.20); 3. Dayanidhi Munda (1:52.80)
- Women's 800m - 1. Laxmipriya Kisan (2:09.10); 2. Vijayakumari GK (2:09.58); 3. Priscilla Daniel (2:12.94)
- Men's 400m - 1. Rajesh Ramesh (45.77s); 2. Jay Kumar (46.53s); 3. Rince Joseph (46.72s)
- Women's 400m - 1. Subha Venkatesan (53.57s); 2. Jisna Mathew (53.78s); 3. Sonia Baishya (54.22s)

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi attended World Audio Visual & Entertainment Summit (WAVES)

- At WAVES-2025, Odisha CM meets TATA Steel, Jain Irrigation, Waaree Group and others; invites industry to join the state's growth drive under "Yahi Samay Hai, Sahi Samay Hai".
- Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi held a series of one-on-one meetings with prominent investors and industry leaders in Mumbai reinforcing his government's commitment to fast-tracked industrial growth and ease of doing business in the state.
- During his visit to the city to attend the WAVES-2025 summit, the chief minister held an investors' meet where he held discussions with senior representatives of Google Inc and Canarys Automation - for digital governance collaboration in areas such as predictive disaster monitoring, AI-based administration, data de-duplication in public service delivery and advanced data analytics.

About WAVES

- World Audio Visual & Entertainment Summit (WAVES) is a key forum for promoting discussions, collaboration, and innovation in the M&E industry. The event will bring together industry leaders, stakeholders and innovators to discuss prospects, challenges, promote global trade and influence the sector's future.

Similipal Tiger Reserve

- Similipal is designated Odisha's second national park, after Bhitarkanika.
- Similipal is the 107th national park and the second in the eastern state, after Bhitarkanika. The proposal to declare Similipal as a national park has remained pending for 45 years.

About Similipal Forest

- Location: Mayurbhanj District of Odisha in Chottanagpur region.
- Major Rivers: Burhabalanga, Palpala Bandan, Salandi, Kahairi, and Deo.
- Similipal is also protected as a Wildlife Sanctuary, a Tiger Reserve (under Project Tiger), a Biosphere Reserve (under UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme, since 2009), and forms part of Mayurbhanj Elephant Reserve.

National park

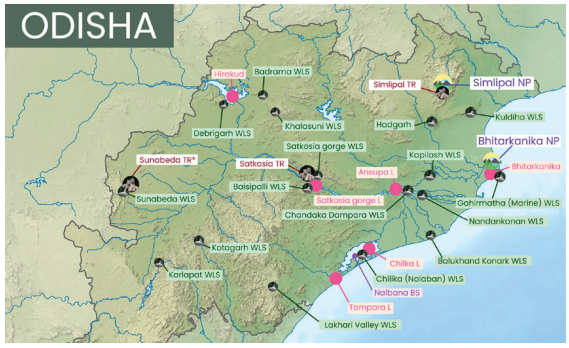
- About: It is an area, whether within a sanctuary or not, given the highest protection to conserve its wildlife and environment by reason of its ecological, faunal, floral, geomorphological, or zoological importance.
  - No human activity is permitted inside the national park, except for the ones permitted by the Chief Wildlife Warden of the state.
  - Also, under the Forest Right Act of 2006, certain tribal groups are permitted to live inside the National Parks.
- Notification: By the State Governments under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
  - However, once notified, no alteration of the boundaries can be done by the State Government, except on a recommendation of the National Board for Wildlife.

National Park Overview

Characteristic	Description
About	High protection area for wildlife
Permitted activities	Limited human activity allowed
Notification	State Government under Act
Boundary alteration	Requires Board recommendation

About Similipal national park

- **Location**: It is located within the Mayurbhanj District, in the Northern-most part of **Odisha**.
- It is spread over 2750 sq.km. and has some beautiful **waterfalls like Joranda and Barehipani.**
- **History and current status:**
  - It was formally designated a **tiger reserve under Project Tiger in May 1973.**
  - It was declared as a wildlife sanctuary in 1979.
  - Later in 1980, Government of Orissa proposed 303 sq. km of the sanctuary as National Park.
  - **UNESCO** added this National Park to its **list of Biosphere Reserves** in May 2009.
- It **comes under Mayurbhanj Elephant Reserve** that includes the adjacent Hadgarh and Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuaries.
- It is surrounded by high plateaus and hills, the highest peak being the twin **peaks of Khairiburu and Meghashini** (1515m above mean sea level).
- The terrain is mostly undulating and hilly, interspersed with open grasslands and wooded areas.
- **Vegetation**: It is a mix of different forest types and habitats, with **Northern tropical moist deciduous** dominating some semi-evergreen patches.
- **Fauna:**
  - It is known for the **tiger, elephant and hill mynah.**
  - It holds the highest tiger population in the state of Orissa.
  - 55 species of mammals, 304 species of birds, 60 species of reptiles, 21 species of frogs, 38 species of fish and 164 species of butterflies have been recorded from the reserve.
- **Fauna:** An astounding 1078 species of plants, including 94 species of orchids are found here



Khelo India centres

- Khelo India centres inaugurated in 30 Odisha districts, to foster sports culture at grassroots level.

- A total of 30 government schools—one from each district—have been selected for the establishment of these sports centres. Each centre will receive an annual financial assistance of Rs 5 lakh to ensure the smooth functioning of operations, training, and maintenance of basic infrastructure.

Details

- According to the Minister, the Khelo India centres have been inaugurated at schools in 30 districts of Odisha. Rs 5 lakh each will be spent annually for each centre. The appointment of coaches will be transparent and from concerned discipline and past champions. I am hopeful that the centres will play a key role for students who want to make a career in sports. The centres will act as training centres at grassroots level.
- Significantly, local retired sportspersons will be engaged as trainers at these centres, utilizing their experience and knowledge while providing them livelihood opportunities. This decision has been welcomed by the sporting community as a step towards sustainable development and sports welfare.
- These grassroots centres will primarily focus on Olympic and priority sports, ensuring children receive expert training in disciplines where India has strong international potential. Over time, schools are expected to transform into regional hubs of athletic excellence, creating a feeder system for district, state, and national teams.

Asit Mahapatra appointed ORERA Chairperson

- The Orissa Real Estate Regulatory Authority (ORERA) has appointed Asit Kumar Mahapatra as the Chairman.

About Asit Kumar Mohapatra

- Asit Kumar Mohapatra is an ex-IRS Officer. With a robust educational background, he completed a B.Sc. in Engineering from REC, Rourkela in 1986, followed by an M.Tech from IIT Madras in 1990. His law degree was obtained from Utkal University in 2021.
- He is a qualified insolvency professional and Valuer as mandated by IBBI. Over his career, he has accumulated a wealth of experience in various capacities within the Income Tax Department, ranging from Assistant Commissioner to Chief Commissioner, over the course of 33 years. Professionally, he is deeply involved with issues related to income tax, legal disputes, and fiscal policies. His extensive career includes roles such as CIT (Appeals) and CIT (ITAT), where he was responsible for adjudicating disputes between taxpayers and the government. His legal acumen is complemented by his training as an Insolvency Professional, a credential he obtained through the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India in 2023.



- He is also a life member of the Indian Council of Arbitration. Asit's ongoing commitment to professional development is evident in his participation in various courses. His expertise as an Insolvency Professional and Valuer highlights his expertise in handling complex issues related to industrial assets and their valuation. His qualifications and experience are pivotal in his role as an arbitrator, where he brings a nuanced understanding of legal, financial, and technical matters to the table.

'Parakram Shobha Yatra

- Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi declared that the administration will hold a 'Parakram Shobha

Yatra' across the state on May 11, 2025, at 8 a.m., to honor the Indian Armed Forces who safeguard the country's sovereignty.

- The 'Parakram Shobha Yatra' aspires to recognize the sacrifices made by the Indian Army in the name of national honour and pride. Majhi urged civilians to join the procession as a symbol of nationalism and solidarity, which would boost soldiers' morale in their fight against terrorism.

Pattnaik's Sand Art Pays Tribute To Virat Kohli's Test Legacy At Puri Beach



- Renowned sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik on Monday created a striking sand sculpture at Puri Beach to mark Virat Kohli's retirement from Test cricket.
- The artwork featured 14 sand cricket bats, symbolizing each year of Kohli's Test career.
- The sculpture showcased a stunning image of 'King Kohli' surrounded by the 14 sand bats.
- In front of the display stood another bat with the inscription, "Kohli – King of Tests, End of an Era." The sand art was eye-catching, beautifully crafted, and appealing to visitors.

Justice Dixit Krishna Shripad

- The Chief Justice of the High Court of Orissa will administer the oath of office to Justice Dixit Krishna Shripad at 10 AM on May 12 in the presence of Puisne Judges and former Judges of High Court of Orissa including other high dignitaries.



About Justice Krishna S. Dixit:

- Honourable Justice Mr. Krishna S. Dixit enrolled as an advocate in July 1989. Since then he was practising in the Hon'ble High Court of Karnataka & High Court of Madras, specializing in Law of Writs, Election Laws & Service Laws. He was appearing in cases before the Service Law Tribunals of several States. He was appointed as the Senior Standing Counsel for the Election Commission of India and also as an Addl. Central Government Standing Counsel since 1999.
- He has also served as Standing Counsel for the University Grants Commission, the Competition Commission of India, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, Karnataka Veterinary Sciences University, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, National Institute of Unani Medicines, etc. He was appointed as Amicus Curiae in a few matters before the Hon'ble High Court of Karnataka.
- He was Panel Counsel for few Nationalized Banks. He was also a para academician and a part-time lecturer in a Law College in Bengaluru for a few years. He was contributing articles to a few Kannada & English Newspapers & magazines. He also participated in several television debates on matters of contemporary relevance.
- Having been appointed as the Assistant Solicitor General of India in the year 2014, he was appearing for the Central Government in numerous important cases till his Elevation as a Judge of the High Court of Karnataka on 14th February 2018.

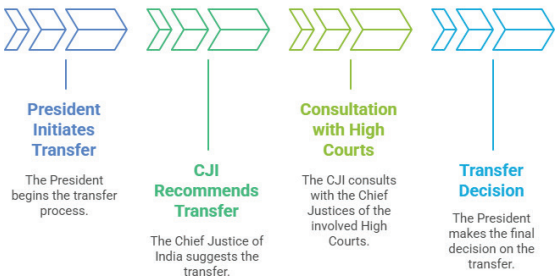
Appointment and transfer of high court judges

- Constitutional Provision: Article 222 of Indian Constitution empowers the President, based on the recommendation of the CJI, to transfer a judge (including Chief Justice) from one High Court to another.
- Consent of the judge is not required, whether it is the first or a subsequent transfer.
- Role of the CJI and the Collegium: The CJI initiates the transfer proposal and his opinion is determinative.

Appointment of High Court Judges

Characteristic	Article 217	Consultation Process
Appointing Authority	President	Collegium
Key Individuals Consulted	CJI, Governor, Chief Justice of High Court	Chief Justice of High Court, Chief Minister, Governor, Union Law Minister
Initiation of Proposal	N/A	Chief Justice of High Court
Chief Justice Appointment	N/A	From outside the respective States

Judicial Transfer Process



Madhusmita Patra

- Odisha's Madhusmita Patra triumphs in scaling Nepal's Mount Meera.
- A trained mountaineer, Madhusmita received her formal education in mountaineering from the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute (HMI), by the Government of India, in 2022. Since then, she has climbed Africa's highest peak, Mount Kilimanjaro, Europe's Mount Elbrus, Himachal Pradesh's Mount Friendship and Mount Renok, among others.



Nibedita

- Odisha's Nibedita clinches gold at Asian Yogasana Championship, elevates country on Global Yoga stage.
- In a moment of immense pride for Odisha and the nation, Nibedita Sahoo secured the gold medal in the Senior Traditional category at the 2nd Asian Yogasana Sports Championship.
- The event took place from April 25 to 27, 2025, at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium in New Delhi, attracting athletes from 21 Asian countries.
- Representing India, Sahoo's outstanding performance stood out among a strong field of competitors, earning her top honours and reinforcing her position as one of the leading Yogasana athletes in the country.
- A postgraduate in Yoga from the Utkal University of Culture and a dedicated practitioner of Isha Yoga, she has previously clinched gold medals at district, state, and national levels.
- Her international triumph is a testament to her consistent dedication and passion for the discipline. Organised by Yogasana Bharat, the championship witnessed participation from over 170 athletes. India emerged as the frontrunner, topping the medal tally with an impressive 83 gold medals.
- Sahoo's achievement not only brings glory to her home state of Odisha but also contributes significantly to India's rising stature in Yogasana

as a recognised competitive sport on the international platform.

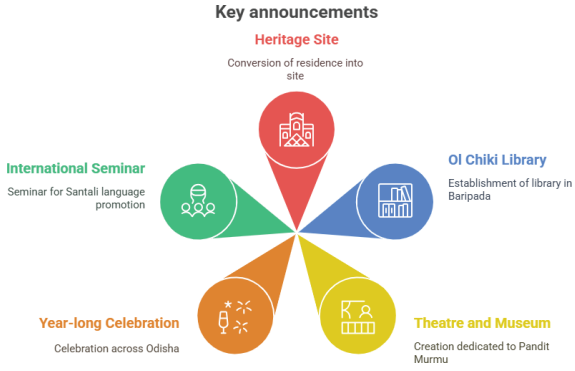


The Odisha Tennis Association (OTA) elects New Executive Council for 2025–2029

- The Odisha Tennis Association (OTA) successfully conducted its Annual General Body Meeting on 10th May 2025, during which the new Executive Council for the term 2025–2029 was formally elected. The meeting was chaired by Asit Tripathy who served as President in the previous tenure and continues in the role for the current term.
- The newly constituted Executive Council of OTA is President Asit Tripathy, Advisor Madhusudan Padhi, Vice President Dr. Satyajit Mohanty, Vice Presidents Capt. Dibya Shankar Mishra, Brahmananda Mishra, Subhransu Sarangi, Dibyaloak Patnaik, Honorary Secretary Sanjeeb Panda, Honorary Treasurer Satyajit Mohanty, Joint Secretary Sambit Patnaik,
- Executive Committee Members Nikhil Pavan Kalyan, Bibekananda Patnaik, Guliver Law, Saroj Kumar Sahoo, Biswa Ranjan Patnaik, Sunil Mohapatra and Rajesh Kanungo
- During the meeting, President Asit Tripathy outlined the association's roadmap for strengthening tennis at the grassroots level. He underlined the importance of developing infrastructure and structured coaching programs across districts, describing it as essential to building a strong foundation and nurturing future talent in the state. He reiterated that empowering local centres would ensure a continuous stream of players progressing through the competitive ranks.

Odisha Celebrates 100 Years of Ol Chiki Script & 120th Birth Anniversary of Pandit Raghunath Murmu

- The Odisha government has launched a year-long celebration marking the centenary of the Ol Chiki script and the 120th birth anniversary of Pandit Raghunath Murmu, a revered figure in Santali literature and culture.
- The government will also set up an Ol Chiki Library in Baripada, create a Pandit Raghunath Murmu open-air theatre and museum, and host an international seminar for Santali language promotion.
- The Odisha government has allocated ₹50 crore for these initiatives, reflecting its commitment to preserving Santali heritage. Murmu, celebrated as Guru Gomke, pioneered the Ol Chiki script, providing Santali speakers with a written language that has strengthened their cultural identity.



About Pandit Raghunath Murmu

- Pandit Raghunath Murmu is the great son of Santali Tribes in India for his contribution to the Santali community by way of developing the "Ol Chiki" script for the first time in India. He was a philosopher, writer, and educator. Prior to the nineteenth century, there was no written language

in Santali, and knowledge was transmitted orally from one generation to another.

- Later European researchers and Christian missionaries started to use Bengali, Odia, and Roman scripts to document the Santali language. It was not accepted by Raghunath Murmu. His creation of the "Ol Chiki" script enriched the cultural identity of the Santali society. He wrote many songs, plays, and school textbooks in this script.
- Raghunath Murmu was born on the day of Baisakhi Purnima (Buddha Purnima) in 1905 at Dandbose (Dahardih) village, Rairangpur which was a part of Mayurbhanj State in Odisha. Nandlal Murmu and Salma Murmu were his parents. His father, Nandlal Murmu, was a village head and his paternal uncle was a Munsi in the court of King Pratap Chandra Bhanjdeo of Mayurbhanj State. As per the traditional social rituals of the Santali people, he was named Chunu Murmu after his birth. However, later the priest, who performed his naming ceremony, changed his name from Chunu Murmu to Raghunath Murmu.
- At the age of seven, he went to the Gambharia U.P. School, an Odia-medium school that was 3 km away from his village for his primary education. On the first day of school, he found his teacher to be an Odiya. He was surprised to see why the school did not have the language in which he spoke i.e Santali. He used to say - why should we learn in this language? We are Kherwal, and Santali is our mother language 'so why are we not taught in Santali? He told his father to admit him to a Santali medium school. His father then told him that Santali does not have any written script; it is an oral language only. At that age, he started to think - why don't we have our own script? Why are we not taught in our own language? These questions always kept buzzing in his mind.
- In 1914, he was admitted to the Bahalda Primary School which was 7 km away from his village. Since the school was quite far from his native village, he built a hut near the school. He started to stay there with some other boys. During these days, while other children used to play together in the nearby playground, he did not play with them. He used to play alone on soil, drawing different shapes on earth, and writing the alphabet. He used to learn through his play. This was probably the time when he started developing the script Ol Chiki.
- He was sent to Baripada, capital city of the Mayurbhanj State for further study. He took admission in the Baripada High School of Mayurbhanj, presently known as M.K.C. High School. But here too his mind was stuck with the thoughts of having his own language and script. During the school holidays, he used to go home to his native village Danbose. At that time, he used to spend his time alone roaming in a nearby jungle, named Kapi-Buru. Generally, no one ventured into that isolated Kapi-Buru jungle. He would often go off into Kapi-Buru with his notebook and pen. It is said that he created the Ol Chiki script at Kapi-Buru in 1925. In 1928, he passed his matriculation examination (10th) from Patna University. In the same year, he married Nuha Baskey, a resident of Jamjora village.

Notable works

- His most notable work is the development of the Ol Chiki script itself. However, there are also some other notable works regarding the Santali literature and script.



- These works are - Ol Chemed (primary syllabus of OlChiki), Parsi Poha (essential elements of OlChiki), Dare Ge Dhon (drama), Sidu Kanhu (patriotic drama), Bidu Chandan (famous love

drama), Kherwal Bir (patriotic drama), Hiatal (scripture of evolution of the Earth and human being of Kherwals myth), Hor Serena (Santali literature songs), Ronor (Santali grammar), Elkha (Santali ematics). His last book is Rah Andorh.

Legacy

- He has not only given a new identity to the Santali society but also has laid an inspiration for other societies to create their own script. Because of this inspiration, many societies are now able to develop their own script. The Government of India has included the Santali language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India on 22 December 2003. After that, many state governments, specifically West Bengal, Jharkhand, Odisha, and Bihar gave recognition to the Santali language. The government of Jharkhand, Odisha, and West Bengal included the Santali language as a medium of instruction at the primary and high school levels in the santal-dominated areas. Many Universities and Colleges in Jharkhand, West Bengal, and Odisha are now offering courses on the Santali literature using the Ol Chiki script.
- In 2016, Govt of Odisha declared the birthday of Pandit Raghunath Murmu (every year full moon day in the month of May which is popularly called "Guru Konami", "Guru Purnima" and "Basant Kunami") as an optional holiday.
- Due to his noble contribution to society, He occupies a noble position in the Santali Community in India.

The Odia Asmita Utsav 2025

- The Bahrain Odia Samaj recently celebrated "Odia Asmita Utsav 2025" in grand manner.
- The Odia Asmita Utsav 2025 was held in the esteemed presence of Indian Ambassador HE Vinod K. Jacob as Chief Guest, alongside several distinguished dignitaries, celebrating Odisha's rich cultural heritage.
- The aim is to promote Odia culture and identity across the globe.
- The event held at Salmabad was presided over by the Founder of Bahrain Odia Samaj Dr Arun Kumar Praharaj.



The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Office in Odisha

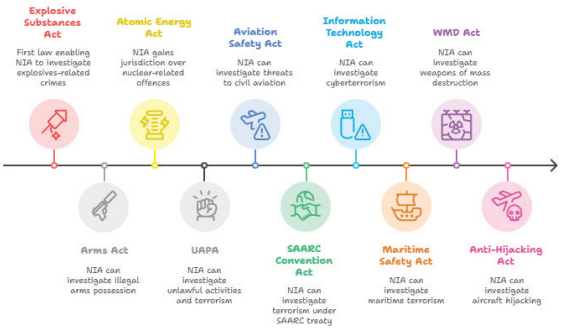
- The National Investigation Agency (NIA) will open an office in Bhubaneswar, which will function for the whole of Odisha.
- A Superintendent of Police (SP) rank officer will remain in-charge of the NIA police station, which will operate from the regional telecom training centre of BSNL here.
- The newly-designated station will be located at the regional telecom training centre near Vani Vihar here and have jurisdiction over the entire state, enabling faster and more effective investigation of scheduled offences under the NIA Act, 2008.
- The decision came amid growing concerns over terror-related activities in the country. Odisha is home to vital national establishments like the missile testing range, naval base and army air defence centre and religious landmarks like the Lord Jagannath temple. It has long been on the radar of terror outfits such as the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) and Al Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS).

About National Investigation Agency (NIA)

- Establishment: Under the National Investigation Agency Act, 2008, which was enacted in the aftermath of the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks.

- Objective: To investigate and prosecute offences that threatens India's sovereignty, security, and integrity, friendly relations with foreign States, matters relating to international treaties etc
- Schedule of Offences: The Act includes a schedule of laws under which the NIA can investigate and prosecute offences.

Key Legislation Under NIA Jurisdiction

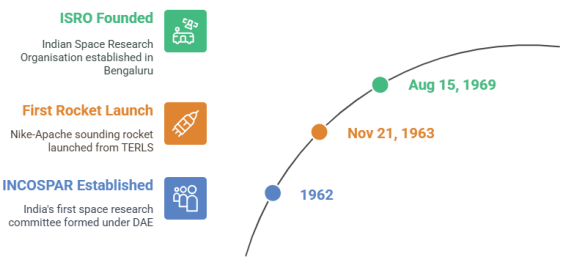


- Headquarters: New Delhi with 2 Zonal offices at Guwahati & Jammu.
- Headed by: Director-General (DG), who is a senior Indian Police Service (IPS) officer.
- Jurisdiction: It extends to the whole of India and it applies also
  - To citizens of India outside India.
  - To persons in the service of the Government wherever they may be.
  - To persons on ships and aircrafts registered in India wherever they may be, and
  - To persons who commit a Scheduled Offence beyond India against the Indian citizen or affecting the interest of India.
- Powers of NIA:
  - Investigation: Central Government can direct NIA to investigate when it is of the opinion that a Scheduled Offence has been committed.
  - Prosecution: The NIA can prosecute cases in specially designated NIA courts.
  - Coordination with State Police: It collaborates with state law enforcement agencies during investigations.
  - Extraterritorial Operations: The agency can investigate and prosecute offences committed outside India, subject to international cooperation agreements.
- Conviction rate: NIA has registered 640 cases from inception in which judgment has been pronounced in 147 cases with a conviction rate of 95.23%.

ISRO Chairman Dr. V. Narayanan Visits Odisha for Key Space Initiatives

- Dr. Narayanan's visit includes a stop at the Central Tool Training Centre (CTTC) and participation in NISER's Technology Day celebrations. His engagements aim to foster discussions on India's future space missions, including Chandrayaan-4, Venus exploration, and upcoming satellite launches.

Key Milestones in the Founding of ISRO



India's Recent Space Missions

- India's recent space missions highlight ISRO's growing capabilities.
- Chandrayaan-3 successfully achieved a soft landing on the Moon's south pole in 2023.
- The Aditya-L1 mission, launched in 2023, aims to study the Sun.
- Gaganyaan, India's first crewed space mission, is set to launch soon, marking a milestone in human spaceflight.
- EOS-04, launched in 2022, enhances radar imaging for agriculture and disaster management. ISRO also conducted commercial missions like PSLV-C57, deploying satellites for global clients,

cementing India's position in space research and exploration.

PM Modi to chair key meeting on Polavaram Project with CMs of 4 states including Odisha on May 28

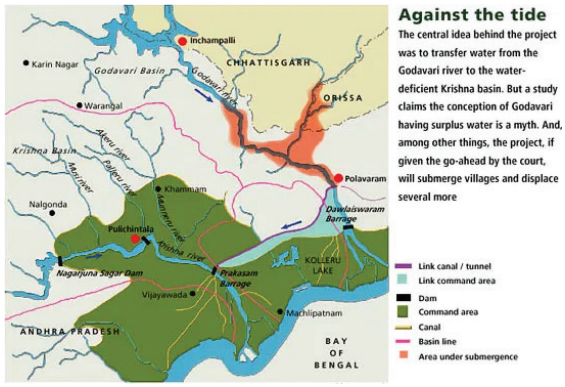
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hold a high-level meeting with the Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh on May 28 to discuss the Polavaram Project. This will be the first time that the Prime Minister will directly engage in talks with all four states on this matter.
- The meeting assumes significance as the Polavaram project, a multi-purpose irrigation and hydroelectric venture in Andhra Pradesh, has been mired in disputes for years. Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and Telangana have raised objections, and related petitions are currently under consideration in the Supreme Court.
- The Polavaram Project has sparked concerns in Odisha and Chhattisgarh, particularly over flooding risks and potential displacement in tribal-dominated areas.

About Polavaram Project

- It is a multi-purpose irrigation project built on the Godavari River where the river emerges out of the last range of the Eastern Ghats and enters the plains.
- The dam will be located near Polavaram village in the West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh, an area bordering Chhattisgarh and Odisha.
- It was conceived in 1980 as a part of the recommendations of the Godavari Water Disputes Tribunal (GWDT).
- It has been accorded national project status by the central government.
- It involves the construction of a dam to address water scarcity, boost agricultural productivity, and generate power.
  - The span of the dam is about 1.2 km, having a pier height of 54 m and a total of 48 radial gates (16mx20m).
  - Designed to withstand massive floods that could occur once in 1000 years, the Polavaram Spillway is set to have the highest discharge capacity in the world.
  - At 50 lakh cusecs, it is set to surpass even the 3 Gorges Dam of China, one of the largest dams in the world.
  - The project has set a world record by pouring 32,315.5 cubic metres of concrete into the spillway channel of the project.

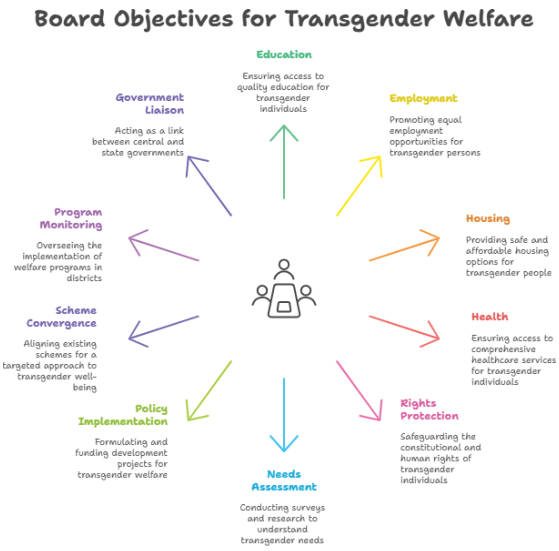
Polavaram Project Objectives

- It is intended for the development of a gross irrigation potential of 4,36,825 ha.
- The project also envisages the generation of 960 MW of hydropower and drinking water supply to a population of 28.50 lakh in 611 villages.
- The project also aims to transfer 80 TMC (Thousand Million Cubic Feet) of water from the Godavari to the Krishna river basin.
- The dam will help manage floodwaters from the Godavari River, reducing risks to nearby communities.



Odisha sets up State Transgender Welfare Board

- The Odisha government has constituted the State Transgender Welfare Board to make a comprehensive guideline for rehabilitation and welfare of transgenders and protect their interest as per the provisions of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.



- The State Transgender Board shall consist of several members, with the Minister of Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities as its chairman. The Secretary of the same department will be vice-chairman of the Board.
- Apart from this, there will be representatives from 7 departments of the Odisha government as members, two representatives of transgender community from across the state, 3 district Collectors on a rotation basis and two NGO representatives as the members of the Board.
- As per the official notification, the members shall be nominated by the Odisha government from time to time.

Duration Of The Board

- The term of office of the Board shall be for a period of three years. On completion of three years, the department will take steps for reconstitution of the Board.

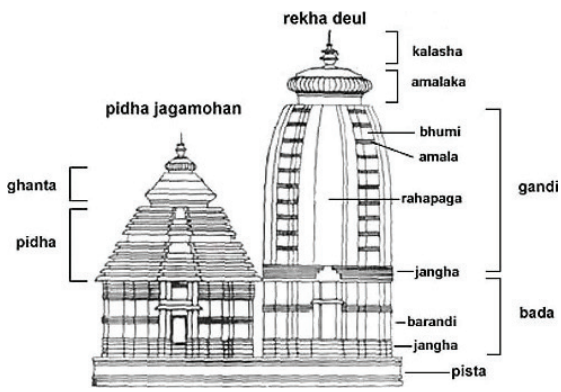
Major Objectives Of The Board

- The Board will look after education, employment, housing, and health schemes for transgender and protect their Constitutional and human rights.
- Study the needs and requirements of transgender persons from time to time through surveys, research and evaluation in such a manner as may be necessary.
- Ensure that sufficient and quality development projects, programmes and schemes are formulated and adequate funds are allocated for effective implementation of TG Policy.

Ensure convergence of existing schemes across departments for a more targeted and focused approach towards ensuring the well-being of the TG community.

- Monitor the implementation of various welfare and other programmes of TGs in the districts.
- Act as a connecting link between the Central Government and the State Governments.

Ahead of Rath Yatra, armoured vehicle Vajra deployed at Puri Jagannath Temple

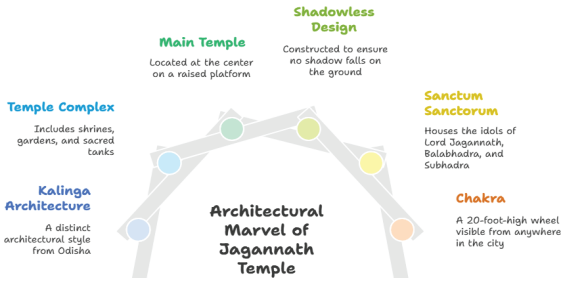


- During his visit, the DGP interacted with senior police officials and reviewed the deployment of modern security infrastructure. Notably, armoured vehicle 'Vajra' was seen patrolling near the temple entrance as part of the enhanced security protocol.
- About Rath yatra
  - Rath Yatra, also known as the Chariot Festival, is a significant Hindu festival celebrated annually, primarily in Puri, Odisha, India, and also in other locations like Ahmedabad. The festival involves the deities Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, and Goddess Subhadra being

taken out in a grand procession on massive, beautifully decorated chariots.

About Jagannath Temple

- It is a Hindu temple located in Puri, Odisha.
- It is dedicated to Lord Jagannath, a form of the Hindu deity Vishnu.



- It is believed to have been built during the reign of King Anantavarman Chodaganga Deva, of the Eastern Ganga dynasty, in the 12th century.
- However, the completion of the temple happened in 1230 AD under Anangbheema Deva III, who also installed the deities in the shrine.
- Ratha Yatra is a Hindu festival associated with Lord Jagannath temple.
- It is also one of the four sacred pilgrimage sites, known as the Chaar Dhaams, that hold great significance for Hindus.
- It is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

'Sahayog' Initiative

Why in the News?

The Odisha government has launched the 'Sahayog' initiative to provide swift assistance to urban poor communities.

In the first phase, this scheme will be implemented in 44 urban local bodies across 8 districts: Khordha, Cuttack, Ganjam, Sundargarh, Sambalpur, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, and Bhadrak.

Objectives of the Initiative:

- **Identification of Urban Poor:** Identifying eligible beneficiaries in urban poor communities and linking them with appropriate government schemes.
- **Public Awareness:** Connecting eligible beneficiaries to the benefits of government schemes through mass awareness.
- **Access to Government Services:** Ensuring doorstep delivery of government services to eligible households.

Major Schemes to be Covered:

- **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban):** Providing permanent housing for urban poor.
- **National Food Security Act (NFSA):** Issuing ration cards.
- **Piped Water Supply:** Improving water supply infrastructure.
- **Ayushman Card:** Issuing health service access cards.
- **Identification of Persons with Disabilities:** Connecting them with relevant schemes.
- **Subhadra Yojana:** Special schemes for vulnerable sections of society.

Urban Poverty in India:

Urban poverty, like rural poverty, is associated with several challenges, such as:

- **Employment:** Lack of stable employment opportunities for the urban poor.
- **Food Security:** Difficulty in accessing nutritious food.
- **Healthcare:** High cost of healthcare services.
- **Education:** Limited access and affordability of education.

Recent Data on Urban Poverty:

According to the recently released World Bank "Poverty and Equity Brief" report:

- Extreme poverty rate in urban India: **17.2%**
- In rural India: **2.8%**

This highlights the deep extent of poverty in urban areas, which is more challenging than in other regions.

Why is Life in Urban Poverty More Challenging?

- **Poor Living Conditions:** Urban poor often live in slums lacking basic amenities like sanitation, drinking water, and ventilation.

- **Expensive Services:** Services like healthcare, education, transport, and housing are more expensive in cities, making them unaffordable for the poor.
- **Lack of Access to Welfare Schemes:** Migrant workers in urban areas often cannot avail benefits due to lack of ID or proof of residence.
- **Inequality:** Urban poverty is often concentrated in slums, making inequality visually stark—like the contrast between Mumbai's Dharavi slum and adjacent luxury buildings.
- **Lack of Social Support:** Urban areas lack community life and traditional social networks, leading to loneliness and mental health issues.
- **Neglected Urbanization:** Slums and informal settlements are often ignored in city planning, leaving urbanization incomplete.

"Atal Network for Knowledge, Urbanisation and Reform" (ANKUR)

Why in the News?

The **Odisha Government** has launched an ambitious urban development initiative named **"Atal Network for Knowledge, Urbanisation and Reform" (ANKUR)**.

Its aim is to promote **inclusive, sustainable, and innovation-driven urbanisation** under **Vision Odisha 2036**, to realise the goal of a "Developed Odisha."

ANKUR Initiative: Key Points

1. **Objective:**
   - To build **citizen-centric cities** that are **smart, sustainable, and future-ready**.
   - To address the challenges of **tripling the urban population** from the current **17% to 40% by 2036**.
- **Focus on Four Pillars:**
   - **Capacity Building**
   - **Knowledge & Research**
   - **Implementation Support**
   - **Innovation**



2. **Key Initiatives:**
   - **Institutional Collaboration:** The Department of Housing and Urban Development signed **MoUs with 6 key institutions**, including **IITs, NITs**, and **international urban planning agencies**.
   - **Policy Innovations:**
     - » Data-driven decision-making (**Smart Governance**)
     - » Promotion of **community participation**
     - » **Climate-resilient urban development**
3. **Vision Odisha 2036 & 2047:**
   - **Metropolitan Area Development:** To develop an integrated metropolitan region covering **7,000 sq. km**, including Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Puri, Paradip, etc.
   - **Economic Targets:**
     - » **$500 billion economy by 2036**
     - » **$1.5 trillion by 2047** (to become one of India's developed states)

ANKUR Roadmap

Sector	Plan
Urban Infrastructure	Smart transport, green energy, digital governance
Housing	Affordable housing, slum redevelopment
Environment	Climate adaptation, waste management, water conservation
Employment	Skill development, IT/manufacturing hubs

Prasanna Pattnaik passes away

Why in the news

- Prasanna Pattnaik, the first BJP MLA in Odisha, passed away in Bhubaneswar.

Personal information

- Prasanna Pattnaik was born in a small village, Bhuban, in Dhenkanal District of the Indian State of Odisha (Then Orissa).



Political career

- A three-time MLA from Dhenkanal's Kamakhyanagar constituency, Pattnaik was first elected to the Assembly in 1977 on a Janata Party ticket. However, after the Janata party experiment failed, he joined the BJP. He contested the 1985 elections on a BJP ticket and won for the second time. His victory was historic as BJP did not have a strong base in the state at the time.
- He, however, joined the Janata Dal subsequently and won the 1990 Assembly polls from Kamakhyanagar. Pattnaik returned to the BJP in 2014 and remained a dedicated member until his demise.

Odisha to install sanitary pad vending machines at schools, colleges, and offices soon

Why in the News?

- Odisha Deputy CM Pravati Parida announced new menstrual hygiene initiatives, including installing sanitary pad vending machines in schools, colleges, and offices. The state will also provide public breastfeeding centres.

Details

- On this occasion of World Menstrual Hygiene Day (May 28), the Deputy Chief Minister formally launched the campaign 'Menstruation-Friendly City—Empowered, Inclusive and Aware'.
- The initiative seeks to raise awareness, remove societal stigma, and build inclusive urban environments that cater to the health and dignity of women.

Nari Shakti Conclave

Why in the News?

- Odisha CM Reviews Welfare Project, Prepares for Nari Shakti Conclave in Cuttack on 13th June.

Details

- At Nari Shakti Samabesh, CM Majhi hails women's role in economy; Odisha creates over 16 lakh Lakhpati Didis, targets one Crorepati Didi per panchayat.
- The event was aimed to empower women and build their self-confidence, the chief minister highlighted the government's flagship scheme Subhadra Yojana, describing it as the largest-ever welfare programme for women in Odisha.
- The government has collected data from every village before launching the scheme, special efforts have been made to include women from remote tribal areas.

About Subhadra Yojana

- The Subhadra Yojana is a women-centric welfare initiative launched by the Government of Odisha on September 17, 2024, with the aim of empowering women aged 21 to 60 years through direct financial assistance.
- The scheme is named after Devi Subhadra, the younger sister of Lord Jagannath and Lord Balabhadra, reflecting the state's cultural heritage

Financial Assistance

- **Total Support**: ₹50,000 over a five-year period (2024–2029).
- **Annual Disbursement**: ₹10,000 per year, distributed in two equal installments of ₹5,000 each.
  - **First Installment**: On **International Women's Day** (March 8).
  - **Second Installment**: On **Raksha Bandhan** (August).
- **Debit Card**: Beneficiaries receive a **Subhadra Debit Card** for seamless transactions.
- **Digital Incentive**: Top 100 beneficiaries with the highest digital transactions annually receive an additional ₹500.

Eligibility Criteria

To qualify for the Subhadra Yojana, applicants must:

- **Age**: Be between **21 and 60 years**.
- **Residency**: Be a **permanent resident of Odisha**.
- **Income & Food Security**:
  - Possess a **NFSA/SFSS ration card**.
  - If not, the applicant's **family income should be below ₹2.5 lakh per annum**.
- **Exclusions**:
  - Government employees.
  - Income taxpayers.
  - Individuals receiving **₹1,500/month or more** (₹18,000/year) from other government schemes.

Nayagarh girl shines in National Pageant: Ayani wins Miss Teen Super Globe 2025 title

Why in the News?

- The competition, held in Goa, saw participation from 18 contestants from across India, and Ayani outshone them all to claim the coveted title.



Details

- In a remarkable achievement, Ayani, a young girl from Sunalti village in Nayagarh district, Odisha, has won the prestigious Miss Teen Super Globe 2025 title. The competition, held in Goa, saw participation from 18 contestants from across India, and Ayani outshone them all to claim the coveted title.
- Ayani, daughter of Gopal Chandra Dalai, has been passionate about modeling since childhood.

Solar-powered concrete beads for Industrial water purification

Why in the News?

- NIT Rourkela has developed **solar-powered spherical concrete beads** that serve as an eco-friendly, reusable photocatalyst for wastewater treatment using sunlight.

Key Features

- **Composition**: Concrete beads made from green concrete with coal-fly-ash-derived zeolite. They're coated with iron-doped nano-titania (Fe-nTiO_2) and graphene oxide/silica—creating a potent Photo-Fenton catalyst.
- **Performance:**
  - Over 82% removal of Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD) in simulated industrial wastewater under sunlight
  - Retains over 90% efficiency after 15 reuse cycles, showcasing strong reusability.
- **Energy-Efficient:** Powered solely by natural sunlight—no UV lamps or external energy required, making it ideal for rural and resource-limited settings
- **Sustainable Design:** The beads are easy to deploy in tanks and just as easy to remove later. Their use of industrial fly ash also promotes circular economy practices.

Research Published: Findings appear in the **Journal of Water Processing Engineering**

Patented by NIT Rourkela under two applications:

- Titania & Graphene Oxide–based Photo-Fenton Catalyst
- Green Concrete Beads coated with metal-doped nano-titania & silica.

Target Applications: Particularly relevant for textile, leather, dyes, paint, pharma, metal-processing industries—and also effective for municipal and natural contaminated water bodies

Advantages:

- Low-cost and scalable.
- Does not depend on electricity—crucial for remote areas.
- Simplifies treatment via a drop-in/drop-out bead approach.

NIT Rourkela's innovative concrete-bead photocatalyst delivers robust, sunlight-driven water remediation with excellent performance, durability, and sustainability. It holds great promise for decentralized, low-energy water purification—especially in industrial and under-resourced rural settings.

Mohammad Rafiq

Why in the news

- A prominent political figure in Odisha, **Mohammad Rafiq**, a former BJP MLA passed away on **Friday, June 6, 2025**.



Details

- A prominent political figure in Odisha, **Mohammad Rafiq**, a former BJP MLA, passed

away on **Friday, June 6, 2025**, at the age of 71. He had been receiving treatment at a private hospital in Bargarh following a prolonged illness.

Political contribution

- MLA for Melchamunda constituency (2004–2009).
- BJP Minority Morcha President (Odisha): Successfully led minority outreach programmes.
- Vice-President, Sohela Durga Puja Committee: Active in local cultural and social initiatives.

United Nations Sasakawa Award for Disaster Risk Reduction

Why in the News?

- 2025 United Nations Sasakawa Award for Disaster Risk Reduction, announced at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Geneva (5 June).

Individual Award (shared)



- **Dr. Mrutyunjay Mohapatra** (Director General, India Meteorological Department)
  - Known as the "Cyclone Man of India," he was honoured for revolutionizing tropical cyclone forecasting and enhancing early warning systems across the North Indian Ocean—saving countless lives and supporting agriculture, fisheries, and infrastructure resilience.



- **Prof. Harkunti Pertiwi Rahayu** (Institut Teknologi Sumatra; Chair, Indonesian Disaster Expert Association)
  - Recognized for 28+ years of impactful work—strengthening tsunami early warning, building resilience for coastal communities (especially those with special needs), and integrating science into national policy.

Organizational Award

- Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR)
  - A global network spanning 1,900+ members in 130+ countries, honored for enabling local, inclusive, and science-informed disaster risk reduction. Their work empowers community-led resilience and democratizes access to innovation.

Suchitra Parida

Why in the News?

- Odisha's Suchitra Parida won silver in women's F55 javelin at Paris 2025 World Para Athletics Grand Prix, achieving a personal best of 17.98 meters at Charlety Stadium.



Event Overview (World Para Athletics Grand Prix 2025)

- Venue: Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, New Delhi
- Classification: 8–10 March 2025
- Competition: 11–13 March 2025

India's Performance

- India emerged at the top of the medal table, earning 134 medals across various disciplines

22nd National Awards for e-Governance (NAeG) 2025

Why in the News?

- Suakati Gram Panchayat, located in Banspal block of Keonjhar district, Odisha, has been honoured with the prestigious Jury Award in the newly introduced "Grassroots Level Initiatives for Deepening Service Delivery" category at the 22nd National Awards for e-Governance (NAeG) 2025.

Highlights of Suakati's Achievement

- One of only three local bodies nationwide to receive this Jury Award—alongside Palsana GP (Gujarat) and Lalitpur Municipal Council (Uttar Pradesh).
- Recognised for exemplary use of digital tools and platforms to enhance public service delivery and digital empowerment at the village level.
- Part of a broader awards scheme that honoured other government units—10 Gold and 6 Silver awards were also handed out across six categories, including AI, cybersecurity, and data analytics .
- Gold winners receive ₹10 lakh (trophy + certificate), Silver winners ₹5 lakh—Jury award recipients' prize amounts weren't specified, but the funds are aimed at supporting further digital governance efforts.
- Awards are presented at the National Conference on e-Governance, scheduled this year in Visakhapatnam on 9–10 June 2025.

National Awards for e-Governancet

- Organised by the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions in partnership with DARPG and MeitY, the NAeG awards role model digital governance efforts in both urban and rural institutions .
- The new category for Gram Panchayats was introduced this year to encourage digital transformation at the village level, evaluating initiatives from Block → District → State → National tiers
- Over 145,000 entries from 26 states and union territories were considered, with only a handful making it through to the award stage.

Ranarnab Deb

Why in the News?

- Ranarnab Deb, younger sibling of Gajapati Maharaja Dibyasingha Deb, breathed his last at a private hospital in Puri late on Sunday.



Details

- According to sources, Deb, popularly known as the 'Thata Raja', died due to cardiac arrest at

around 12.30 am after suffering from multiple health issues.

- Dibyasingha Deba, known by the symbolic regnal title as Gajapati Maharaja Divyasingha Deva IV, is the current Gajapati Maharaja and the King of Puri. He is the current head of the house of Bhoi dynasty, who were the hereditary rulers of the ancient realm of Trikalinga (regions of Kalinga, Utkal, Dakshin Koshala), medieval era Khurda Kingdom and the rulers of the Puri Estate, with their current capital located at Puri.

About Bhoi Dynasty

- The Bhoi Dynasty was a medieval Hindu dynasty that ruled parts of eastern India, especially Odisha, from the mid-16th century. It succeeded the Gajapati dynasty after its decline and played an important role in preserving the cultural and religious heritage of Odisha.



Overview of the Bhoi Dynasty

Founded by	Govinda Vidyadhara
Founded in	Around 1541 CE
Capital	Initially Cuttack, later shifted to Puri
Religion	Hinduism
Significance	Maintained the Jagannath Temple traditions and Odisha's religious identity

Key Rulers:

1. Govinda Vidyadhara (Founder)
   - A minister under the last Gajapati king.
   - Took control after the Gajapati dynasty declined.
2. Chakrapratapa
   - Faced resistance and invasions during his reign.
3. Mukunda Deva
   - Last important ruler before the Mughal conquest.
   - Killed in 1568 CE during the Afghan invasion led by Sulaiman Karrani.

Decline:

- In 1568 CE, Odisha was conquered by the Afghan ruler Sulaiman Karrani of Bengal.
- Later, Mughals and then Marathas took control.
- However, the Bhoi lineage continued in Puri as ceremonial rulers (servitors of Lord Jagannath), even under foreign powers.

Legacy:

- The Bhoi dynasty played a vital role in upholding Odia culture and Jagannath worship during political instability.
- Their descendants, known as Rajas of Khurda, later became hereditary custodians of the Jagannath Temple.

Odisha alerts districts against spread of cholera

Why in the News?

- Odisha alerts districts against spread of cholera, 11 dead so far.

Details

- Origin & Spread: The outbreak began as diarrhoea in Jajpur district around June 9, and has since spread to Dhenkanal, Bhadrak, Keonjhar, Kendrapada, Cuttack and other areas
- Cases & Fatalities: Over 2,000 people across at least 7 districts have been affected. Cholera has been confirmed in approximately 10% of tested

samples, and at least 11 deaths have been reported.

Government Response

- State-wide Alert: The Odisha government has placed all 30 districts on high alert, mobilizing local health officials, ASHA/Anganwadi workers, and sanitation teams for door-to-door campaigns and awareness drives.
- Sanitation & Disinfection: Intensified cleaning of water sources across rural areas. Over 100,000 water points were disinfected, and damaged pipelines repaired.
- Containment Measures in Jajpur: Closure of eateries and roadside hotels in affected blocks, sealing of certain water-packing plants, and dedicated hospital wards and mobile health camps deployed
- Central Support: A 14-member central health team, along with experts from ICMR, FSSAI, RMRC, and NHM, is on-site to assist coordination and diagnostics.
- Continuous Monitoring: Daily reviews by state and district-level health officials will continue for at least a week, along with the promotion of urgent hygiene and safe water practice

About Cholera

- Bacterium: Vibrio cholerae, especially strains O1 and O139.
- Transmission: Through ingestion of food or water contaminated with feces from an infected person.
- Prevention
  - Drink safe, treated, or boiled water.
  - Eat freshly cooked food and avoid raw or undercooked seafood.
  - Practice good hand hygiene (especially after using the toilet and before eating).
  - Proper sanitation and waste disposal.
  - Vaccines (oral cholera vaccines like Dukoral, Shanchol, Euvichol-Plus) are available and used in high-risk areas.

Odisha To Launch Jan Poshan Kendras In Every Gram Panchayat

Why in the News?

- In a landmark step towards strengthening food security and addressing nutritional gaps, the Odisha government has unveiled plans to establish Jan Poshan Kendras in every gram panchayat across the state.

Details

- These will offer staple items (rice, wheat, pulses, oils) at subsidised rates, targeting economically weaker sections and middle-class families.
- **Subsidies will be shared jointly by the State and Central governments**, and the project is being designed with support from the World Food Organisation.
- At present, Odisha has over 3.26 crore beneficiaries covered under the National Food Security Act (NFSA). With the introduction of Jan Poshan Kendras, an additional 50 lakh people, particularly from the middle-income bracket, are expected to come under the food security net.
- Officials believe that once fully implemented, the initiative will not only bridge crucial gaps in nutritional support but also enhance community health outcomes, reduce food insecurity, and serve as a buffer against market-driven food price volatility.

Adyanshu Mishra

Why in the News?

- Adyanshu Mishra, hailing from Balasore, clinched the gold medal in the Under-14/15 category at the National Karate Championship held in Goa.

Details

- The National Karate Championship in Goa included an Under-14/15 category for both boys and girls. In this category, young karate athletes competed in various weight divisions and showcased their skills in both Kata (forms) and Kumite (sparring). Goan athletes also participated in the event.

The U-15 CM Trophy 2025 football championship in Rourkela

Why in the News?

- The U-15 CM Trophy 2025—Odisha's inaugural Chief Minister's Trophy for under-15 football—culminated in a nail-biting final at Rourkela's Birsa Munda Athletic Stadium on 8 June. Hosted at the newly commissioned venue with a 9,000-seat capacity.



Key Highlights

- The U-15 CM Trophy 2025 football championship in Rourkela concluded with Bargarh FC winning the title after defeating Bhubaneswar FC 3-2 in the final held at Birsa Munda Stadium.
- Tournament timeline: Launched on 16 January, the championship progressed through district and zonal stages (Sambalpur, Bhubaneswar, Keonjhar, Berhampur), concluding with knockout semis and the final in Rourkela.
- Officials & Guests: Sports Minister Surjyabanshi Suraj and Odisha Football Association President Tankadhar Tripathy graced the final – Suraj emphasized the CM's commitment to grassroots sport, pledging to train the top 100 players found through the tournament
- Legacy & Expansion: Modeled to nurture young talent, future editions may introduce athletics, badminton, kabaddi, kho-kho, and hockey alongside football.

Anupama Swain

Why in the News?

- Odisha Police Constable Anupama Swain has brought glory to the state and nation with her outstanding performance at the 9th Asian Jiu-Jitsu Championship held in Dubai, UAE, from May 23 to June 1, 2025.



Details

- Representing India, Swain clinched a silver medal in the Contact Jiu-Jitsu (under 48 kg) category and a bronze in the Fighting System (under 61 kg) category, showcasing exceptional skill and determination.
- Swain, currently serving with the Bhubaneswar Urban Police District (UPD), has a history of excelling in martial arts. Her medals at the championship in Dubai add to her tally of national and international accolades, making her a role model for aspiring athletes.

Utkal Ranjan Sahoo

Why in the News?

- Utkal Ranjan Sahoo, a 1988-batch IPS officer, has been appointed as the new Chairman of the Rajasthan Public Service Commission (RPSC).



About Utkal Ranjan Sahoo

- 1988 batch IPS, Rajasthan cadre; native of Odisha with an M.Tech in Engineering Geology
- Early postings included Assistant Superintendent of Police in Jodhpur (1991), followed by district SP roles in Sikar, Hanumangarh, Banswara, Sriganganagar, Bhilwara and Dholpur.
- Police Medal (2005) and President's Police Medal (2017) awarded for exemplary service.

Articles Regarding Public Service Commissions

	Article Number	Description
Commission Constitution	315	Establishes PSCs for Union, States
Member Appointment	316	Defines member appointment terms
Member Removal	317	Explains member removal process
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The State Public Service Commission (PSC)

The provisions regarding the composition of SPSC, appointment and removal of its members and the powers and functions of SPSC are provided in Part XIV of the Indian Constitution under Article 315 to Article 323.

- **Appointment of Members**: The Chairman and other members of the SPSC are appointed by the Governor of the State.
- **Term of Office:** A member of the SPSC shall hold office for a term of six years or till the age of 62 years, whichever is earlier:
- **Reappointment:** Any person who has once held the office as a member of a Public Service Commission is ineligible for reappointment to that office.
- **Resignation**: A member of a State Public Service Commission may resign from his/her office by submitting the written resignation to the Governor of the State.
- **Removal/Suspension of Members:** The Chairman or any other member of SPSC shall only be removed from his/her office by order of the President of India.

Eligible Appointments

- Chairman (SPSC): The Chairman of a SPSC shall be eligible for appointment as the Chairman or any other member of the UPSC or SPSC, but not for any other employment either under the Government of India or under the Government of a State.
- Other Members (SPSC): A member of the SPSC (other than the Chairman) shall be eligible for appointment as the Chairman or any other member of the UPSC or the SPSC.

Vikash Vahan

Why in the News?

- A state-wide public outreach initiative launched by Odisha CM Mohan Charan Majhi on June 12, 2025, marking his government's first anniversary.

Details

- It's designed to spread awareness on state and central welfare schemes through specially branded vans called Vikas Vahan (Development Vehicles).

Objectives & Activities

- Raise public awareness: Distribute booklets (like Pragati Prabah), flyers, and screen videos showcasing government achievements
- Public engagement: Organize village-level "chaupals" and on-the-spot registrations for flagship schemes such as PM Awas Yojana, Ayushman Bharat, Subhadra Yojana, and Ayushman Vay Vandana Yojana.
- Reach remote areas: Aimed at bringing scheme details and services to underserved regions .

Srabani Nanda

Why in the News?

- Odisha's ace sprinter Srabani Nanda and her team have clinched Silver in the 4X100m relay at the Asian Athletics Championships-2025 in South Korea.



Details

- Odisha's ace sprinter Srabani Nanda and her team have clinched Silver in the 4X100m relay at the Asian Athletics Championships-2025 in South Korea.
- Nanda, a native of Odisha's Kandhamal district, was the member of an Indian team that had won Bronze in women's 4X100 metre relay event at the 2010 Commonwealth Games in Delhi.

Career Highlights

- Personal Bests:
  - 100 m – 11.36 s (2021, Miramar)
  - 200 m – 23.07 s (2016, Almaty)
- Olympics: Represented India in the women's 200 m at Rio 2016, clocking 23.07 s to qualify
- **Major Medals:**
  - Bronze in 4×100 m relay, Delhi 2010 Commonwealth Games Gold (200 m) & Silver (100 m), South Asian Games 2016
  - Bronze, 4×100 m relay at 2017 Asian Championships (Bhubaneswar)
  - Silver, 4×100 m relay at 2025 Asian Championships in Gumi, South Korea — marking a major comeback

Six Fast-Track Courts for Crimes Against Women

Why in the News?

- The Odisha government announced six fast-track courts for crimes against women in late June 2025.

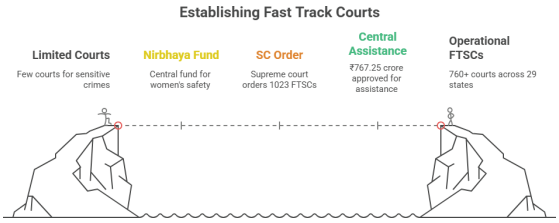
Details

- Following heightened public concern, six fast-track courts were formally announced by the Law Minister as part of efforts to speed up justice in the wake of the Gopalpur case .
- Aim: To **complete trials within 1 month** from charge sheet submission.

About Fast-track courts for crimes against women

- **Fast-track courts (FTCs) for crimes against women in India** are special courts established to ensure **speedy justice** in cases involving **rape, sexual assault, domestic violence, and other gender-based crimes**.
- Fast-track courts were first introduced in **2000** for general cases, but after the **2012 Nirbhaya case**, the focus shifted sharply toward **crimes against women and children**.
- **Objective**: To **dispose of cases in a time-bound manner**, reduce pendency, and ensure justice for survivors without long delays.

- **Scope**: Covers cases like **rape (IPC Section 376), POCSO Act violations**, domestic violence, and **acid attacks**



Challenges

- Lack of infrastructure and staff.
- Backlogs despite fast-track status.
- Poor conviction rates due to delay in investigation and lack of evidence.

Fast-track courts are an essential judicial reform for addressing crimes against women in India. However, their success depends on proper infrastructure, training, and systemic support—not just faster trials.

Niranjan Rath

Why in the News?

- Renowned Odia journalist, editor, and dedicated social worker Niranjan Rath passed away on June 19, 2025, in a private hospital in Cuttack at the age of 78.



About Niranjan Rath

- He served as the respected **Editor and Publisher of "Samaj"**, one of Odisha's leading newspapers, and was the National Secretary (or General Secretary) of the **Loksevak Mandal**, a prominent social organization
- **Contributions**
  - Rath was widely admired for his unwavering commitment to **journalism and social welfare**, devoting his life to public service and bringing attention to social issues through his reporting.

Flagged off 100 electric buses

Why in the News?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi officially **flagged off 100 electric buses** in Odisha as part of a broader ₹18,600 crore infrastructure package during his visit to Bhubaneswar on **June 20, 2025.**

Details

- 100 electric buses under the Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT) network in Bhubaneswar were inaugurated to enhance sustainable urban mobility.
- These buses are part of 105 development projects worth over ₹18,600 crore across sectors like railways, roads, health, and urban transport

PM E-Drive Scheme

- Total outlay: ₹10,900 crore over two years (October 2024 – March 2026) Electric buses allocation: ₹4,391 crore earmarked specifically for 14,028 e-buses in major cities like Delhi, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Kolkata, Mumbai, Pune, and Surat.
- Additional incentives: Funds also support e-two-wheelers, e-three-wheelers, e-trucks, e-ambulances, and a nationwide fast-charging infrastructure

16th Krishi Mela (Krushi Mela)

- It is a national-level agricultural exhibition held in Puri, Odisha at Saradhabali near Jagannath Dham, organized by Shree Shrikhetra Soochana.

- The event features a wide range of sectors: agriculture, animal husbandry, veterinary science, poultry, floriculture, horticulture, aquaculture, fisheries, and more

Highlights & Theme

- Branded as "16th Krishi Fair – 2025," its mission is "Empowering Farmers, Enriching Agriculture," focusing on innovative agricultural practices, farmer welfare, government schemes, and smart farming techniques.
- It promotes self-reliant India through knowledge exchange, showcasing government initiatives and new technologies.

Pattachitra painting

Why in the News?

- Prime Minister Modi did present a **Pattachitra painting from Odisha** to Croatia's President **Zoran Milanović** during his recent visit to Zagreb.



About Patachitra Painting:

- Patachitra, or Pattachitra, is a general term for traditional, cloth-based scroll painting based in the eastern Indian states of Odisha and West Bengal.
- It is believed to have originated as early as the 12th century.
- In the Sanskrit language, "Patta" literally means "cloth" and "Chitra" means "picture".
- It is known for its intricate details as well as the mythological narratives and folktales inscribed in it.
- Most of these paintings depict stories of Hindu deities.
- Pattachitra is one of the ancient artworks of Odisha, originally created for ritual use and as souvenirs for pilgrims to Puri, as well as other temples in Odisha.
- Patachitras are a component of ancient Bengali narrative art, originally serving as a visual device during the performance of a song.
- Making:
  - Pattachitra paintings are made on a special canvas where cotton sarees are layered with tamarind paste and then coated with clay powder.
  - Traditionally, cotton canvas was used; now, both cotton and silk canvas are used for paintings.
  - Once the canvas becomes sturdy, colours are filled in directly without any initial sketches. It is a tradition to complete the borders of the painting first.
  - All colours are obtained from natural sources like lamp soot and powdered conch shells.
  - Each painting can take up to weeks or months to be prepared.

AI-Enabled Water Resource Management Workshop

Why in the News?

- IIT Bhubaneswar and the Odisha government have recently intensified their collaboration to enhance sustainable water management using advanced technologies, particularly artificial intelligence (AI).

Details

- Organizers: State Water Informatics Centre (SWIC) and IIT Bhubaneswar's Research & Entrepreneurship Park.
- Focus: Best practices for data management, digitization, real-time monitoring, and AI-powered decision support in water governance.
- Highlights:

  - Hands-on sessions introducing officials to AI platforms for forecasting and anomaly detection.
  - Applications discussed include smart irrigation tools, weather models, and water-ERP systems like "GOWATER."
- Pilot Projects in Odisha's Capital Region
  - Sites: Phulnakhara, Mendhasala, Darpanpur

IIT Bhubaneswar's Broader Water-Sustainability Projects

- MO-WATER Research Group: Focuses on watershed hydrology, hydrological extreme modeling (floods/droughts), DSS development, and remote-sensing-enhanced water balance modeling specifically for Odisha landscapes.
- Saraswati 2.0: An ITEEU-funded project piloting energy-efficient wastewater treatment technologies on campus (e.g., UASB-Anammox), aiming for scalable decentralized systems.

Kendra Sahitya Akademi for 2025

Why in the News?

- Odia authors **Dr. Rajkishore Padhi** and **Subrat Kumar Senapati** have been honored by the Kendra Sahitya Akademi for 2025.

Details

- **Bal Sahitya Puraskar** (children's literature) went to Dr. Rajkishore Padhi for his Odia poetry collection "Kete Phula Phutichhi". He previously won the Odisha Sahitya Akademi Award in 2015.
- **Yuva Puraskar** (for writers under 35) was awarded to Subrat Kumar Senapati for his Odia short-story collection "Kadamba Bana". He is an assistant professor at SOA University and his work highlights underrepresented communities like transgender and LGBTQ individuals.

Both awards include:

- A cash prize of ₹50,000
- A citation plaque (engraved copper)
- A shawl

The official announcements came after the Sahitya Akademi's executive board meeting held on Wednesday, June 18, 2025

Note:

- The Bal Sahitya Puraskar, established in 2010, honors outstanding children's literature in India.
- The Yuva Puraskar, introduced in 2011, recognizes young writers under 35 for their contributions to any of India's recognized languages.

Vedanta's aluminium smelter project

Why in the News?

- Vedanta's proposed aluminium smelter project in Dhenkanal, Odisha.

Details

- Investment: ₹1.28 lakh crore (~US$ 15.4 billion)
- Facilities Planned:
  - Aluminium smelter with 3 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) capacity
  - 4,900 MW captive power plant to power the complex
  - Jobs Created: Approximately 30,000 direct jobs

Strategic Impact

- Positioned as a flagship deal within a larger wave of industrial investment in Odisha:
  - Part of eight projects totalling ₹1.51 lakh crore
  - Expected to create over 60,000 jobs statewide, boosting sectors like chemicals, steel, textiles, and metal processing.
- Solidifies Odisha's trajectory as a global aluminium hub, alongside Vedanta's existing operations in Jharsuguda.

Why Dhenkanal

- Strategically chosen for its access to coal (Talcher/Ib Valley) and water resources from Hirakud dam region

- Enhances regional infrastructure, potentially transforming Dhenkanal into a major industrial corridor.

Note:

- Vedanta has previously faced environmental scrutiny in Odisha:
- ₹71 crore fine for unauthorized fly-ash disposal from its thermal power operations

Susanta Kumar Nath

Why in the News?

- Susanta Kumar Nath in his capacity as the Director General of Prisons & Correctional Services, Odisha:

Details

- Appointed DG, Prisons & Correctional Services, Odisha on May 2, 2025, following a Home Department notification; he succeeded Arun Ray.



Professional Highlights

- 1993-batch Odisha cadre IPS officer.
- Inspector General (IG), BSF: Deputed to the Border Security Force since September 2020, overseeing roles at Tripura and Delhi HQ.
- DG of Prisons & Correctional Services, Odisha: Assumed charge in May 2025, after extensive service including stints as SP, DIG, ADG SFSL, and IGP for various divisions and CID

Sabyasachi Mohapatra

Why in the News?

- Sabyasachi Mohapatra—the acclaimed Odia filmmaker—was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 5th Star Odia Film Awards, held in Singapore.



About Sabyasachi Mohapatra

- Born August 27, 1950, in Sonepur (Subarnapur), he built a remarkable career directing and producing Odia and Sambalpuri films.
- His key works include Pahada Ra Luha, Shalabudha, Jai Jagannath, Bahudibe Mo Jagabalia, Bou, Bhukha, Sabumayare Bai, and Jhilli—all widely acclaimed by audiences.
- National recognition includes the National Film Award for Best Feature Film in Odia, received for Pahada Ra Luha, and the Kalinga Ratna honor in 2016.

About the Awards Event

- The ceremony in Singapore marked the second international edition of the Star Odia Film Awards (the first being in Dubai), spotlighting excellence across 32 categories.
- Other notable winners that evening included:
  - Best Film: Power
  - Best Director: Ashok Pati (for Power)
  - Best Actor/Actress: Babusaan & Elina Samantray

Sangita Nayak

Why in the News?

- Sangita Nayak recently won the **Mrs. India Worldwide 2025** crown in Dubai. Along with the main title, she also earned the subtitle **Mrs. Fashion Icon.**



Details

- The competition featured around 300 contestants; 25 advanced to the semi-finals, narrowing to the top 5, with Sangita ultimately taking the crown.
- Judges evaluated contestants on their runway walk, attire, communication, confidence, and interactions with media and society.

Saswata Mishra

Why in the News?

- IAS officer Saswata Mishra of the 1996 batch has been appointed as the Principal Secretary to Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi.



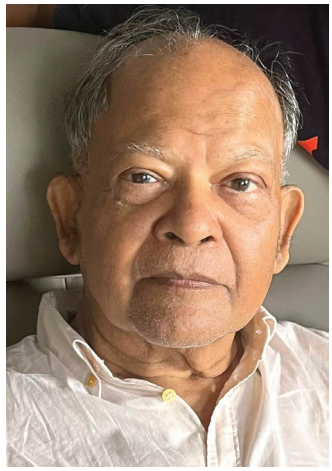
Details

- He'll retain his existing roles as Finance Secretary and Chairman of the Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation of Odisha (IDCO) while taking on this new position.
- The appointment was made official through a notification released by the General Administration & Public Grievance Department around **June 29–30, 2025**, filling the vacancy left in May after Nikunja Dhal moved to a central deputation.

Dr. Sureswar Mohanty

Why in the News?

- Prof. (Dr.) Sureswar Mohanty is a distinguished luminary in Indian neurosurgery and neurosciences—recently honored with the 2025 Lifetime Achievement Award by the Neurological Society of India (NSI).



Accolades & Leadership

- Received multiple national awards: ICMR, MCI, NSI, NAMS, and the prestigious Dr B.C. Roy Award.
- Held leadership roles, including President of the UP Neurosciences Society and Neurotrauma Society of India.
- Served as visiting professor at top international centers—London, Moscow's Burdenko Institute, and Cleveland Clinic (USA.

About the NSI Lifetime Achievement Award

- The Neurological Society of India, founded in 1951, is the country's apex body for neurologists and neurosurgeonsIts.
- Lifetime Achievement Award, inaugurated in 2008, recognizes senior life members (usually above 75) for decades of impactful contributions to neurology across India.
- This honor places Prof. Mohanty among the most revered figures in Indian neuroscience, following predecessors like Dr P.N. Tandon and Dr Noshir Wadia

MITS Institute of Professional Studies (MIPS)

Why in the News?

- MITS Institute of Professional Studies (MIPS), Rayagada, has been honored with the **Outstanding Agricultural Institute Award** at the prestigious ET Education Excellence Awards 2025.

Details

- Award: Outstanding Agricultural Institute at the ET Education Excellence Awards 2025
- Organiser: The Economic Times
- Venue & Date: Ceremony held at The Leela Convention Centre, New Delhi, in June 2025

Compensation for those affected by wild animal attacks

Why in the News?

- Odisha has significantly increased its compensation for those affected by wild animal attacks.

Details

What's Changed?

Incident	Previous Ex-Gratia	New Ex-Gratia
Death from wild animal attack	₹6 lakh	₹10 lakh
House damaged	–	New house under Antyodaya Gruha Yojana or equivalent monetary aid
Damage to kitchen, paddy storage, goat shed	–	₹3,000
Compound wall damage	–	₹5,000/m up to ₹25,000 total

Sattwik Swain

Why in the News?

- He won the 38th National U-9 Chess Championship, Gurugram, June 2025.

National & International Accolades

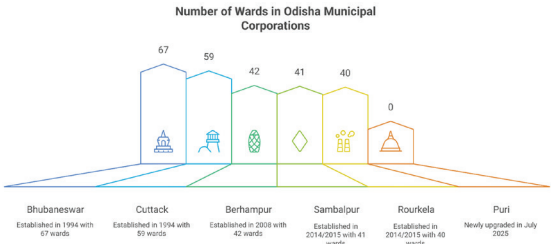
- Gold – 38th National U-9 Chess Championship, Gurugram, June 2025 (10/11, 1875 FIDE rating).
- Silver – FIDE World Cadet U-8 Championship, Montesilvano, Italy, Nov 2024, finishing unbeaten (1787 → ~1882 rating gain).
- Bronze – FIDE Chess World Cup U-8 Open, Batumi, Georgia, July 2024



Odisha's 6th Municipal Corporation

Why in the News?

- Puri has just been officially upgraded to Odisha's 6th Municipal Corporation, bringing the total to six including Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Sambalpur, Berhampur, and Rourkela.



Details

- Formal announcement: CM Mohan Charan Majhi declared the upgrade on July 4, 2025, with expansion to include 7–10 adjacent Gram Panchayats from Puri Sadar and Brahmagiri blocks.
- Reasoning: To meet the needs of a surging pilgrim/ tourist population (especially during Rath Yatra), and to deliver more efficient civic amenities like roads, water, drainage, etc.
- Vision 2036: The government aims to develop Puri as a leading spiritual and tourist hub with a world-class museum, library, research centre, and auditorium as part of the new municipal setup.

Urban governance in Odisha

- Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) are civic administrative units in towns and cities, governed under the Odisha Municipal Act, 1950 and Odisha Municipal Corporation Act, 2003. ULBs are mainly divided into three categories based on population size and urbanization status.

ULB Types and Characteristics

Type of ULB	Population Criteria	Total Number (2025)	Examples
Municipal Corporations	Above 100,000, special importance	6	Bhubaneswar, etc.
Municipalities	40,000 to 100,000	54	Balasore, etc.
Notified Area Councils	5,000 to 40,000, rural to urban	113	Sunabeda, etc.

Governance Structure:

- Municipal Corporations → Headed by a Mayor and Municipal Commissioner.
- Municipalities → Headed by a Chairperson and Executive Officer.
- NACs → Headed by a Chairperson and Executive Officer.

Powers and Responsibilities:

- Urban planning & land use
- Water supply, drainage, sewerage
- Solid waste management
- Slum improvement and urban poverty alleviation
- Roads, street lighting, and public amenities
- Health and sanitation
- Birth and death registration
- Promotion of cultural, educational, and social activities.

Shristi Upadhya

Why in the News?

- Odisha's Shristi Wins Second Medal In Senior National Aquatics In Bhubaneswar.



Details

- Odisha's Shristi Upadhyay won her second medal in the 78th National Aquatic Championships.
- The 23-year-old finished third in the women's 200m Butterfly Event at Kalinga Stadium's Aquatics Centre. Directo.
- Senior National Aquatic Championships 2025 (Bhubaneswar – June 24, 2025)
  - Gold in the 100 m Butterfly—Shristi claimed the top podium spot in this thrilling event
  - Bronze in the 200 m Butterfly, securing her second medal at the meet.

Pyari Xaxa

Why in the News?

- Pyari Xaxa won Indian Women's Football Player of the Year.

Details

- FPAI Women's Indian Player of the Year 2025: The Football Players' Association of India honored Pyari Xaxa as the Best Women's Player at their awards in Shillong on June 29, 2025.
- AIFF Emerging Woman Footballer of the Year 2015: She earned the inaugural award after breaking into the national team at just 18.
- Indian Football Fans' Player of the Year 2020–21: Recognized as a fan favorite for her consistent impact.

Personal life

- Pyari hails from Sundargarh, Odisha, and plays club football for Odisha FC Women while also representing the Odisha Police team in domestic competitions.



Shri Jagannath Museum & Library Complex

Why in the News?

- Odisha's Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi announced a new world-class museum, research centre, and library in Puri dedicated to Jagannath culture, scheduled to open in the near future.

Details

- Comprehensive exhibits on temple history, deities (wooden craftsmanship), major festivals like Ratha Yatra, and temple rituals through paintings, models, plaques, and multimedia.
- A 300-seat auditorium for daily light-and-sound shows.
- A large open-air stage for cultural events.
- Research centre with an e-library and literary resources in Odia, Hindi, English, and Bengali

Goals

- Cultural Awareness: Bridge the educational gap among young visitors who may be unfamiliar with Jagannath traditions
- Boost Tourism: By offering a richer, longer, and more meaningful experience in Puri, the project aims to elevate tourism and local economic activity
- Spiritual Engagement: The complex will deepen devotees' connection with the temple through engaging storytelling and heritage interpretation

ECoR Yatra app

Why in the News?

- The ECoR Yatra app is a free Android application launched by East Coast Railway, specifically for pilgrims traveling to Puri for the Rath Yatra festival in 2025.

Details

- Real-time Train & Platform Info : Live status, arrival/departure timings and platform details from NTES and the national train enquiry system I

- Special & Regular Train Schedules : Full list of Rath Yatra special trains (June 25–July 7), plus regular service timetables
- Accommodation Listings : Details of IRCTC retiring rooms, tourist huts, mela camps and temporary lodgings
- Ticketing Support : Info on special counters, UTS unreserved tickets, and PNR/seat availability checks
- Safety & Amenities Guide : Highlights drinking water booths, medical aid, wheelchairs, misting fans, e-catering, helpline numbers and crowd management guidelines
- Digital Literacy Tutorials : Video demos on using ATVMs and UTS mobile for ticketing
- Multilingual UI : Designed to assist users from various regions across India

Baghuni (English title: Dance Like a Tiger)

Why in the News?

- The Odia-language film Baghuni (English title: Dance Like a Tiger) made a striking debut at the 78th Cannes Film Festival — not as part of the competition, but via its official first-look motion poster unveiled at the India Pavilion.

Details

- It's the first-ever international co-production from Odisha.

What Baghuni is about:

- A powerful women's empowerment narrative: a young woman challenges patriarchal norms through a traditional "Tiger dance" (Bagha Nacha), rooted in regions of Odisha like Binka, Sonepur, Brahmapur, and Ganjam.
- Directed and co-produced by Jitendra Mishra, starring Sabyasachi Mishra, with a team of nationally award-winning technicians and writers
- The multilingual film, featuring Odia, Sambalpuri, Kosli, and Hindi, is scheduled to shoot in Odisha and London later this year

Cultural & Industry Impact:

- Showcases Odisha's cultural richness and storytelling on a global stage
- Aimed at fostering international collaborations and drawing attention to regional Indian cinema

Top medical colleges in India for 2025

All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Bhubaneswar

- 1 in Odisha — the top medical college in the state
- National Recognition:
  - Ranked 12th among medical colleges in India in the 2025 India Today–MDRA survey
  - Recognized as the 2nd best emerging medical college in India in 2025
  - Placed 15th nationally in NIRF 2024 for Medical Colleges, making it the 3rd best AIIMS after Delhi and Rishikesh.

Medical Institute Ranking

Institute	Rank	Score	Description
AIIMS New Delhi	1	94.46	Top NIRF ranking
PGIMER Chandigarh	2	80.83	Postgraduate & research hub
CMC Vellore	3	75.11	Top private institute
NIMHANS Bengaluru	4	71.92	Mental health & neurosciences
JIPMER Puducherry	5	70.74	Fifth position
SGPGIMS Lucknow	6	70.07	Sixth position
IMS-BHU Varanasi	7	69.54	Seventh position
Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham Coimbatore	8	68.8	Eighth position
KMC Manipal	9	67.42	Ninth position
Madras Medical College Chennai	10	64.12	Tenth position

16th Agriculture Leadership Conclave

Why in the News?

- Odisha was officially recognized as the Best State for Agriculture at the 16th Agriculture Leadership Conclave, held on 9–10 July 2025 in New Delhi.

Details

- The accolade, known as the Agriculture Leadership Award, was presented by the Agriculture Today Group, with the award accepted by Odisha's Deputy Chief Minister and Agriculture Minister, Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo.

Why Odisha Topped the Rankings

- Outstanding agricultural performance: In the fiscal year 2024–25, the agriculture and allied sectors contributed approximately 19% to Odisha's Gross State Value Added (GSVA), with a robust 3.3% growth—outperforming national averages over the past five years
- Impressive crop yields: Odisha produced 115.39 lakh tonnes of rice (equal to 174.83 lakh tonnes paddy) in 2023–24, ranking as the 4th-largest rice supplier to the FCI
- Mechanization & farm power: The state registered India's highest tractor sales last year and achieved a farm power input of 2.60 kW/ha in 2024–25, with ambitions to reach 3.5 kW/ha by 2036 .
- Horticulture excellence: Odisha exported 121.82 MT of horticultural products—including dragon fruit, cashews, mangoes, and vegetables—to markets in the UAE, Qatar, UK, and Europe.
- Diverse crop leadership: The state leads India in sweet potato and paddy straw mushroom, ranks 2nd in fruits and brinjal/cabbage, and stands in the top 5 for several other produce categories

The award reflects Odisha's well-rounded agricultural strategy, encompassing innovation, sustainability, farmer empowerment, and rural infrastructure development. The initiative aims to set Odisha as a national model for inclusive and climate-resilient agriculture.

Manmohan Samal

Why in the News?

- On 8 July 2025, Samal was re-elected unopposed for his fourth term as state party president.



Details

- Under his leadership, the BJP achieved a historic first-ever victory in the 2024 Odisha Assembly elections.
- He was first elected in 1999, served until 2004, and then reappointed in March 2023.

A natural birth of a 5.5 kg (around 12.1 lb) baby girl in Odisha

Why in the News?

- a natural birth of a 5.5 kg (around 12.1 lb) baby girl in Jagatsinghpur, Odisha.

Details

- Mother: 18-year-old Saraswati Nayak from Naugaon; she herself weighs about 114 kg.
- Delivery: Took place on July 10 at Jagatsinghpur District Headquarters Hospital (DHH), without a Caesarean. The local health center referred her to DHH when labor began.
- Babies weighing over 5 kg (called macrosomia) are usually delivered via C-section due to health risks. This case is medically exceptional both for its weight and natural birth outcome.

Srikant Das

Why in the News?

- Srikant Das, a renowned Odia singer from Cuttack, passed away on July 13, 2025, at the age of 78.



Details

- Trained under eminent gurus such as Akshaya Mohanty and classical master Adi Narayan Rao; continued music as lifelong passion alongside his banking career at UCO Bank from 1973 to 2006.
- Cultural impact: Remembered fondly in Odisha's musical circles.

Uganda Para Badminton International 2025

Why in the News?

- Odisha's contingent made a stellar showing at the Uganda Para Badminton International 2025, held from July 1–6 in Kampala, delivering a total of four medals on the global stage.

Medal-Winning Performances

Subhrajeet Maharana

- Silver – Men's Singles SL4
  - Defeated Uganda's Julius Obura 21-10, 21-7 in the semifinals; conceded a walkover in the final against Peru's Renzo Diquez Bances Morales.
- Bronze – Men's Doubles SL3–SL4
  - Partnered with Pujyam Mishra to reach the semifinals; lost 21-16, 21-19 to the Peruvian duo.

Additional Bronze Medals

- The state also secured two more bronze medals through Bibhasindhu Barik and Nurul Hossain Khan, adding depth to the medal tally.



Junior National Wushu Championship

Why in the News?

- Sonakshi Mohanty of Odisha clinched the gold medal in the girls' Taolu – Wingchun category at the 24th Junior National Wushu Championship, held July 1–6, 2025 at Gachibowli Indoor Stadium, Hyderabad.



Details

- Odisha Medal Summary – 24th Junior National Wushu (Odisha contingent: 39 athletes)
  - Gold: Sonakshi Mohanty (Girls Taolu – Wingchun)
  - Silver: Sadhana Majhi (Girls Taolu – Duilian), Samridhi (Girls Taolu – Duilian), Romesh Munda (Boys Sanda – 48 kg)
  - Bronze: Ayush Anshuman Sahu (Boys Flexible Weapon), Rahul Ghadei (Boys Nan Type), Unnati Prasad (Girls Sanda 52 kg)

Odisha finished with a total of seven medals

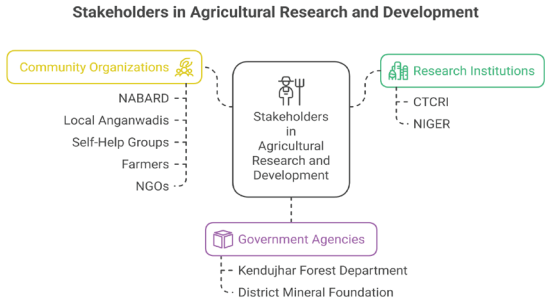
- 1 Gold,

- 3 Silver
- 3 Bronze

The Indradhanu Enriched Food Initiative

Why in the News?

- The initiative was formally launched on June 19, 2025, in Keonjhar district, focusing initially on tribal-dominated blocks such as Banspal, Telkoi, and Harichandanpur, where malnutrition levels are notably higher.



Why Tubers & Indigenous Crops?

- Nutritional value: Tubers are rich in energy, vitamins, and minerals.
- Cultural fit: These crops are traditional staples of tribal diets and can enhance food acceptance and sustainability.

Key Features & Future Plans

- Techno-Incubation Centre (TIC) to be established in Keonjhar for product development and processing support.
- Active participation from local SHGs, Anganwadis, and farmers to ensure ground-level engagement.
- Emphasis on making the initiative locally empowered and scalable.

Goals & Vision

- Combat child malnutrition in tribal clusters through enriched food interventions.
- Foster nutrition security using regionally appropriate and culturally acceptable food sources.
- Leverage community-driven mechanisms to sustain change over the long term.

Toll-Free Anti-Naxal Helpline

Why in the News?

- Odisha is set to launch a toll-free helpline to report Maoist/Naxal activity. This initiative ensures callers' anonymity and offers monetary rewards for credible information.

Details

- Although Odisha's exact reward amounts aren't public yet, similar programs exist elsewhere. For instance, Chhattisgarh's new surrender-and-informant policy (announced in March 2025) includes:
  - Rs 10 lakh compensation to families of informants killed during anti-Maoist operations (up from Rs 5 lakh).
  - Rs 5 lakh for informants permanently disabled—previously Rs 3 lakh.

123rd Annual Convocation of Utkal Sahitya Samaj

Why in the News?

- The convocation took place recently at the Centennial Building in Cuttack, organized by Utkal Sahitya Samaj.



Details

- A major highlight was the presentation of the prestigious Utkal Ratna Award to Biswabhusan Harichandan, former Governor of Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, in recognition of his contributions to public life and Odia literature.

About Utkal Sahitya Samaj

- Utkal Sahitya Samaj is the oldest and most prestigious literary and cultural institution in Odisha, headquartered in Cuttack.
- Established on 7 May 1903, it evolved from the earlier "Alochana Sabha" (founded in 1895), and was aimed at promoting Odia literature and fostering interest in the Odia language.

Satyam Bishoyi

Why in the News?

- Satyam Bishoyi, representing Odisha, secured a bronze medal in shooting at the 54th KVS National Sports Meet, which was held in Ferozepur, Punjab, from July 15 to 19, 2025.

Details

- The KVS 54th national meet ran from July 15 to 19, 2025 and included disciplines like shooting, athletics, swimming, taekwondo, judo, archery, etc. Several outstanding young athletes earned medals and recognition during this event.

The first dedicated textile conclave in Odisha

Why in the News?

- The first dedicated textile conclave in Odisha—branded "O-TEX" (Odisha Textile and Apparel Conclave)—was held on July 25, 2025 in Bhubaneswar.
- The Odisha government officially launched six new textile and apparel parks during the inaugural Odisha TEX 2025.
- Based on district-level investment focus and future cluster expansion plans, these parks are expected to be located in six major textile hubs across Odisha:
  - Balangir
  - Keonjhar
  - Sambalpur
  - Jagatsinghpur
  - Ganjam
  - Cuttack

Key outcomes

- Investment Intentions: The conclave saw 33 MoUs signed, totaling investment proposals of ₹7,808 crore, targeting over 53,300 new jobs in the textile-apparel sector.
- Infrastructure Launch: Two textile and footwear parks with plug-and-play facilities were unveiled at Jagatsinghpur and Bhadrak.
- Annual Event Announcement: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi declared O-TEX will be held every year, serving as a dedicated platform to showcase Odisha's rich handloom heritage and ambitions in modern and technical textiles.
- Technological Commitment: The event aimed to drive new textile clusters and focus on technical textiles, garment automation, and wearable technology solutions.
- Subsidy Support: Enhanced employment subsidies were unveiled under the Odisha Technical Textile & Apparel Policy 2022—₹6,000/month for male workers and ₹7,000/month for female workers.

Welfare package for sanitation workers

Why in the News?

- On July 26, 2025, Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi announced a comprehensive welfare package for sanitation workers—particularly those engaged in cleaning sewerage and septic tanks—under the Garima scheme.

Details

- ₹10 lakh life insurance cover for sanitation workers involved in hazardous duties, including sewer/septic tank cleaning.

- ₹30 lakh compensation for families in the event of the worker's death while on duty.
- Additional support measures include the provision of mobile phones to key sanitation workers, and allocation of pucca houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) in urban areas.
- These initiatives are part of a national workshop titled "Transforming Core Sanitation Work – Safety, Dignity & Inclusion", held at the Lok Seva Bhavan Convention Center in Bhubaneswar.
- The scheme is expected to benefit around 20,000 sanitation workers across urban Odisha, with over 10,000 workers already identified in 115 urban local bodies under this programme.

2025 World University Games in Germany

Why in the News?

- In the men's 4×100 m relay, the Indian quartet comprised three sprinters from Odisha—Animesh Kujur, Lalu Prasad Bhoi, and Dondapati Jayram—alongside Manikanta Hobildar (Services). They won the bronze medal, clocking 38.89 seconds.
- Bhoi, Kujur, and Jayram are originally from Odisha, making this relay medal a direct Odisha contribution to India's overall tally.

Details

- India finished 20th overall, securing 12 medals — 2 gold, 5 silver, and 5 bronze
- Athletics accounted for five medals, including:
  - Silver by Ankita Dhyani (women's 3000 m steeplechase),
  - Silver by Seema (women's 5000 m),
  - Silver by Praveen Chitravel (men's triple jump),
  - Bronze in the men's 4×100 m relay that included Odisha athletes
- Other medals came from archery (golds and silvers), badminton (bronze in mixed team), and tennis (bronze by Vaishnavi Adkar).

Note: Odisha was a major contributor to India's team: 42 athletes overall hailed from the state, second only to Punjab, with 40 of them representing KIIT University alone.



Online sand art certificate courses on the SWAYAM platform

Why in the News?

- IGNOU has recently collaborated with Padma Shri awardee Sudarsan Pattnaik to launch two online sand art certificate courses on the SWAYAM platform.



Course Title	Duration	Mode & Platform	Key Topics
Introduction to Sand Art	12 weeks	Online via SWAYAM	Basics of sand sculpture: tool selection, sand & water ratios, compaction, site planning
Principles & Formats of Sand Art	(~6 weeks or included module)	Online via SWAYAM	Creative formats, large-scale themes, cultural storytelling through sand.

National Conference on Good Governance Practices

Why in the News?

- National Conference on Good Governance Practices held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha on July 17–18, 2025.

Details

- Organisers: Jointly hosted by the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DARPG) under the Government of India, and the Government of Odisha.
- Inaugurated by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Union Minister of State Dr. Jitendra Singh (Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions).
- Theme: "Good Governance Practices" featuring award-winning initiatives under the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration.
- Highlighted Innovative Digital Tools: The conference highlighted Centralised Public Grievance Redressal and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) and Digital Life Certificate (also known as Jeevan Pramaan) have become global models for innovative governance.
- CPGRAMS: It is a 24x7 online platform for citizens to lodge grievances related to public service delivery.
  - Launched by the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DARPG) under the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, it connects all central ministries and state departments. '
- Jeevan Pramaan: It is a biometric-enabled digital service launched in 2014 to simplify life certificate submission for pensioners. Instead of appearing in person, pensioners can now digitally verify their identity through a mobile app or online platform.

Odisha recently won two prestigious awards in the tourism sector

Why in the News?

- Odisha recently won two prestigious awards in the tourism sector, highlighting its growing prominence in India's travel and tourism landscape.

Details

- Best State for Promoting Eco-Tourism – India International Travel Mart (IITM), Chennai:
  - Odisha was recognized for its outstanding efforts in promoting eco-tourism initiatives, sustainable travel, and conservation of natural heritage. The award was presented at the IITM platform, showcasing Odisha's successful eco-tourism models like nature camps, Chilika Lake initiatives, and tribal tourism circuits.
- Best State for Cultural Tourism – Another National Tourism Recognition Platform (likely Ministry of Tourism or associated event):
  - Odisha received this award for its vibrant cultural offerings, including heritage monuments like Konark Sun Temple, Jagannath Temple, classical dance forms like Odissi, and major festivals such as Rath Yatra. This recognition strengthens its image as a leading cultural tourism destination in India.

Kalinga Ratna Award – 2024

Why in the News?

- On July 15, 2025, during the 600th birth anniversary celebrations of the Odia poet Adikabi Sarala Das held in Cuttack, Odisha, President Droupadi Murmu presented the Kalinga Ratna Award-2024 to Union Education Minister Shri Dharmendra Pradhan.

Details

- The event was organized by Sarala Sahitya Sansad, the literary body in Odisha that confers this annual honour to distinguished individuals of Odia origin for excellence in literature, culture, education, or public service.
- In the same ceremony, writer Bijaya Nayak was awarded the Sarala Samman (a literary award).

Kalinga Ratna Award-2024

- Established in 2007 by Sarala Sahitya Sansad, the award honours Odisha natives who have made national or international contributions in fields such as literature, education, public service, or culture.
- Past laureates include eminent figures like Justice Ranganath Mishra, Biswabhusan Harichandan, Pratibha Ray, and others noted for their outstanding work across different domains.

Adikabi Sarala Das

- Adikabi Sarala Dasa (originally Siddheswara Parida) is revered as the Adi Kabi or First Poet of Odia literature. Flourishing in the 15th century CE, he was the first scholar to author major literary works in the Odia language.



- Early Life
  - Born in the village of Kanakavati Patana (modern-day Kanakapura) in the Jagatsinghpur district of Odisha, Sarala belonged to a farming family of the Chasa community Legend holds that as a youthful Siddheswara ploughed local fields while singing, the goddess Sarala was so moved by his voice that she endowed him with the poetic gift—leading to his name Sarala Dasa, meaning "servant of Sarala"
- Historical Context
  - He lived under the reign of the Gajapati King Kapilendra Deva (1435–67 AD), and evidence suggests he even served in the royal army, experiences from which infused his epic writings.

Major Works

- Sarala Mahabharata – a regional retelling of the Sanskrit Mahabharata spanning 18 parvas, enriched with local folklore, original episodes, and vivid descriptions of Odisha's culture and geography (e.g. Puri, Konark, Bhubaneswar).
- Vilanka Ramayana – an innovative version of the Rama–Ravana conflict, focusing on Ravana's thousand-headed Vishwanath avatar.
- Chandi Purana – an Odia rendering of the story of Goddess Durga and Mahishasura, with meaningful adaptations and folk flavor
- Laxmi Narayana Vachanika – another devotional work attributed to Sarala, though less widely cited than his epics
- He composed in Dandi chand, a rhythmic folk-inspired metre characterized by variable line lengths, but similar end-sounds—a hallmark of the local oral traditions like Ghoda-nacha and puppet dance narratives.

16th Agriculture Leadership Conclave 2025

Why in the News?

- Odisha bags Agriculture Leadership Award as best state in farming.

Details

- Odisha received the Agriculture Leadership Award (alternatively referred to as "Best State Award")

at this conclave, organized by the Agriculture Today Group.

- The honour was accepted by Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo, who dedicated it to Odisha's farmers, calling them the true "annadatas" of the state

Agricultural Growth & Productivity

- In FY 2023–24, Odisha produced 115.39 lakh metric tonnes of rice (~174.83 lakh tonnes of paddy), making it the fourth-largest rice supplier to the FCI.
- Agriculture and allied sectors contributed about 19 % to GSVA and employed nearly half of the state's workforce (≈ 49 %) in FY 2024–25, growing at a rate of 3.3 %, outpacing national trends.
- Odisha ranks 2 in fruit production, 1 in sweet potato and paddy straw mushroom production, 2 in brinjal and cabbage, 3 in cashews, and 5 in watermelon, cauliflower, okra, tomato, lemon, and coconut nationally.

Mukhya Mantri Bayu Swasthya Seva

Why in the News?

- After a pause of over a year and a half, the scheme's four-day mega camp resumed in Nabarangpur from July 7–10, 2025, providing care to 938 pre-screened patients.

Details

- During this camp, senior and consultant doctors performed echocardiography, gastrointestinal endoscopy, diagnostics, surgeries and treated conditions in urology, nephrology, neurology, endocrinology—all free of charge.

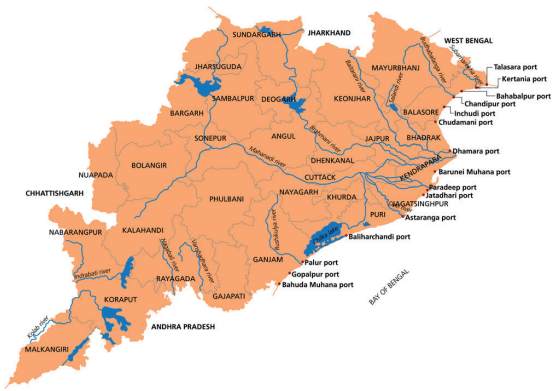
About Mukhya Mantri Bayu Swasthya Seva

- Mukhya Mantri Bayu Swasthya Seva or Air Health Services—is a flagship initiative by the Government of Odisha, launched on December 20–21, 2021 by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik.
- Its purpose is to deliver free super-specialty healthcare to remote, tribal and underserved districts by airlifting teams of specialist doctors and evacuating critical patients if needed, all at state expense

The Kalinga Maritime Museum

Why in the News?

- The Kalinga Maritime Museum is currently under construction at Paradip Port, which is located in Jagatsinghpur district.



Details

- Paradip Port is a major seaport on India's east coast, situated where the Mahanadi River meets the Bay of Bengal. It lies in Jagatsinghpur district and has served as Odisha's only major port since its commissioning in the 1960s.
- The Kalinga Maritime Museum project officially began with a groundbreaking ceremony in July 2025, aimed at preserving and showcasing the rich marine heritage of the ancient Kalinga region.

Major Port:

- Paradip Port: Located on the east coast, it is a natural, deep-water port and the only major port in Odisha.

Non-Major Ports:

- Dhamra Port: A privately-owned, all-weather port with deep drafts and direct berthing facilities, according to Adani Ports.
- Gopalpur Port: A deep sea port developed on the Bay of Bengal, with plans for expansion.

- Other potential sites: The Odisha government has identified other locations for non-major ports, including Bichitrapur (Talashari), Subarnarekha Mouth (Kirtania), Bahabalpur, and Chandipur, all in Balasore district,

Sabari Sanskrutika Bhawan

Why in the News?

- A newly constructed short-stay facility inaugurated on 3 July 2025 by Odisha CM Mohan Charan Majhi, located in the IRC Village area of Bhubaneswar.

Details

- It was built by the Sabari Sanskrutika Parishad to serve residents from tribal-dominated districts: Koraput, Rayagada, Nabarangpur, and Malkangiri.
- State leadership allocated ₹2 crore for further infrastructure development and upgrades.
- Positioned as part of the broader "36 for 36" initiative, targeting inclusive development and tribal empowerment by 2036 — Odisha's centenary year.

Odisha's Bridge Maintenance & Safety Audit Policy

Why in the News?

- The Government of Odisha has recently formally launched a "Bridge Maintenance Policy", initiating a framework for annual safety audits of bridges.

Details

- Under this policy, government engineers will be responsible for conducting field inspections and submitting condition reports each year.
- The approach aligns with national standards such as IRC:SP:88-2019 and IRC:SP:112-2017, which outline safe bridge design, maintenance, and quality assurance procedures.

The first-ever Maintenance, Repair & Overhaul (MRO) facility in Odisha

Why in the News?

- The first-ever Maintenance, Repair & Overhaul (MRO) facility in Odisha is being established at Biju Patnaik International Airport (BBI), Bhubaneswar.

Significances

- Supports the New Destination Policy, which has already operationalised 13 new international and domestic flight routes, including direct flights to Dubai and Abu Dhabi, boosting Odisha's global connectivity and diaspora linkages.
- Reinforces expansion of regional air connectivity under the UDAN scheme, enabling operationalisation of airstrips at Jeypore, Rourkela, Utkela, Rangeilunda and others.
- Designed to reduce operational costs and maintenance delays, create high-skilled jobs, and catalyse Odisha's ambition to become an aviation hub in eastern India.

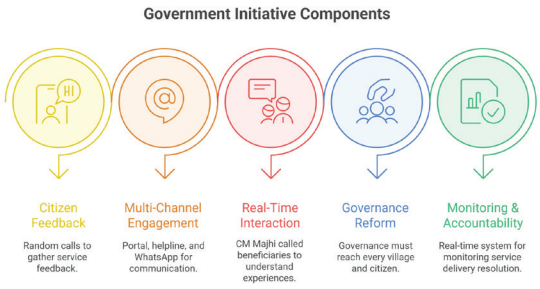
Ama Shasana

Why in the News?

- Ama Shasana, which translates to "Our Governance," is a recent public service initiative launched by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi of Odisha.

Ama Shasana

- The goal of the initiative is to strengthen transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement in state governance.



Significances

- **Empowerment through Voice:** Citizens now have a direct line to the highest office, enabling them to report problems or provide feedback with ease.
- **Responsive Governance**: Rapid feedback and proactive outreach can help identify and resolve systemic issues quickly.
- **Inclusive Outreach**: By using multiple contact channels, the initiative extends access across demographics—from students to rural citizens.

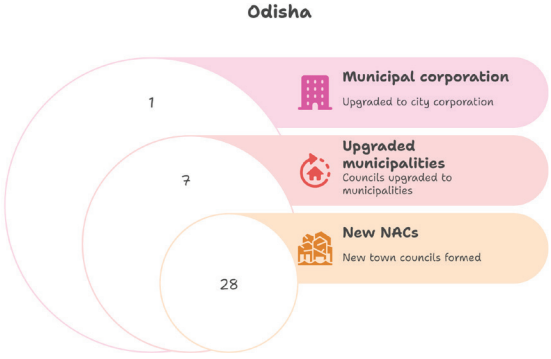
Odisha government announced new notified area council and municipalities

Why in the News?

- On 31 August 2025, the Odisha government officially announced the creation of 16 new Notified Area Councils (NACs) and the upgradation of 7 existing NACs into municipalities, along with the elevation of Puri from municipality to municipal corporation status.

Details

- **Seven Newly Upgraded Municipalities (formerly NACs):**
  - Karanjia
  - Boudh
  - Bhanjanagar
  - Aska
  - Chhatrapur
  - Kabisuryanagar
  - Polasara
  - Also, Puri was elevated to a Municipal Corporation.



- **Sixteen Newly Notified Area Councils (NACs):**
  - Balangir District: Loisingha
  - Bargarh District: Sohela
  - Cuttack District: Badamba, Narasinghpur, Salepur
  - Dhenkanal District: Gondia
  - Ganjam District: Jagannath Prasad, Patrapur
  - Jajpur District: Chandikhole
  - Kalahandi District: Narla, Jayapatna
  - Khurda District: Tangi
  - Koraput District: Borigumma

– Mayurbhanj District: Kaptipada, Jashipur, Rasgovindpu

Significances

- **Urban Enhancement: T**hese changes aim to strengthen urban governance and bring systematic civic improvements to rapidly growing semi-urban areas.
- **Improved Services:** With a structured urban body in place, these regions should benefit from better infrastructure—roads, water, sanitation, street lighting, etc.
- **Time-bound Goals:** The Chief Minister emphasized goals like achieving pothole-free roads and covered drains across ULBs by April 2026, urging local bodies to self-certify compliance.
- **Citizen-Centric Initiatives:** The government launched schemes like the 'Sahayog' program (in collaboration with Tata Steel Foundation), a toll-free grievance number 1929 ('Sahar Saathi'), and a WhatsApp ticketing facility for 'Aama Bus' services with fare discounts to enhance public engagement.

Odisha ranks 5th in India-India Electric Mobility Index (IEMI) 2024

Why in the News?

- Odisha is making significant strides in green mobility, ranking fifth nationwide with 450 electric buses.

Details

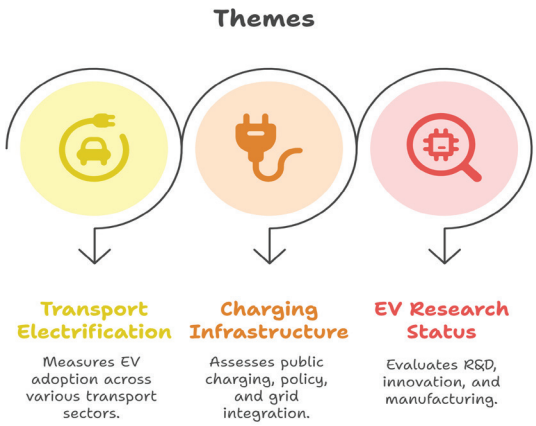
- According to data, 14,329 e-buses are currently in operation across India, of which Delhi has the highest number of vehicles at 3,564, followed by Maharashtra (3,296), Karnataka (2,236), and Uttar Pradesh (850), according to an official statement.
- Odisha, with 450 such vehicles, is in the fifth position among all states in the adoption of electric buses.
- Odisha has outpaced the neighbouring states in this field - West Bengal (391), Andhra Pradesh (238), Chhattisgarh (215) and Jharkhand (46), it claimed.

Odisha's Performance by Theme:

- Transport Electrification Progress:
  - Score: 56 — Odisha is categorized as a "Performer"
  - Sub-scores include: private EV adoption score of 97; commercial adoption 18; government initiatives 100; purchase incentives 2; transition incentives 50; operational support initiatives 33; fuel price parity 88
- Charging Infrastructure Readiness:
  - Score: 43 — Odisha is labeled an "Aspirant"
  - Breakdown: EV-to-EV charger ratio 16; capital subsidies for charging infrastructure 100; charging infrastructure development initiatives 67; building byelaws for charging 100; share of renewable energy in charging ecosystem 22; power availability 10
- EV Research & Innovation:
  - Score: 41 — Again categorized as an "Aspirant"
  - Sub-scores: EV startups 41; R&D initiatives 67; patents 0

About India Electric Mobility Index (IEMI) 2024

- The IEMI is a pioneering, data-driven tool designed to assess the electric mobility ecosystem across Indian states and Union Territories. It breaks down performance across **three core themes** and **16 indicators**, scoring regions on a **0–100 scale**. It is structured as follows:
  - **Transport Electrification Progress (50%)**: Evaluates adoption levels of EVs in private, commercial, and public sectors, along with governance, incentives, and transition support.
  - **Charging Infrastructure Readiness (30%):** Tracks deployment and accessibility of charging infrastructure—number of chargers, fast charging, grid readiness, and policy support.
  - **EV Research & Innovation Status (20%)**: Assesses R&D investments, innovation hubs, patents, startup activity, and supply ecosystem strength



Overall Frontrunners

- Delhi, Maharashtra, and Chandigarh emerged as the top-performing regions with scores in the "Frontrunners" category (65–99) .

Theme-wise Leaders

- Transport Electrification Progress: Delhi, Maharashtra, and Chandigarh lead this dimension
- Charging Infrastructure Readiness: Haryana, Karnataka, Ladakh, and Himachal Pradesh scored highest in infrastructure deployment
- EV Research & Innovation Status: Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Haryana, and Telangana stood out

Category Classifications

- Frontrunners: Delhi, Maharashtra, Chandigarh.
- Performers: Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Haryana (noted for progress but trailing frontrunners)
- Aspirants: States like Odisha, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, among others, are lagging and require targeted support

Importance of the India Electric Mobility Index (IEMI) 2024

- Benchmarking & Transparency: Offers states a robust framework to assess performance, identify gaps, and learn from top performers
- Encouraging Competition: By ranking states, the index fosters healthy rivalry and targeted policy interventions
- Alignment with National Goals: Supports India's journey toward 30% EV penetration by 2030 and net-zero by 2070
- Dynamic & Responsive: Designed for updates over time to reflect evolving trends and policies

Paradip Port

Why in the News?

- Paradip Port has indeed received the title of "Major Port of the Year.

Key Awards and Recognitions for Paradip Port

- Major Port of the Year – Non-Containerised Cargo
  - At the 14th All India Maritime and Logistics Awards (MALA) in 2024, Paradip Port was awarded the "Major Port of the Year – Non-Containerised Cargo" distinction for its outstanding performance in handling non-container goods.
  - The award was presented by the Chairman of the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority and the Consul-General of Israel.
- Major Port of the Year – East Coast
  - At the 11th International Samudra Manthan Awards in November 2024, Paradip Port Authority was honored as "Major Port of the Year – East Coast" in recognition of its exceptional contributions to maritime trade.
  - The award ceremony took place at the Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai, where the port's achievements were acknowledged by a distinguished jury. \

Major ports in India

- India hosts 13 major ports (including proposed Vadhavan Port) and over 200 minor ones. Major ports handle 95% of India's trade by volume and 70% by value.

Major Ports in India List

- There are 12 major ports in India divided into the Western and Eastern coasts of the Peninsula. The list of major ports in India are as follows:



Major Ports of India Significance

- India's major ports hold significant importance by handling 95% of foreign trade by volume, enhancing connectivity, preserving historical significance, advancing infrastructure through initiatives like Sagarmala, and adopting eco-friendly practices.
- Economic Impact: Major ports handle 95% of India's foreign trade by volume and 70% by value, with 795 million tonnes of cargo handled in 2022-23. In July 2024, cargo traffic grew by 5.92%, reaching 70.08 million tonnes.
- Strategic Location: Positioned along key shipping routes, Indian ports boost connectivity between Asia, Europe, and Africa. Ports like Mumbai and Chennai are vital for trade between India, Iran, Russia, and other regions.
- Historical and Cultural Significance: Ports like Kolkata, established in 1870, have long been gateways for trade with Southeast Asia and Europe. They facilitated cultural interactions through ancient trade routes.
- Infrastructure Development: The Sagarmala Project and a 4.02% cargo growth in 2024 demonstrate significant investments in infrastructure. Cargo handling capacity at major ports has increased by 87% from 2014-15 to 2023-24.
- Environmental Considerations: Indian ports are adopting eco-friendly measures, including electric vehicles and digital solutions, to minimize environmental impact.

Major Ports of India Challenges

- India's major ports are vital for trade and economic growth but face challenges like inadequate infrastructure, poor connectivity, operational inefficiencies, regulatory hurdles, environmental issues, and labour shortages, impacting their competitiveness.
- Inadequate Infrastructure: Ports face dredging limitations, making them unsuitable for large vessels, and outdated equipment reduces efficiency.
- Connectivity Issues: Poor road, rail networks, and last-mile connectivity hinder smooth cargo evacuation and logistics.
- Operational Inefficiencies: Longer ship turnaround times and inefficient cargo handling delay operations and reduce productivity.
- Regulatory and Financial Barriers: Complex regulations and lengthy project timelines hinder timely project approvals and financing.
- Environmental Compliance Issues: Environmental challenges like spills and non-compliance lead to penalties and operational disruptions.
- Labour Issues: A shortage of skilled labour and inefficient management affect port productivity and service quality.

Odisha State Commission for Women (OSCW)

Why in the News?

- Shovana Mohanty, a senior BJP leader from Karanjia in Remuna Block, Balasore district, has been appointed as the Chairperson of the Odisha State Commission for Women under the provisions of the Odisha State Commission for Women Act, 1993.

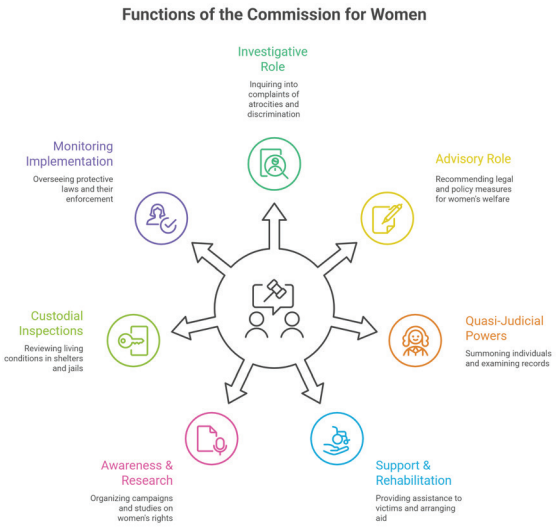


Details

- Shovana Mohanty is a senior BJP leader hailing from Karanjia in the Remuna block of Balasore district, Odisha.

About Odisha State Commission for Women (OSCW)

- Overview & History
  - The Odisha State Commission for Women (OSCW) is a statutory, quasi-judicial body established under the Odisha State Commission for Women Act, 1993, and officially formed in October 2004.
  - It works under the Government of Odisha, with its headquarters located at Toshali Bhawan, Satyanagar, Bhubaneswar.
- Objectives & Core Functions
  - Investigate and address crimes against women, including dowry-related issues, rape, trafficking, and more.
  - Conduct in-depth studies on women's economic, educational, and health conditions—especially in tribal and under-developed areas.
  - Track offences against women and coordinate with district/state cells to mobilize public awareness and quick action.
  - Receive complaints when women are deprived of rights or face institutional negligence.
  - Provide legal counseling, inspect women's facilities (jails, remand homes), and assist in rehabilitation efforts.
  - Operate with powers akin to a civil court—summoning, examining on oath, requisitioning documents, etc.
- Composition
  - Chairperson – Appointed by the State Government.
  - Members – Usually experts/activists working in women's welfare, law, health, education, and social work.
  - Member Secretary – An administrative officer.



Government appointed as the brand ambassador for Odisha's handloom industry

Why in the News?

- On August 7, 2025, the Odisha government officially appointed Bollywood icon Madhuri Dixit Nene as the brand ambassador of the state's handloom industry for a one-year term.

Details

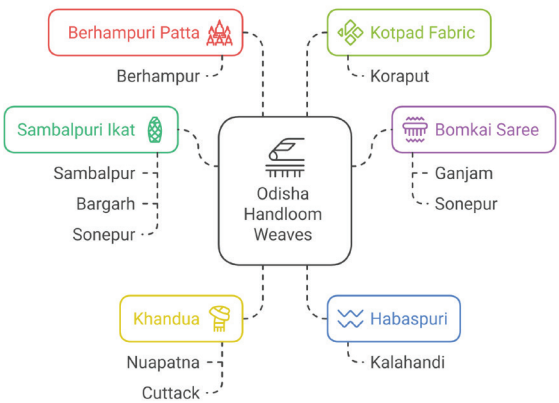
- This announcement was made by Chief Minister **Mohan Charan Majhi** at the launch of **EKTA** (Exhibition-cum-Knowledge Sharing for Textile Advantage), held in Bhubaneswar on the occasion of **National Handloom Day.**
- The role is intended to promote iconic Odia weaves—like Bomkai, Sambalpuri, Ikat, and Habaspuri—to both national and international audiences, elevating their visibility within the fashion industry.

The handloom industry in Odisha

- Historical & Cultural Significance
  - Handloom weaving in Odisha dates back over 2,000 years.

- It's deeply tied to religious and cultural life—many patterns are inspired by Jagannath culture, temple art, and tribal motifs.
- Odia textiles often feature symbolic motifs such as the conch (shankha), wheel (chakra), lotus, and temple borders.

Odisha Handloom Weaves: Styles and Regions



Unique Techniques

- Ikat (Bandha): Yarns are tie-dyed before weaving, producing identical patterns on both sides.
- Extra Weft Weaving: Creates intricate motifs on the body of the fabric.
- Vegetable Dyeing: Especially in tribal regions like Kotpad.

Challenges

- Competition from machine-made textiles.
- Decline in younger generations taking up weaving.
- Marketing & global outreach limitations.
- Need for design innovation while keeping traditional essence.

Government Support & Promotion

- Odisha State Handloom Weavers Co-operative Society (Boyanika) markets weavers' products.
- Schemes like Mukhyamantri Kalakar Sahayata Yojana and subsidies on looms & raw materials.
- Annual events like National Handloom Day celebrations and Toshali National Crafts Mela showcase these works.
- August 2025: Madhuri Dixit appointed brand ambassador to promote Odisha handlooms globally.

Subas Pani

Why in the News?

- Subas Pani passed away on Monday, August 4, 2025, at his residence in Bhubaneswar.



About Subas Pani

- He was a former Chief Secretary of Odisha, with a remarkable career spanning roles such as Deputy Election Commissioner of India, and contributions to IT infrastructure and digitization in the state.
- Beyond administration, he was a respected Jagannath scholar—authored and translated significant works including Sampoorna Geeta Govinda, Daru Brahma, Her Monuments and Their Tales, Palm Leaf Paintings of Orissa, and Blue Hill: Hymns to Jagannatha.
- He also composed music for the Sampoorna Geeta Govinda audio CDs (released in 2008) and served as a long-time commentator for the Puri Rath Yatra on Doordarshan (1994–2021).

Sambalpuri Day (Sambalpuri Din)

Why in the News?

- Sambalpuri Day (Sambalpuri Din) is celebrated every year on August 1 across the Sambalpur region and wider Western Odisha.



Details

- It marks the 1913 birth of Guru Satyanarayan Bohidar, celebrated for his contributions to Sambalpuri language preservation, including compiling the Sambalpuri Bhasakosh (dictionary) and authoring literary works like Tik Chahnra, Ghuvkudu, Ghavghavo, and various poems.
- Beyond its linguistic origins, the day also features celebrations tied to the rich **Sambalpuri culture**—from folk arts and handicrafts to cuisine and sarees. Sambalpuri sarees, crafted using the intricate Bandha (tie-dye ikat) technique, are cherished symbols of the region's artistic legacy.

Bibhuti Bhushan Singh Mardaraj

Why in the News?

- He passed away **on August 7, 2025**, at a private hospital in Bhubaneswar after a prolonged illness.



About Bibhuti Bhushan Singh Mardaraj

- Born on January 4, 1955, he was a scion of the Khandapada royal family.
- Elected as an Independent MLA from Khandapada in 1980, he later joined Congress and was re-elected in 1985 and 1995.
- He served as Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Tourism & Culture, and Planning & Coordination in the Hemananda Biswal ministry (1989).
- From 1996 to 2000, he held the office of Deputy Speaker of the Odisha Legislative Assembly.

Khandapada state

- **Origins and History**
  - Khandpara State, a princely territory in present-day Nayagarh district (Odisha), was founded circa 1599 by Jadunath Singh Mangaraj, who received the title "Mangaraj" from the Gajapati King of Puri.
  - It was carved out from Nayagarh State and remained a recognized princely state until its accession to the Indian Union on **1 January 1948.**
- **Rulers**
  - The rulers bore the title Raja, with notable successors including:
    - » Niladri Singh Mardaraj (1770–1794), who initiated the Rath Yatra traditions.
    - » A detailed lineage—including Kunja Bihari Singh, Natabar Mardaraj, Ram Chandra Singh, and Harihar Singh Mardaraj—is recorded in historical sources.
  - Post-independence, the titling continued:
    - » Harihar Singh Mardaraj became the titular Raja (1948–1977).
    - » Bibhuti Bhusan Singh Mardaraj took over in 1977 and held political positions as MLA, minister of state, and deputy speaker of the Odisha Assembly.
- **Cultural and Architectural Legacy**
  - The Rajabati palace (approximately 250 years old) is noted for its fusion of Mughal and Odia architecture. It comprises an outer Darbar Hall and the inner Rani Mahal (restricted access).

– Alongside it stands the Jagannath Temple, built in the mid-19th century under Raja Kunja Bihari Mardaraja (1842–1867), exhibiting traditional Odia architectural forms and serving as a focal point for festivals like the Rath Yatra.

Pushkara

Why in the News?

- Pushkara—the Odia film honored at the 71st National Film Awards.

About Pushkara

- Pushkara was awarded Best Odia Feature Film at the 71st National Film Awards, affirming its excellence in regional cinema
- Directed by Subhransu Das, it features Sabyasachi Mishra and Supriya Nayak. The film is an adaptation of the Odia novel Nadabindu by Shankar Tripathy.
- Celebrated for its deeply rooted Odia cultural narrative, Pushkara weaves in traditional rituals like Sahi Jata, Kartika Purnima, and Boita Bandana, capturing the essence of Puri's traditions.
- The director received a Silver Lotus (Rajat Kamal) trophy along with a cash prize of ₹2 lakh for the honor.

Broader Highlights from the 71st National Film Awards

- The Best Feature Film award went to 12th Fail (Hindi), while Flowering Man won Best Non-Feature Film.
- Shah Rukh Khan earned his first National Award for Best Actor for Jawan, and Vikrant Massey also won Best Actor for 12th Fail. Rani Mukerji bagged Best Actress for Mrs. Chatterjee vs Norway
- The Tamil film Parking secured three major awards: Best Tamil Film, Best Screenplay, and Best Supporting Actor for M. S. Bhaskar .
- G. V. Prakash Kumar won Best Music Direction (Songs) for the Tamil–Telugu bilingual Vaathi.
- Sukriti Veni Bandreddi, the daughter of director Sukumar, won Best Child Artist for her performance in the Telugu film Gandhi Tatha Chettu.
- The Kerala Story sparked controversy: it was awarded Best Cinematography, drawing criticism from the Kerala CM over political and ideological concerns.

Odisha: Emerging as a Leader in Organ Donation

Why in the News?

- Odisha recently received a national award in the category of emerging states in organ donation and transplantation.

Key Milestones & Progress

- Significant Uptick in Transplants
  - Odisha saw a 11% increase in organ transplants in 2023, with 197 organs transplanted compared to 178 in 2022. Cadaveric (deceased donor) transplants rose by 50%, from 4 in 2022 to 6 in 2023.
- Government Initiatives & Honors
  - The state introduced the Jeevan Upahar scheme in 2018–19 and has expanded transplantation permissions to 14 hospitals statewide.
  - To commemorate donor families, Odisha launched the Suraj Award and offers a guard of honour at funerals for deceased donors.
- AIIMS Bhubaneswar Leads the Way
  - AIIMS Bhubaneswar marked its first deceased organ donation in February 2024, followed by two more such donations in July and October.

Odisha's Real-Time Road Safety Dashboard

Why in the News?

- The Government of Odisha is collaborating with IIT-Madras, particularly via its RBG Labs, to build a real-time road safety dashboard.

Details

- Aim: This platform is aimed at offering dynamic analytics, visuals, and insights to aid proactive

traffic management and safety responses. It will serve both policymakers and the public.

- Featuring Citizen-Centric 'Sahayaka' Module
  - A standout feature of the dashboard is 'Sahayaka', enabling citizens to:
    - » Report accidents in real time
    - » Nominate Raahveers (good Samaritans) to aid in emergency response
- Integration with systems like ERSS (Emergency Response Support System), eDAR-CCTNS, and the Sanjaya super-app is underway to streamline operations across platforms

"Shaktishree"

Why in the News?

- By August 20–25, 2025: Institutions must establish the full Shaktishree Empowerment Cell and appoint the Saathi
- Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi announced Shaktishree on July 19, 2025, in direct response to a tragic case of self-immolation by a student in Balasore following alleged sexual harassment.

Key Components & Structure

- Shaktishree Empowerment Cell

Each institution must establish a permanent, student-led cell, with:

- A Shaktishree Sanjojika (female faculty coordinator),
- A Shaktishree Saathi (female student peer leader),

This cell conducts safety, legal-awareness, and self-defence training throughout the academic year.

- Shakti Apas (Mentors)

Every district will have five senior female professionals appointed as Shakti Apas, who'll mentor students and visit campuses at least once every three months.

- Mobile App & Digital Support

A dedicated Shaktishree Mobile App will allow students to:

- Register complaints (text/audio/video, anonymously),
- Access mental health services via Tele-MANAS,
- Use an SOS button, and connect to local grievance mechanisms.

- Training & Codes of Conduct
  - Teaching and non-teaching staff must complete annual online training on POSH Act (2013) and UGC Regulations (2015).
  - A binding Code of Conduct will be enforced to ensure professional and gender-sensitive behavior.Awareness & Reporting
  - The SAFE Campaign (Shaktishree Actions for Female Empowerment) will run biannually, raising awareness on gender issues, bullying, and harassment.
  - Institutions must submit an Annual Campus Safety Report by December 31 every year.
- Enhanced Security & Annual Workshops
  - 24×7 CCTV surveillance across campuses ensures constant monitoring.
  - The Shakti Swarupini is an annual one-day workshop gathering all Sanjojikas and Saathis for training, feedback, and knowledge exchange.

"Golden hour" in Odisha

Details

- The Odisha government has implemented a Good Samaritan initiative that provides monetary rewards to individuals who transport road accident victims to hospitals within the critical "golden hour." Initially, this reward was set at ₹5,000
- More recently, under the updated 'Rah-Veer' Scheme, the reward has been increased to ₹25,000 for such life-saving actions.

Odisha, to replace "Harijan" word in place of Scheduled Caste

Why in the News?

- In Odisha, historically the term "Harijan" (meaning "children of God," popularized by Mahatma Gandhi) was used in place of Scheduled Caste (SC).

Details

- Today, the Government of India officially uses "Scheduled Castes (SC)" as per the Constitution (Article 341) and related laws.
- The term Harijan is not used in official records, notifications, or government documents—instead, "Scheduled Caste" is mandatory.

Scheduled Castes (SCs) – UPSC Notes

Constitutional Provisions

- Article 341: The President may specify castes, races, or tribes deemed as SCs in consultation with the Governor of the state.
- Only Parliament can make inclusions or exclusions from the SC list.
- Reservation in education, employment, and legislatures.
- Special provisions for upliftment under Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSPs).

Safeguards for Scheduled Castes

- **Political:** Reservation of seats in Lok Sabha & State Legislative Assemblies (Article 330, 332).
- **Social:**
  - Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955: Abolishes untouchability.
  - SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989: Provides stringent punishment for crimes against SCs.

Commissions & Bodies

- National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) (Article 338):
  - Monitors safeguards, inquires into complaints, advises on socio-economic development.

Important Committees & Reports

- Kaka Kalelkar Commission (1955) – first Backward Classes Commission.
- Mandal Commission (1980) – primarily for OBCs, but highlighted SC backwardness.
- Sachar Committee (2006) – focused on Muslims, but useful for comparison.

Government Schemes for SCs

- Stand-Up India Scheme (for SC/ST entrepreneurs).
- Post-Matric Scholarship for SCs.
- Pre-Matric Scholarship.
- National SC Finance & Development Corporation (NSFDC).
- Scheduled Castes Sub-Plan (SCSP) – part of budgeting.

Pragyan Prasanti Sahu

Why in the News?

- Odisha's Pragyan Wins 100m Hurdles At World Athletics Continental Tour Meet In Bhubaneswar



Achievement Highlight

- Event: Women's 100 m Hurdles at the World Athletics Continental Tour Bronze meet held at Kalinga Stadium, Bhubaneswar.
- Medal: Gold, with a timing of 13.74 seconds.
- Runner-up: Nandini Konghan (Tamil Nadu) – 13.80 seconds
- Third Place: Anjali C (Kerala) – 14.00 seconds.

Presidential Medals awarded to personnel from Odisha

Why in the News?

- Presidential Medals awarded to personnel from Odisha on the occasion of Independence Day 2025, announced ahead of Republic Day 2026.

President's Medal for Distinguished Service (PSM)

- These recipients are recognized for their exceptionally distinguished service:
  - Rabindra Kumar Panda, Additional Superintendent of Police, Odisha Police
  - Naresh Kumar Patel, Commandant, Odisha Police
  - Dolagobinda Mohapatra, Home Guard Platoon Commander (Home Guard & Civil Defence)
  - Kamakhi Prasad Pati, Jailor (Correctional Service)

Cold storage scheme

Why in the News?

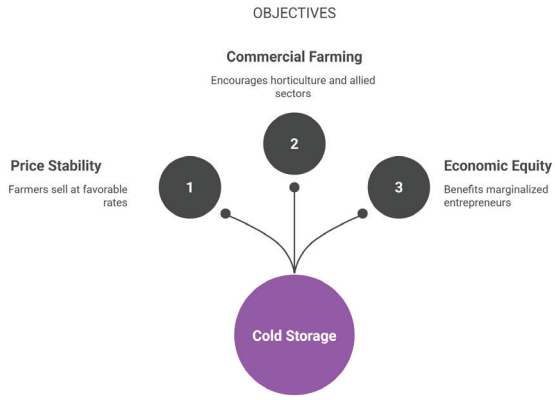
- Odisha's ambitious cold storage scheme aims to construct at least one cold storage facility in each of the 58 sub-divisions of the state.

Scheme Highlights

- The state cabinet approved a Rs 252 crore package for the "Financial Assistance to Cold Storages" scheme, spanning 2025–26 to 2029–30.
- The scheme is designed to establish at least one cold storage unit in each of the 58 sub-divisions to minimize post-harvest losses, enhance pricing stability, and boost farmers' incomes.

Financial & Non-Financial Benefits

- Capital Cost Subsidy:
  - 60% subsidy (capped at ₹6.5 crore) for beneficiaries from Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes, women, and transgender individuals
  - 50% subsidy (capped at ₹6 crore) for other entrepreneurs.
- Interest Subvention:
  - Up to 6% interest relief, with 3% from the central AIF (Agriculture Infrastructure Fund) and 3% top-up from the state.
- Working Capital Support:
  - Inspired by the CM-SRIM scheme, cold storage units will be eligible for reimbursement of interest on working capital loans. Reimbursement rates:
    - » 100% for loans up to ₹10 lakh
    - » 75% for ₹10 lakh–₹50 lakh
    - » 50% for ₹50 lakh–₹1 crore
    - » 25% for ₹1 crore–₹5 crore
- Electricity Subsidy:
  - A 50% subsidy on electricity bills for up to 7 years from commissioning date—applicable to both new and revived cold storage facilities.



Gaudiya Vaishnava gathering

Why in the News?

- Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi attended a grand celebration at Jawaharlal Indoor Stadium in Cuttack, marking the 151st birth anniversary of Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Prabhupada and the centenary of Sri Saccidananda Math.

Details

2025: 151st Birth Anniversary & Centenary Celebrations

- The Gaudiya Vaishnava Conference (Sammilani) was held on August 13, 2025, at the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium, Cuttack, organized by the Gaudiya Mission.
- The event marked the 151st Birth Anniversary of Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Prabhupad along with the centenary of Sri Satchidananda Math.

- Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi praised Srila Prabhupad's teachings and the enduring spiritual, social, and educational contributions of the Math.
- Mohan Bhagwat, RSS chief, participated as the chief guest at the Sammilani and later visited Puri, engaging in devotional activities and meeting with Shankaracharya Swami Nischalananda Saraswati

Odisha Mukhyamantri Kamadhenu Yojana

Why in the News?

- The current milk production in Odisha is approximately 72 lakh litres per day. The government's goal is to double this output to 150 lakh litres per day by 2030.
- More recently, in July 2025, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi set an expanded timeline under the Yojana:
  - Reach 165 lakh litres per day by 2036.
  - And further increase to 274 lakh litres per day by 2047.

Overview of Mukhyamantri Kamadhenu Yojana (MKY), Odisha

Launch & Funding

- A comprehensive five-year umbrella scheme of ₹1,423.47 crore, approved by the Odisha cabinet in late 2024
- Endorsed by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi at the Monsoon Meet 2024

Key Objectives

- Boost milk production across Odisha.
- Provide financial and technical support for small dairy units, subsidised calf feed, livestock insurance, and strengthening of dairy cooperatives
- Partner with NDDB to support cooperative infrastructure, feed labs, and vaccine production.

Mega steel plant

Why in the News?

- The Odisha government, led by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, plans to set up a mega steel plant in Keonjhar district.

Details

- **Location**: The proposed site is in the Patna area of Keonjhar district, with land parcels already identified near Taramakant and Patna, covering thousands of acres.
- **Developed by:** The project is envisioned as a joint venture between India's JSW Steel and South Korean steel giant POSCO, targeting an initial production capacity of 5 MTPA (million tonnes per annum).
- **Investment:** The estimated investment ranges between ₹30,000 crore and ₹40,000 crore.
- **Strategic & Local Impact:** The project aims to convert mineral-rich Keonjhar—formerly a site of raw ore export—into a manufacturing and industrial hub.

Para-Legal Volunteer (PLV) Scheme

Why in the News?

- Odisha has introduced the Para-Legal Volunteer (PLV) Scheme under the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) and the Odisha State Legal Services Authority (OSLSA).

Key Points about Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs) in Odisha:

- Every Gram Panchayat is provided with at least one Para-Legal Volunteer (PLV).
- They act as the link between the community and legal services institutions.
- PLVs are selected from local educated youth, social workers, teachers, Anganwadi workers, self-help group (SHG) members, NGOs, etc.
- Their work is voluntary (honorarium/stipend is provided for specific tasks).

Functions of PLVs in Panchayats:

- Create legal awareness among villagers about rights, welfare schemes, and government benefits.
- Help people access free legal aid through Legal Services Authorities.
- Assist in Lok Adalats and settlement of petty disputes at the village level.

- Spread awareness about issues like domestic violence, child marriage, dowry, bonded labour, land rights, PDS, MGNREGA, pension schemes etc.
- Act as a bridge between citizens and the justice delivery system.
- Support in cases of marginalized groups (SC/ST, women, children, disabled, poor).

Coverage in Odisha:

- The scheme ensures at least one PLV in each Panchayat, so Odisha has thousands of PLVs across all districts.
- They work under the guidance of the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) and Taluk Legal Services Committee (TLSC).

Binod Kumar Pasayat

Why in the News?

- Padma Shri awardee Binod Kumar Pasayat has passed away on August 21, 2025, at the age of 90.

About Binod Kumar Pasayat

- A barber by profession who became a celebrated Sambalpuri poet, playwright, and lyricist; a recognized artist with All India Radio and Doordarshan; wrote iconic works like "Hai Krushna Hai Krushna Boli…," "E Nani Sulochana," and dramas such as Ukhi, Mui Nai Mare, Lita, Chinha, and Bharna.
- Awards: Honoured with the Padma Shri in 2024, among many other accolades.

First Asian Elephant Species Survival Centre

Why in the News?

- Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi announced the establishment of the world's first Asian Elephant Species Survival Centre on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar.

Details

- **Purpose & Location:** Named the Centre for Species Survival: Asian Elephant, it's being established at Godibari, near the Chandaka Wildlife Division on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar.
- **Collaborating Organizations**: The centre is a joint effort between the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC), Wildlife Trust of India (WTI), Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, and the Odisha Forest Department.
- **Importance**:: While there are multiple CSS (Centers for Species Survival) globally, this is the only one dedicated exclusively to the Asian elephant, aiming to consolidate conservation efforts for a species listed as Endangered.

India successfully test-fires ICBM Agni 5 missile from Odisha's Chandipur

Why in the News?

- India has demonstrated its strategic military capabilities by successfully test-firing the 'Agni 5' intermediate-range ballistic missile.

Details

- Agni-5 Missile Test
  - Range: Up to 5,000 km.
  - Capabilities: Can target almost all of Asia, including northern China and parts of Europe.
  - Significance: Conducted under the Strategic Forces Command, following a military conflict with Pakistan.
  - Previous Tests: India had also test-fired the Agni-5 missile in March of the previous year.

India's Missile Arsenal

- Agni Series:
  - Agni-1 to Agni-4: Ranges between 700 km and 3,500 km, already deployed.
  - Agni-1: Range of 700-900 km, payload capacity of 1,000 kg.
- Prithvi-II Missile:
  - Range: Approximately 350 km.
  - Payload: Up to 500 kg, capable of carrying both conventional and nuclear warheads.

- Pralay Missile:
  - New Tactical Missile: Short-range surface-to-surface.
  - Payload Capacity: 500-1,000 kg, carrying conventional warheads.

These missile tests reflect India's advancing missile technology and strategic deterrence capabilities.

Peru Para Badminton International 2025

Why in the News?

- Peru Para Badminton International 2025 held in Lima from August 11 to 17, 2025.

Odisha athletes' performance

- Gold in Men's Doubles SL3–SU4: Deep Ranjan Bisoyee partnered with Manoj Sarkar, defeating opponents from Portugal and France.
- Bronze in Men's Singles SL4: Deep Ranjan Bisoyee secured the bronze after losing a closely fought semifinal match against a Brazilian shuttler.
- Bronze in Men's Doubles SL3–SL4: Md Arwaz Ansari, with partner Subhrajeet Maharana, earned a bronze for India.



12 New Notified Area Councils (NACs) in Odisha

Why in the News?

- The Housing & Urban Development Department released a draft notification proposing the formation of 12 new NACs across seven districts.

Details

- Angul district: Pallahara
- Subarnapur (Sonepur): Birmaharajpur
- Balasore: Simulia and Basta
- Mayurbhanj: Betnoti, Bangriposi, and Chitrada
- Rayagada: Bissam Cuttack
- Sambalpur: Bamra and Rengali
- Bhadrak: Tihidi and Dhusuri

Rahul Pradhan

Why in the News?

- Rahul Pradhan, a young mountaineer from Kalahandi, has set a new record by successfully scaling Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa.



About Mount Kilimanjaro

- Location: Northern Tanzania, near the border with Kenya.
- Type: It is a stratovolcano, made up of three volcanic cones – Kibo (the highest and dormant), Mawenzi, and Shira (both extinct).
- Uhuru Peak, the highest free-standing peak in Africa, is located on the volcanic cone Kibo.
- Kilimanjaro is also known for its snow-capped peak.
- Vegetation: The mountain has five main vegetation zones, from the lowest to the highest point: Lower slopes, montane forest, heath and moorland, alpine desert, and summit.
- The Kilimanjaro National Park was named a United Nations Educational, Scientific, and

Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Site in 1987.



Biju Patnaik Bravery Award 2025

Why in the News?

- Chittaranjan Pradhan and Jiban Kumar Behera both received Biju Patnaik Bravery Award.



Details

- At the Biju Patnaik Sports Awards ceremony held around August 29, 2025 to mark National Sports Day in Odisha, the Biju Patnaik Bravery Award 2025 was conferred upon two individuals:
  - Chittaranjan Pradhan
  - Jiban Kumar Behera
- They each received a citation, a trophy, and a cash prize of ₹2 lakh

Operation Pahar

Why in the News?

- Odisha's government began a fortnight-long anti-drug campaign called Operation Prahar aimed at curbing drug abuse, smuggling, and sale across the state, particularly targeting urban centers like Bhubaneswar and Cuttack

Details

- **Multi-agency Coordination:** The operation involves seamless collaboration among the Odisha Police, Special Task Force (STF), Excise Department, and the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB).
- **Target Areas and Strategies**: A key focus is heightened surveillance around educational institutions to disrupt the supply of narcotics to youth

Karendra Majh

Why in the News?

- Karendra Majhi passed away at the age of 52 on Sunday night, August 24, 2025



Details

- His political career included two successful terms as MLA from Baliguda, in 2004 and 2009.
- He was notable for being from the Kutia Kondh tribal community and held the distinction of being Odisha's first postgraduate tribal leader, and he authored three books in the Kui language.

Odisha at the Khelo India Water Sports Festival 2025

Why in the News?

- Khelo India Water Sports Festival 2025, held at Dal Lake in Srinagar from August 21 to 23, 2025.



Odisha Performances

- Odisha finished 2nd in the overall state-wise medal tally, with a total of 10 medals, including:
  - 4 golds
  - 5 silvers, and
  - 1 bronze
- Rasmita Sahoo was a standout athlete for Odisha, winning two gold medals (200 m canoe singles and 500 m canoe doubles)

Nuakhai festival

Why in the News?

- Nuakhai is a major agrarian festival of **Western Odisha and adjoining areas of Chhattisgarh**, celebrated to welcome the new harvest.

Details

- It is observed the day after **Ganesh Chaturthi**
- Cultural significance:
  - It marks the first consumption of newly harvested rice.
  - Farmers offer the new grain to their household deities and ancestors before eating it.
  - It is a thanksgiving to nature and Mother Earth for a good harvest.
- Rituals:
  - Nabanna – offering of the new grain to deities.
  - Nuakhai Juhar – younger members greet elders with respect, and elders bless them.
  - Families come together, share traditional food, and celebrate with folk dances like Sambalpuri, Rasarkeli, Dalkhai.

Operation Anweshan

Why in the News?

- Its five-day rescue operation was launched on August 18, 2025 by the Crime Against Women & Children Wing of Odisha Police, in Ganjam district.

Details

- Operation Anweshan was a state-wide, time-bound police operation (Aug 18–22, 2025) aimed at rescuing missing women and children. In Ganjam district, the drive led to the safe recovery and reunification of approximately 86 women and 29 children, including swift action involving four young students in Berhampur. At the state level, it accounted for over 2,400 rescues across Odisha.

Puspanjali Mohapatra

Why in the News?

- Odisha's Puspanjali Mohapatra wins Gold at All India Thal Sainik Competition 2025.



Details

- Sergeant Puspanjali, a cadet of 1 Odisha Girls Battalion NCC under Cuttack Group, secured the top position in the Service Shooting event, outshining participants from 17 NCC Directorates across the country.
- The Thal Sainik Camp (TSC) is one of the most prestigious annual events of the National Cadet Corps (NCC), drawing the best cadets from across India to compete in various disciplines that test discipline, endurance, leadership, and marksmanship.

Home Stay Scheme

Why in the News?

- Odisha to Launch Home Stay Scheme to Boost Rural Tourism, Employment.

Details

- In a bid to promote rural tourism and generate local employment, the Odisha government has announced the launch of a Home Stay Scheme, which will be operational for five years from the fiscal year 2025-26 to 2029-30
- The scheme aims to encourage the establishment of homestays in Odisha's rural and lesser-known areas, promote community participation in tourism, and provide tourists with authentic cultural and village experiences.
- Under this initiative, eligible residents in selected villages will receive financial assistance to set up new homestay units.

Shirish Chandra Murmu

Why in the News?

- Shirish Chandra MurmuThe Government of India has appointed Shirish Chandra Murmu as the new Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), effective 9th October 2025, succeeding M. Rajeshwar Rao.
- **He is from Mayurbhanj District of Odisha and belonging to the Santal tribe.**



Details

- About: Shirish Chandra Murmu, currently serving as the Executive Director at RBI, has been appointed to the post for a period of three years.
  - He joined the RBI in 1991 and has held important positions such as Regional Director, as well as senior management roles in Banking Regulation, Currency Management, and Information Technology.
- Function: In his new role, he is expected to handle key portfolios, including banking regulation, financial markets, and monetary policy.

- Appointment: His appointment was approved by the **Appointment Committee of the Cabinet (ACC).**
  - The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), headed by the Prime Minister with the Minister of Home Affairs as a member, is responsible for making senior government appointments.
- Structure: According to the **RBI act 1934** the central bank is required to have four deputy governors: two from within RBI, one from the commercial banking sector, and one economist to head the monetary policy department.
  - The current deputy governors, in addition to Shirish Chandra Murmu, include T. Rabi Sankar, Swaminathan J, and Poonam Gupta.

Amrit Bharat Express between Odisha and Gujarat

Why in the News?

- Hon'ble Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi flagged off the Amrit Bharat Express between Brahmapur (Odisha) and Udhna (Gujarat). It is a new generation train designed for affordable, safe, and long-distance travel.

Features of Amrit Bharat Express:

- Modern ergonomic seating with improved design
- Fully connected coaches for seamless movement
- Twin-engine configuration ensuring higher safety and reliability
- Just as Vande Bharat has redefined travel for the middle class, Amrit Bharat Express will provide similar facilities at an affordable fare.

Ama Sathi' WhatsApp chatbot

Why in the News?

- Odisha launches 'Ama Sathi' WhatsApp chatbot to simplify access to 120 public services

Details

- The people of Odisha can now access a range of citizen-centric services, including birth and income certificates, inter-caste marriage benefits, government scheme incentives, and applications for driving and fertiliser licences, through WhatsApp.
- The state government unveiled 'Ama Sathi', a unified WhatsApp chatbot that will make 120 services available to more than 4.5 crore residents across the state. Developed by the Centre for Modernising Government Initiative (CMGI) in collaboration with Meta, the chatbot is accessible in both Odia and English via a single WhatsApp number: 9437292000.

Devdas Chhotray

Why in the News?

- Bureaucrat-turned-writer Devdas Chhotray will be conferred the prestigious 'Sarala Puraskar' for his short-story collection 'Matinee Show'.



Details

- The award, given annually by the IMFA Charitable Trust (IMPaCT), will presented in Bhubaneswar on October 26. It comprises a cash component of ₹7 lakh, a citation, and a plaque.
- Mr. Chhotray's Matinee Show was published by Timepass Publication in 2023. According to the trust, seven books had made it to the final round.
- IMPaCT also announced that the annual 'Ila-Bansidhar Panda Kala Samman' for lifetime excellence in the field of art will be conferred

on famous painter Baladev Maharatha and renowned musician Guru Ramhari Das. Both will be given a certificate, plaque, and cash of ₹2.5 lakh.

Rajendra Dholakia

Why in the News?

- Rajendra Dholakia—senior BJD leader and MLA from Nuapada, Odisha—passed away on 8 September 2025 while undergoing treatment in Chennai.



Details

- He was a former MLA from Odisha's Nuapada constituency.
- He was a senior leader of the BJD. Earlier in his political career, he was elected as an independent candidate.
- He was a four-time MLA, winning elections in 2004, 2009, 2019, and 2024. He also served as a minister in the Naveen Patnaik-led cabinet from 2022 to 2024.

28th ITTF-ATTU Asian Table Tennis Team Championships 2025

- **Dates**: 11 to 15 October 2025
- **Location** / Venue: Bhubaneswar, India — Kalinga Stadium, Athletics Centre (Kalinga-Athletics HPC Building,
- First Asian-level TT event in Odisha

Bahuda Port project

Why in the News?

- Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Tuesday expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for approving the Bahuda Port project.

Details

- The Bahuda Port is a greenfield deep-sea port proposed in the Ganjam district of Odisha.
- **Significance & Implications**
  - Decongestion & Capacity: Paradip Port, which is already one of Odisha's major ports, handles a lot of cargo. Bahuda will help in distributing the load, especially for large dry bulk and container vessels.
  - Economic Growth: Expected to generate employment (direct & indirect), spur development of ancillary industries (warehousing, logistics, etc.), and improve trade connectivity.
  - Strategic / Policy Alignment: Ties in with national schemes like Maritime India Vision 2030 and Gati Shakti National Master Plan. It also aligns with Odisha's ambition to become a maritime & industrial hub.
  - Geographical Advantage: Located in southern Odisha (Ganjam district), the port will serve not just Odisha's hinterland but potentially neighbouring regions. Also makes use of coastal salt-land (converted for port use).

84th Annual Session of Indian Road Congress

Why in the News?

- The 84th Annual Session of the Indian Road Congress (IRC) is set to take place in Bhubaneswar from November 7 to 10, 2025, marking the sixth time Odisha will host this prestigious event.

Details

- The last IRC session in the state was held in 2015, marking its 75th edition.
- The Indian Road Congress, established in 1934, is a premier organisation for road engineers and professionals, playing a pivotal role in setting national standards for road construction, design, maintenance, management, and safety.

Skater Anahita Mishra

Why in the News?

- Ace roller skater Anahita Mishra did Odisha and India proud by striking gold at the Faro Inline Freestyle World Cup in Portugal.



Details

- The 14-year-old Cuttack girl thus became the first Asian to secure gold medal in the championship dominated by Europeans.
- Earlier this year, she bagged gold medals at the 13th Inline Freestyle Slalom meet in Poland's Kertzyn as well as in France's Rennes.

Debasish Patra

Why in the News?

- Fakir Mohan University Professor Debasish Patra, head of the department of Language and Literature, has been awarded the Bharatiya Bhasha Samman 2025 by the Bharatiya Bhasha Sammilani in Varanasi.



Details

- Bharatiya Bhasha Samman" typically refers to awards like the Bhasha Samman given by the Sahitya Akademi to recognize contributions to unrecognized and tribal languages. These awards are also sometimes used to refer to the Bhasha Bharati Samman from the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), which honors writers of books in Indian languages.

Largest green ammonia plant in Odisha

Why in the News?

- The largest green ammonia plant in Odisha is being developed in Gopalpur, Ganjam district, through a joint venture between ACME Group and Japan's IHI Corporation.

Key Details of the Project:

- Location: Gopalpur Industrial Park, Tata Steel Special Economic Zone (SEZ), Odisha
- Capacity: 1.2 MMTPA
- Technology Provider: Casale's FlexAMMONIA technology
- Energy Source: 100% renewable energy
- Target Commissioning: By 2029–30
- Primary Export Market: Japan
- Investment: ₹28,084 crore (approximately $3.4 billion)

George Tirkey

Why in the News?

- George Tirkeydied at about age 67 at a private hospital in Bhubaneswar.



Details

- George Tirkey was a four-time MLA from Biramitrapur (1995, 2000, 2009, 2014).
- He is known for raising issues concerning tribal land rights, displacement, and protection of tribal culture.
- He was earlier associated with the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) and later joined the Indian National Congress (INC).

Pushkara

Why in the News?

- The Odia film Pushkara won the Best Odia Film award at the 71st National Film Awards.

71st National Film Awards

- **Best Feature Film** (i.e. top national award) went to 12th Fail.
- Best Actor: Jointly awarded to Shah Rukh Khan for Jawan and Vikrant Massey for 12th Fail.
- Best Actress: Rani Mukerji for Mrs Chatterjee vs Norway.
- **Dadasaheb Phalke Award** (the lifetime achievement honor) was conferred on Mohanlal.

The Odisha Quad City Programme

Why in the News?

- The Odisha Quad City Programme is an ambitious urban development initiative launched by the Odisha government to transform key urban clusters into integrated economic zones, enhancing regional growth and global competitiveness.

Overview of the Quad City Programme

The programme aims to create three major economic zones by linking clusters of four significant cities in each zone:

1. Zone 1: Bhubaneswar, Puri, Cuttack, and Paradip
2. Zone 2: Sunabeda, Koraput, Bargarh, and Sambalpur
3. Zone 3: Rourkela, Keonjhar, and Barbil

The Quad City Programme is central to Odisha's broader vision of achieving a $500 billion economy by 2036 and a $1.5 trillion economy by 2047.

2025 edition of the Mukhyamantri Shikhya Puraskar,

Why in the News?

- In the 2025 edition of the Mukhyamantri Shikhya Puraskar, the top-performing districts in Odisha were recognized for their excellence in education.

Top 3 Districts in Mukhyamantri Shikhya Puraskar 2025

1. Jharsuguda – Awarded ₹3 crore for securing the first position.
2. Khordha – Secured the second position with ₹2 crore.
3. Jagatsinghpur – Ranked third, receiving ₹1 crore

A state-of-the-art Science City

Why in the News?

- As of September 2025, Bhubaneswar is in the planning stages of establishing a state-of-the-art Science City.

Vision and Features

- Modern scientific exhibition spaces

- Immersive learning centers
- Advanced research facilities
- Platforms for innovation and discovery

Existing Science Attractions in Bhubaneswar

While the new Science City is under development, Bhubaneswar currently boasts several science-related attractions:

- **Regional Science Centre:** A unit of the National Council of Science Museums, offering interactive exhibits and educational programs.
- **Pathani Samanta Planetarium**: Dedicated to astronomy, featuring night sky viewing and audio-visual programs.
- **Mobile Science Vans:** Launched by the Regional Science Centre to enhance scientific learning among students in remote areas

"Operation Chakra"

Why in the News?

- "Operation Chakra" is a comprehensive law enforcement initiative launched by the Puri Police in Odisha to combat rising criminal activities, including extortion, drug trafficking, and organized crime.

Operation Chakra employs a multi-faceted strategy to restore law and order in Puri

- **Increased Surveillance**: Enhanced patrolling and surveillance measures have been implemented to deter criminal activities.
- **Community Engagement:** The police are actively engaging with local communities to build trust and encourage cooperation in reporting crimes.
- **Inter-Agency Cooperation:** Collaboration with other law enforcement agencies ensures a coordinated effort in tackling organized crime.

The Second National Mediation Workshop

Why in the News?

- The Second National Mediation Workshop is scheduled to take place on Sunday, September 28, 2025, at the Lok Seva Bhawan Convention Hall in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Key points

- This significant event is organized by the Office of the Advocate General, Odisha, in collaboration with the Department of Law, Government of Odisha.
- It aims to promote mediation as an effective alternative dispute resolution mechanism, especially in light of the Mediation Act, 2023

Koraput Coffee

Why in the News?

- Koraput Coffee Cafe at Odisha Niwas (Delhi) was inaugurated recently (on 4 September 2025) by Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi.

Key points

- The cafe is meant as a place for the Odia community in Delhi to have access to Odia products and to keep connected with Odisha's food and culture. It also features Omfed products in the same venue.
- They serve Koraput Coffee — which is a 100% Arabica, single-origin coffee. The coffee is being promoted for its aroma and unique flavour.

Coffee Cultivation in Odisha

- Coffee is mainly grown in the Koraput district, which is part of the Eastern Ghats.
- The region's high altitude, cool climate, and rich soil make it suitable for Arabica coffee.

General Climatic Conditions for Coffee Cultivation

- **Temperature**
  - Ideal range: 15°C – 28°C.
  - Arabica: thrives at 15°C – 24°C.
  - Robusta: tolerates 24°C – 30°C.
  - Frost and very high temperatures are harmful.
- **Rainfall**
  - Requires 1,500 – 2,500 mm annually, well-distributed.
  - A dry spell is important for flowering.

  - Too much rain during flowering/harvest damages the crop.
- **Altitude**
  - Grows best at 600 – 2,000 meters above sea level.
  - Arabica prefers higher altitudes (900–1800 m).
  - Robusta can be grown at lower elevations (500–1000 m).
- **Shade & Sunlight**
  - Coffee is a shade-loving plant, especially Arabica.
  - Needs filtered sunlight, often grown under tall shade trees.
- **Soil**
  - Fertile, well-drained soil with good organic matter.
  - Slightly acidic pH (6.0 – 6.5) is best.
  - Laterite, volcanic, and loamy soils are most suitable.

Iconic Odisha Chess Premier League (IOCPL)

Why in the News?

- Odisha is hosting its first-ever Iconic Odisha Chess Premier League (IOCPL), an IPL-style professional chess event, from November 14-16, 2025, in Bhubaneswar.

Key points

- Organized by the All Odisha Chess Association (AOCA) and ICONIC Sports Federation, the league features a player auction on October 19, 2025, with a substantial prize fund of ₹10 lakh and a unique team structure including a minimum of four Odisha players and one female player per team.

"Never Alone" programme

Why in the News?

- AIIMS Bhubaneswar is taking a bold step to safeguard student mental health with the launch of the AI-driven 'Never Alone' app, designed to prevent suicides and provide continuous support.

Key points

- 'Never Alone' app is an AI-driven mental health and wellness platform aimed at students, launched by AIIMS-Delhi, and now also being implemented at AIIMS Bhubaneswar (Odisha) and a few other institutes.
- The goal is to reduce student suicides, provide timely support for stress, anxiety, emotional crises, and improve awareness of mental health

Zero Accident Day (ZAD) campaign

Why in the News?

- Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Saturday launched the 'Zero Accident Day' (ZAD) campaign in **Keonjhar district.**

Key points

- A road safety initiative launched by the Government of Odisha (Commerce & Transport Department) with technical help from IIT Madras (RBG Labs).
- **Goal:** To reduce road accidents by fostering behavioural change, increasing awareness, stricter enforcement, and engaging citizens. The motto is along the lines of "Come Home Safe."
- **Leadership & Inclusivity:** Women are being placed in lead roles for awareness and outreach. The campaign intends for women to act as ambassadors, encouraging safe driving behaviour within families and communities

Jeevan Jindabad

Why in the News?

- Statewide suicide-prevention and life-affirming awareness campaign launched by the Odisha government on World Suicide Prevention Day (Sept 10, 2025) to encourage resilience, spread awareness and reduce suicide.

Key points

- Why: to tackle rising suicides, especially among youth, by promoting mental-health awareness, community support, and early intervention.

- How they're rolling it out: district- and block-level programmes (events, plays, school/college activities), pledges to "value life", and a theme song/composition unveiled as part of the launch.
- **Notable mentions:** Odisha's chief minister and state ministers spoke at the launch urging people to.

Abhipsa Hota

Why in the News?

- Abhipsa, a kickboxer from Odisha's Balangir district, secured a bronze medal at the National Kickboxing Championship held in Chennai.



National Kickboxing Championship held in Chennai

- The Children & Cadet National Kickboxing Championship 2025 was held in Chennai from August 27 to 31 at the Nehru Indoor Stadium.
- Maharashtra won the Cadet category, while Tamil Nadu took first place in the Children category.
- The event was organized by WAKO India and the Tamil Nadu State Amateur Kickboxing Association (TNSKA).

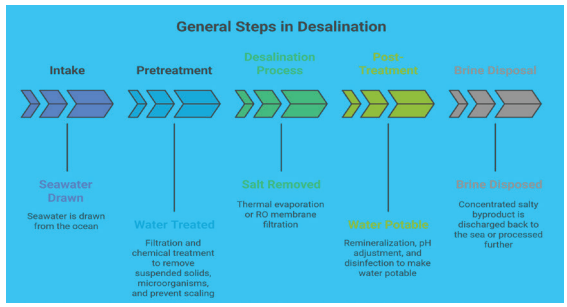
Odisha's first seawater desalination plant

Why in the News?

- Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Sunday inaugurated Odisha's first seawater desalination plant in Ganjam district.

Key points

- **Location:** Matikhal, near Chhatrapur in Ganjam district,
- **Operator / Developer**: Odisha Sands Complex (OSCOM), a unit of Indian Rare Earths Limited (IREL).
- **Technology:** Reverse Osmosis (RO), using technology developed by the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC).
- **Capacity:** 4.5 million litres per day (MLD)



Black Swan Summit 2026

Why in the News?

- Odisha will host the India edition of the Black Swan Summit in early 2026.

Key Points

- **Organized by:** It's being organised by the Global Finance & Technology Network (GFTN).
- **Themes:** will include FinTech, InsurTech, AI, quantum computing, tokenisation, emerging digital infrastructure etc.
- **Strategic Plans & Related Initiatives**
  - Odisha signed an MoU with GFTN and NUS-AIDF (National University of Singapore's Asian Institute of Digital Finance) in Jan 2025 to drive fintech innovation, skills development etc.
  - The state is building an Integrated Global Financial Technology Capability Hub (I-GFTCH) in Bhubaneswar.
  - As part of this, they plan a Certificate in FinTech & InsurTech (CFI) programme: 5 months hybrid training (online + in-person + projects +

internships) targeting over 7,000 students over 5 years. The first cohort (375 seats) starts in September 2025.

Saita Sata book

Why in the News?

- The book and a video song called Behal Barsha were launched together.

Key points

- **Author**: Dr. Arun Kumar Sahoo.
- **Language**: Odia.
- The launch was done by **Abhiram Biswal** (book) and **Choudhury Bikash Das** (song)

National Conference of SC/ST Welfare Committees of Parliament and State Legislatures

Why in the News?

- Lok Sabha Speaker Shri Om Birla inaugurated the two-day National Conference of Chairpersons of the Committees on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of Parliament and State Legislatures today in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Key priorities include:

- Ensuring government schemes reach the SC/ST communities effectively.
- Strengthening educational access for SC/ST students under various programs.
- Constituting or empowering legislative oversight committees to monitor implementation of welfare policies.
- Using the constitutional safeguards more effectively.
- Sharing and scaling best practices from different states

Manoj Bihari Das

Why in the News?

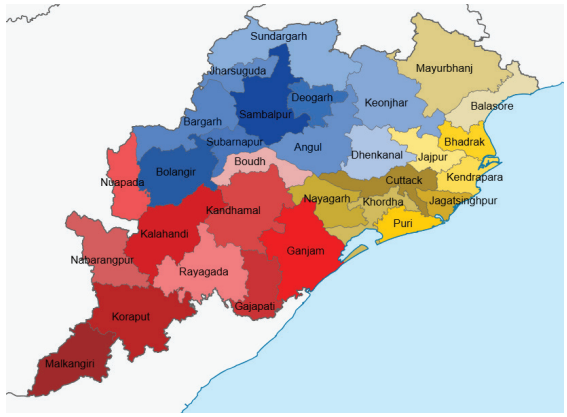
- Manoj Bihari Das, a 65-year-old retired officer from Balasore, Odisha, achieved a remarkable feat by winning a bronze medal at the Asian Bodybuilding Championship held in Thailand.



OMBRIC (Odisha Marine Biotechnology Research & Innovation Corridor)

Why in the News?

- Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Tuesday launched the Odisha Marine Biotechnology Research and Innovation Corridor (OMBRIC), an initiative to give fillip to bio-resources enterprises and startups.



Key Details / Objectives

- Odisha has a 574 km-long coastline with rich marine bio-resources. OMBRIC is intended to harness these resources responsibly.
- The initiative aims to convert scientific research into market-ready applications via incubation, IP generation, mentoring, etc.

- It will work in areas like gene discovery, bioactive compounds, bioremediation, nutraceuticals, etc.
- There's also a focus on environmental protection, science tourism, livelihood support for coastal communities, and aligning with Odisha and national development visions (like Viksit Odisha 2036 and Viksit India 2047).

Impacts / Significance

- It is expected to generate jobs in coastal Odisha and boost entrepreneurship.
- Helps in using marine biodiversity in a sustainable way — not just exploration, but also conservation, environment protection.
- Could make Odisha a leader in marine biotech, increasing its role in the blue economy.

Collaborating Institutions

- **IIT Bhubaneswar**: Specializes in mapping and monitoring coastal marine bio-resources.
- **NIT Rourkela: F**ocuses on cultivating marine microorganisms and extracting bioactive compounds.
- **IISER Berhampur:** Engages in gene discovery and structural elucidation of marine bioactive compounds.
- **ILS Bhubaneswa**r: Establishes a Marine Microbial Biorepository and promotes innovation in blue technology.
- **Berhampur Universit**y: Conducts marine biodiversity mapping and metabolite characterization.
- **Fakir Mohan University:** Supports various aspects of marine biotechnology research and innovation.

About blue economy

- The Blue Economy refers to the sustainable use of ocean, sea, and freshwater resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs, while preserving the health of aquatic ecosystems. It's an approach that balances economic development with environmental sustainability.
- **Key Components of the Blue Economy**
  - **Fisheries and Aquaculture**
    - » Sustainable fishing practices.
    - » Developing aquaculture (fish farming) to meet food demand.
    - » Preventing overfishing and maintaining marine biodiversity.



  - **Marine Tourism**
    - » Eco-tourism along coastal areas.
    - » Promoting activities like diving, boating, and coastal sightseeing without harming ecosystems.
  - **Shipping and Ports**
    - » Efficient port operations.
    - » Sustainable shipping practices to reduce emissions and marine pollution.
  - **Offshore Energy**
    - » Renewable energy sources like wind, tidal, and wave energy.
    - » Responsible exploitation of oil and gas while minimizing environmental damage.
  - **Marine Biotechnology**
    - » Exploring marine organisms for pharmaceuticals, biofuels, and industrial applications.
  - **Coastal Protection and Marine Conservation**
    - » Mangrove restoration, coral reef conservation.
    - » Mitigating climate change effects and protecting coastal communities.

Swasth Nari, Sashakt Parivar Abhiyan

Why in the News?

- Odisha launched of a transformative healthcare initiative, the *Swasth Nari, Sashakt Parivar Abhiyan* (Healthy Women, Empowered Families Campaign), on September 17, 2025.

Details

- The campaign, aimed at providing comprehensive health screening, nutrition, and wellness services for women and girls of all ages, will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Madhya Pradesh's Dhar district.
- The campaign's core objective is to promote women's health and nutrition, ensuring the holistic development of women and girls with the belief that "when girls are healthy, educated, and empowered, families thrive." Aligned with the PMMVY enrollment and National Nutrition Month (starting September 12), the initiative will emphasise nutritious food counselling, menstrual hygiene awareness, reducing oil and sugar consumption, preventing obesity, and promoting iron-rich foods and dietary diversity.
- Across Odisha's 30 districts, the campaign aims to screen women and girls for hypertension, diabetes, cancers (oral, breast, and cervical), anaemia, TB, sickle cell disease, and maternal health issues. Health camps will be organised at Ayushman Arogya Mandirs, PHCs, UPHCs, CHCs, UCHCs, and remote villages to ensure widespread access.

Women and Health

- **Sex Ratio at Birth:** The UNFPA State of World Population 2020 estimated the sex ratio at birth in India as 910, which is on the lower side of index.
- **Health of Adolescent Girls:** At the adolescent age 70% of the girls are anaemic and their problems related to their menstrual health and hygiene often go unaddressed.
- **Adolescent Fertility Rate (AFR):** The United Nations defines Adolescent Fertility Rate (AFR) as the annual number of births to women aged 15-19 years per 1,000 women.
  - Among 22 surveyed states as per, National Family Health Survey-5. Tripura recorded the highest AFR with 69 births per 1,000 women.
    - » The lowest adolescent fertility was recorded in Goa with 14 births per 1,000 women.
- **Teenage Pregnancies:** There are 3 times more chances of deaths of girls in teenage pregnancies. Reproductive and sexual health needs of women are often ignored.
  - About 113 women in India every year lose their lives as a result of libels due to teen pregnancies. Moreover, under-reporting of such deaths is also there.
- **Reproductive Health Issues**: 70% of women of India are suffering from reproductive tract infections which may lead to infertility, abortions and similar kinds of problems that are perceived as normal.
- Maternal Mortality Rate: Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) is defined as the number of maternal deaths during a given time period per 1,00,000 live births during the same time period.
  - MMR of the Country has declined to 113 in 2016-18 from 122 in 2015-17 and 130 in 2014-2016.
- **Women Amid the Pandemic**: Women who are working amid the pandemic as frontline workers, many of them don't have access to simple necessities at such times like PPE kits which makes them more vulnerable to infections.
  - There is an unmet need for women's menstrual products while wearing PPEs. unmet need for contraception.
  - Women, besides frontline workers, who get infected also have to face double trouble as they are supposed not only have to look after themselves but also other family members who are infected.
  - Even the women suffering from covid-19 who are admitted to the hospital, their mean number of days of admission are much less as compared to their male counterparts.
  - Among the school dropouts, the majority of them are girls.

Government Initiative to Ensure Health Facilities to Women

- Health and Wellness Centres: India has about 76,000 health and wellness centres which perform screening of 5 types of health issues;

hypertension, diabetes, breast cancer, oral cancer and cervical cancer.
  - Total footfalls in these health and wellness centres is about 46.4 crores. Out of these 24.91 crore i.e. 53.7% are women.
- Adolescent Friendly Health Services Program: Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram is there where female adolescents are sensitised about their health.
  - The programme also focuses on reaching out to all adolescents including Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ).
- Auxiliary Nurse Midwife:Auxiliary Nurse Midwife, commonly known as ANM, is a village-level female health worker in India who is known as the first contact person between the community and the health services.
- Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY): Janani Suraksha Yojana(JSY)is a safe motherhood intervention under the National Health Mission (NHM).
  - It was launched on 12th April 2005 and is being implemented in all states and UTs with special focus on low performing states.
  - JSY is a 100% centrally sponsored scheme and it integrates cash assistance with delivery and post-delivery care.
- Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY): It is a scheme for pregnant women and lactating mothers.
  - The scheme has crossed the mark of 1 crore beneficiaries.
  - Is a direct benefit transfer (DBT) scheme under which cash benefits are provided to pregnant women in their bank account directly to meet enhanced nutritional needs and partially compensate for wage loss.

Way Forward

- **Multisectoral Approach:** In order to ensure good health of women, the same should be tackled at multi sectoral level such as eradication of child marriages, access to contraceptives and healthcare facilities at all levels.
  - Maternal healthcare is no doubt important, but healthcare for women across her life span is where the focus should be the most.
  - Promoting better health, regular screening and preventive care are the areas that require attention..
- **Proximity to Healthcare Facilities**: There is reluctance on part of women themselves to prioritise their health.
  - Women access health facilities if it is available near their homes as they can barely take out time for themselves due to their multiple roles.
  - The mantra to ensure that women access healthcare facilities is to have reliable and good healthcare facilities near women.
- **Combined Efforts:** The empowerment shall come from within facilitated by the family members. Women must also prioritise their health and be aware of the facilities that are being provided to them by the government.
  - For pregnant women, regular checkups are mandatory and through these visits, their anaemia should be taken care of and ensure childbirths under safe circumstances.
  - Also the mindset of males in the society needs to be changed and they must also be educated.
  - Education is very critical to promote good health for women and eventually for all.

This historic initiative is expected to strengthen the health status of women and girls in Odisha, contributing meaningfully to the national vision of a developed India through healthy, empowered families.

Baliyatra

- The annual Baliyatra on the banks of the Mahanadi in Cuttack that commemorates age-old links between ancient Kalinga and Southeast Asia.
- About:
  - Baliyatra, literally ‘voyage to Bali’ is one of the country’s largest open-air fares.
  - Baliyatra is a week-long event which begins on Kartik Purnima (full moon night in the month of Kartik)

- Historical/Cultural Significance:
  - It is organised every year to commemorate the 2,000-year-old maritime and cultural links between ancient Kalinga (today's Odisha) and Bali and other South and Southeast Asian regions like Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Burma (Myanmar) and Ceylon (Sri Lanka).
  - According to historians, popular items of trade between Kalinga and Southeast Asia included pepper, cinnamon, cardamom, silk, camphor, gold, and jewellery.
  - The Bali Yatra celebrates the ingenuity and skill of those expert sailors who made Kalinga one of the most prosperous empires of its time.
- Commercial Significance:
  - Baliyatra has a significant commercial dimension in addition to its cultural and historical elements.
    - » It is a time when people purchase everything from automobiles and electronic devices to local artisanal products at prices that are comparatively low.
    - » The district administration allots more than 1,500 stalls to traders through an auction, and the fair is estimated to see business worth more than Rs 100 crore over the period it lasts.

About Kalinga links with Southeast Asia

- **Origin** – Growth of Ports: The Kalinga Empire (present-day Odisha) is known for its glorious maritime history. Due to the geographical location of Kalinga, this area saw the growth of ports as early as the 4th and the 5th century BC.
  - Some of the famous ports, Tamralipti, Manikpatna, Chelitalo, Palur and Pithunda allowed India to connect with other countries via the sea. Soon, the Kalingas had trade links with Srilanka, Java, Borneo, Sumatra, Bali and Burma.
    - » Bali formed a part of the four islands that were collectively called the Suvarnadvipa, today known as Indonesia.
- **Kalinga's Ships:** The Kalingas constructed large boats called the 'Boitas' and with the help of these, they traded with the Indonesian islands.
  - The Bay of Bengal was once known as the Kalinga Sea as it was thronged by these ships.
  - The dominance of the Kalingas over the sea routes can be understood from the fact that Kalidasa in his Raghuvamsa referred to the King of Kalinga as 'The Lord of the Sea'.
- **Cultural Exchange with Indonesia:** The Kalingas frequently traded with the island of Bali. The trade-in commodities also led to the interchange of ideas and beliefs.
  - Odia merchants formed settlements in Bali and influenced its culture and ethics which led to the growth of Hinduism in the region.
    - » Hinduism blended well with the Balinese concepts and even today, 'Balinese Hinduism' is practised by a majority of their population.
- They worship various Hindu Gods such as Shiva, Vishnu, Ganesha and Brahma.
- Shiva was considered to be the presiding deity and believed to be the elder brother of Buddha.
  - The Balinese also celebrate Hindu Festivals such as Shivaratri, Durga Pooja and Saraswati Pooja.
    - » The 'Masakapan ke Tukad' festival celebrated in Bali is similar to the Bali Yatra festival in Odisha. Both are celebrated in the memory of their maritime ancestors.

Subhadra Shakti Mela 2025

Why in the News?

- The Subhadra Shakti Mela 2025 held in Bhubaneswar.

Key points

- Dates: 1 November – 12 November 2025.
- Venue: IDCO Exhibition Ground, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- Hosted by: The state government's Mission Shakti Department (Odisha).
- Participation: Over 300 women-led Self-Help Groups (SHGs) from Odisha + invited SHGs from 11 other state

The 10th Film Preservation and Restoration Workshop India (FPRWI 2025)

Why in the News?

- The 10th Film Preservation and Restoration Workshop India (FPRWI 2025) is being held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, from November 12 to 19, 2025.

Key points

- **Venue:** The workshop is taking place at the Kalabhoomi Odisha Crafts Museum in Bhubaneswar. Organizers: It is an initiative of the Film Heritage Foundation (FHF), in association with the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF), and in partnership with the Government of Odisha.
- **Objective**: The program aims to train participants from India and around the world in the theory and practical skills required for film and audio-visual archiving, including conservation of analogue and digital films, photographs, and related materials.
- **Key Dignitaries:** Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi is the Chief Guest for the opening ceremony, and legendary actress Waheeda Rehman is the Guest of Honour.
- **Focus on Odia Cinem**a: The workshop is highlighting the urgent need to preserve Odia film heritage, which is currently endangered. As part of the event, the FHF's 4K restoration of the acclaimed Odia film "Maya Miriga" (1984) is being screened.

The NaMo Semiconductor Laboratory in Odisha

Why in the News?

- The NaMo Semiconductor Laboratory in Odisha was approved in October 2025 and is in the process of being established at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bhubaneswar.

Key points

Union Minister of Electronics and Information Technology, Ashwini Vaishnaw, approved the project, which will be funded by his MPLAD (Members of Parliament Local Area Development) scheme at an estimated cost of ₹4.95 crore.

The lab's key objectives and status in late 2025:

- **Purpose:** The lab is designed to equip youth with industry-ready skills in semiconductor design, training, and fabrication, thus creating a deep talent pool for India's growing chip manufacturing and packaging ecosystem.
- **Location**: It is strategically located at IIT Bhubaneswar, which already hosts the Silicon Carbide Research and Innovation Centre (SiCRIC), to leverage existing infrastructure and R&D capabilities.
- **Integration with Industry:** The lab is intended to complement and support the two major commercial semiconductor projects recently approved for Odisha under the India Semiconductor Mission: a Silicon Carbide (SiC)-based compound semiconductor facility by SiCSem Private Limited and an advanced 3D glass packaging facility.

Vedanta to invest in Odisha

Why in the News?

- Vedanta has recently announced a significant new investment of over ₹1 lakh crore (approximately USD 12 billion) in Odisha for the expansion of its metals and mining operations.

Key projects under this new investment plan include:

- **New Aluminium and Alumina Facilities**: Plans include a greenfield 6 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) alumina refinery in **Rayagada distric**t and a 3 MTPA aluminium smelter near Kamakhyanagar in Dhenkanal district. These facilities are intended to produce "green" aluminium using renewable energy and position Odisha as a global aluminium hub.
- **Ferro Alloys Plant:** An ultra-modern ferro-alloys plant will be established in the **Keonjhar district** with an investment of ₹2,000 crore to enhance the state's role in the global metal value chain.
- **Aluminium Park**s: Two new state-of-the-art aluminium parks are planned, one near the existing Jharsuguda facility and another at a government-identified site. These parks aim to attract downstream industries and MSMEs to produce high-grade aluminium alloys for sectors such as aerospace, electric vehicles, and defence.
- **Job Creation**: The overall investment is expected to generate more than 1 lakh direct and indirect employment opportunities in the state.
- **Vedanta University**: The company has also expressed a renewed interest in setting up a world-class university in Odisha, with the state government assuring full support for site selection and necessary clearances

Indian Roads Congress (IRC) 84th Annual Session

Why in the News?

- The session is scheduled to be held **7–10 November 2025** at Janata Maidan, Bhubaneswar.

Key points

- The venue hosts both the conference and the technical exhibition.
- It marks the sixth time Odisha is hosting the IRC annual session (previous times: 1954, 1982, 1994, 2005, 2015).

Shankar Parida

Why in the News?

- **Shankar Parida died late on 30 October 2025 while undergoing treatment for lung cancer at AIIMS Bhubaneswar in Odisha.**



Key points

- He served in key roles in Odisha's local governance: e.g., as Chairperson of the Puri Zilla Parishad, and also engaged in literary work (as a poet) in the Odia language.

OTV Business Odisha Awards 2025

Why in the News?

- **OTV Business Odisha Awards 2025 honours enterprises driving State's growth**

Key points

- This flagship initiative recognised top-performing organisations across seven key sectors — education, health, jewellery, manufacturing, real estate, startups & entrepreneurship, and business — for their high-quality products and public-focused services.

Notable Awardees

- Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) Deemed to be University: Received the "Best University - Quality Education & Research" award in the 2024 edition.
- SUM Ultimate Medicare: A part of the SOA Group, it was honored as the "Best Multi Super Speciality Quaternary Care Hospital" in 2024 and received the "Pioneer in Advanced Healthcare" award at the 2025 event.
- Tata Steel Limited: Recognized for "Sustainable Value Creator Of Odisha".
- Khimji Jewellers/Group: Awarded as the "Most Trusted Jewellery Brand" and for "Best Business Practices In Industry".
- Apollo Hospitals, Bhubaneswar: Received the "Best Patient-Centric Hospital" award.

Odisha's literary and artistic excellence

Why in the News?

- The 46th Sarala Puraskar Conferred on Devdas Chhotray: 'Ila-Bansidhar Panda Kala Samman' for Guru Ramhari Das and Baladev Maharatha.



Key points

- Noted poet and fiction writer **Devdas Chhotray** received the 46th Sarala Puraskar, instituted by the Indian Metals Public Charitable Trust (IMPaCT), which is presented annually for outstanding literary achievement.
- The award, comprising a copper plaque and a cash prize of ₹7 lakh, was presented by eminent Hindi poet and writer Prof. Savita Singh for Chhotray's short-story collection Matinee Show, published by Timepass Publication.
- In addition, legendary Odissi musician and vocalist **Guru Ramhari Da**s and eminent painter Baladev Maharatha were honoured with the 'Ila-Bansidhar Panda Kala Samman'. Each received a citation plaque and a cash award of ₹2.5 lakh.
- The event drew writers and literature enthusiasts from across the state, marking a memorable celebration of Odisha's literary and artistic excellence.
- Founded in 1974 by Dr. Bansidhar Panda and Mrs. Ila Panda, the Indian Metals Public Charitable Trust (IMPaCT) has been instrumental in promoting Odia literature and culture through initiatives such as the Sarala Puraskar (instituted in 1980), Ila-Bansidhar Panda Kala Samman, and Ekalabya Puraskar.

NAMO Semiconductor Laboratory'

Why in the News?

- Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has approved the establishment of this laboratory at IIT Bhubaneswar at a cost of approximately ₹4.95 crore.

Objective:

- The main goal of this laboratory is to provide semiconductor training, design, and fabrication skills to Indian youth according to industry needs. This will increase the number of professionals involved in chip design in the country.

Role:

- Talent Development: The lab will train skilled professionals for the chip manufacturing and packaging units being set up across the country (such as Micron, Tata, etc.).
- Strengthening the Ecosystem: It will accelerate India's rapidly developing semiconductor

ecosystem and promote initiatives like Make in India and Design in India.

Why IIT Bhubaneswar was Chosen:

- Due to the institute's growing role in semiconductor research and its existing infrastructure.
- It already houses the Silicon Carbide Research and Innovation Centre (SiCRIC), and the new lab will enhance its capabilities further.
- Odisha has recently received approval for two advanced semiconductor projects (Silicon Carbide and 3D Glass Packaging) under the India Semiconductor Mission, positioning the state as an emerging semiconductor hub.

Semiconductor Units in India:

- The country has approved a total of 10 semiconductor units so far.
- These include major fabrication units by Tata and Foxconn-HCL in Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh, Micron's ATMP (Assembly, Testing, Marking, and Packaging) facility in Gujarat, and other units in Odisha, Punjab, and Andhra Pradesh

Swetaparna Panda

Why in the News?

- Swetaparna Panda, the badminton player, has been selected for the 33rd Ekalabya Puraskar for 2025.



Key points

- The award, presented by the IMPaCT, includes a cash prize of ₹7 lakh, a trophy, and recognition for outstanding achievements in sports. Weightlifter Pritismita Bhoi and tennis player Aahaan will also be honored with citations

Guru Mukund Dev Sahoo

Why in the News?

- Odisha's Pride Guru Mukund Dev Sahoo To Represent India At Cosmopolis Festival In Hong Kong.



Key points

- Sahoo will mesmerize the audience with his soulful performance, "Om-Tvam: The Eternal Yogic Sound of India," showcasing the spiritual depth and richness of India's classical music traditions.
- Guru Mukund Dev Sahoo will make history as the first Odia artist to perform at the prestigious Cosmopolis Festival 2025. His captivating performance, "Om-Tvam: The Eternal Yogic Sound of India," will introduce the rich spiritual and musical heritage of Odisha to a global audience, showcasing the depth of Indian classical music traditions.

Odisha's second Regional Plant Resource Centre (RPRC)

Why in the News?

- Odisha's second Regional Plant Resource Centre (RPRC) is planned for Sanaghagara in Keonjhar district, with completion expected by 2027

Key points

- **Project highlights**: The center will include gardens for orchids, medicinal plants, wild edible fruits, bamboo, and cactus.
- **Eco-tourism focus:** The project will incorporate the existing Sanaghagara waterfall and nature camp, creating a new destination for nature-based learning and sustainable tourism in northern Odisha.
- **Visitor facilities:** Plans include an orchid conservation and display unit, a lotus garden, a flower market, and a children's play area.
- **Sustainability:** Structures within the center will be built using locally sourced stone and wood to maintain a natural aesthetic

Dhanu Yatra

Why in the News?

- The annual Dhanu Yatra, one of the world's largest open-air theatrical festivals, will be held in Bargarh, Odisha, from December 24, 2025, to January 3, 2026.

Key points

- The 11-day festival re-enacts the mythological tale of Lord Krishna and his demon uncle, King Kansa.
- The Dhanu Yatra typically runs for 11 days, with a narrative that follows the "Krishna Leela" and "Mathura Vijay"
- Bargarh town becomes Mathura, the kingdom of King Kansa.
- The nearby Ambapali village is decorated to represent Gopapura, where Krishna spent his childhood.
- The Jira River, which separates the two areas, symbolizes the Yamuna River.
- The play has no written script; actors and the public move around to follow the events as they unfold.

The mythological story

- The play depicts the narrative of Krishna from the Bhagavata Purana, including his mischievous childhood and heroic deeds. The story begins with the wedding of Devaki and Vasudeva and concludes with Krishna slaying the tyrant Kansa.

New NIELIT Centre in Balasore

Why in the News?

- A new NIELIT centre in Balasore was virtually inaugurated by Union Minister Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw on October 2, 2025

Key points

- The platform is designed to democratize access to high-quality digital education. The Minister also inaugurated five other NIELIT Centres at Muzaffarpur in Bihar, Balasore in Odisha, Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh, Lunglei in Mizoram and Daman.
- The Centre offers courses in AI, Cybersecurity, Semiconductors, and other emerging technologies. Advanced digital platforms will deliver future-ready training to Odisha's youth. Students from across the state can now access high-tech learning opportunities.
- The inauguration of the NIELIT Centre in Balasore marks a major milestone in Odisha's digital journey. By offering advanced courses in AI, Cybersecurity, and Semiconductors, the Centre empowers students with future-ready skills. This initiative strengthens Odisha's role in India's digital transformation and opens new doors for youth across the state to thrive in the tech-driven economy.

Odisha tops in human trafficking

Why in the News?

- Odisha tops in human trafficking in country for third consecutive year

Key points

- According to the latest report released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) on Monday, 1,305 people were trafficked from the state, surpassing Maharashtra (935) and Telangana (626).
- This is for the third consecutive year that Odisha has topped the human trafficking chart. Interestingly, the NCRB data shows that the proportion of men (661) trafficked was higher than women (644). In 2022, as many as 1,120 people including 502 women were trafficked, while the number stood at 1,475 including 735 women in 2021.
- At least 26.7 per cent of the victims (348 people) in 2023 were below the age of 18, of which 181 were girls. The number of trafficked minors was 353 in 2022 and 291 in 2021.
- Odisha has, though, recorded the highest number of rescues in the country. As many as 1,246 victims trafficked in previous years were rescued by law enforcement agencies in 2023 alone. Among them were 649 men, 597 women and 342 below 18 years.
- According to the NCRB data, forced labour, sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, forced marriage and petty crimes were the major purposes behind human trafficking in the state.
- Odisha currently has 36 Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs), one in each police district, through which such cases are being registered and monitored. The NCRB has been collecting trafficking-related data from these units across India since 2016.

40th National Junior Athletics Championships\

Why in the News?

- Bhubaneswar Hosts 40th National Junior Athletics at Kalinga Stadium from Oct 10-14
- The event is organised by the Athletics Federation of India (AFI).
- It will be held from 10 October to 14 October 2025 in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- The venue indicated is the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar.

Eastern India's Largest Fish Market In Bhubaneswar

Why in the News?

- PM Modi Lays Foundation Stone For Eastern India's Largest Fish Market In Bhubaneswar.

Key Points

- The project is part of the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) with an allocation of Rs 50 crore. The overall project cost is expected to be around Rs 60 to 80 crore.
- The market will integrate wholesale and retail facilities, cold storage, solar energy systems, and trader houses, creating a modern hub for fish trade in the region.

Aims and Objectives

- Harnessing of fisheries potential
- Enhancing of fish production and productivity
- Modernizing and strengthening of value chain – post -harvest management and quality improvement
- Doubling fishers and fish farmers incomes and generation of employment
- Enhancing contribution to Agriculture GVA and exports
- Social, physical and economic security for fishers and fish farmers
- Robust fisheries management and regulatory framework

Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)

- Launched on September 10, 2020 by the Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying for a period of five years from 2020-21 to 2024-25.

- The scheme has now been extended up to 2025–26.
- National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) is the nodal agency for implementing the training, awareness and capacity-building programmes under PMMSY.
- PMMSY will be implemented as an umbrella scheme having both Centrally Sector Components and Centrally Sponsored Scheme Components.

Strategic Initiatives

- Empowering women in fisheries: Provides up to 60% financial assistance for women-oriented projects and supports climate-resilient coastal villages.
- Technology Adoption: Scaled up Biofloc and Recirculatory Aquaculture System (RAS) units to boost productivity sustainably.
- Formalization & Digitalization: The Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah Yojana (PM-MKSSY), sub-scheme of PMMSY, and National Fisheries Digital Platform (NFDP) formalize the sector and offer single-window access to benefits.
- Climate Resilient Coastal Fishermen Villages (CRCFV): The development of 100 CRCFV aims to enhance climate resilience in coastal communities.

Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das

Why in the News?

- On October 9, 2025, Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and other dignitaries paid floral tributes to Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das on his birth anniversary at the state Assembly premises in Bhubaneswar.

About Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das

- Pandit Gopabandhu Das (1877–1928), popularly known as "Utkalmani" or the Jewel of Odisha, was a highly influential freedom fighter, social reformer, journalist, and poet from Odisha.

Contributions to education

- Satyabadi Bana Vidyalaya: Das founded the Satyabadi Bana Vidyalaya in 1909 near Puri, inspired by the ancient gurukul system. The school aimed to instill a liberal, non-sectarian education that fostered a strong sense of nationalism and civic duty among students.
- Holistic education: He emphasized the holistic development of students—physically, mentally, and spiritually—and believed that education was a key tool for creating a free and just society.
- Social inclusion: The school broke with tradition by allowing students of all castes and backgrounds to study and dine together, challenging the norms of untouchability.



Role in the freedom movement

- Utkal Sammilani: A member of the regional organization Utkal Sammilani since 1903, Das worked towards the amalgamation of all Odia-speaking regions into a single administrative unit.
- Indian National Congress: He brought the Utkal Sammilani under the umbrella of the Indian National Congress in 1920 and became the first president of the Utkal Pradesh Congress Committee.
- Non-Cooperation Movement: He was a staunch supporter of Mahatma Gandhi and led the Non-Cooperation Movement in Odisha. He invited Gandhi to the state in 1921 to mobilize people against British rule.

- Imprisonment: His activism led to his arrest and imprisonment for two years in Hazaribagh jail, where he wrote some of his most famous poems.
- Father of the National Movement: Subhas Chandra Bose referred to him as the "father of the national movement in Orissa".

Journalism and literature

- "The Samaja": In 1919, Das founded the Odia weekly newspaper The Samaja, which later became a daily. He used the paper to highlight the problems of the masses, spread the message of freedom, and promote social and national awareness.
- Literary works: A gifted poet, Das's writings include Kara Kabita (Prison Poems) and Bandira Atmakatha (The Prisoner's Autobiography), which reflect his nationalist ideals and indomitable spirit. Another famous work, Dharmapada, motivated Indians to embrace nationalism.

Social and humanitarian work

- Relief efforts: Das and his volunteers were noted for their selfless service during natural calamities, such as the 1912 flood and the 1918 influenza epidemic, earning him the title "Utkalmani".
- Puri Seva Samiti: He established this voluntary organization to help cholera victims, which eventually led to the creation of a dedicated hospital for them.
- Crusade against social evils: He campaigned extensively against social injustices like untouchability and advocated for widow remarriage and women's education.

Mahila Su Vahak' Scheme

Why in the News?

- The Odisha govt intends to launch a new programme to empower women in the driving profession. Tentatively named 'Atmanirbhar Mahila Su Vahak' (Ama Su Vahak), the proposed initiative seeks to provide women with entrepreneurial opportunities in the transportation sector.

Key features of the Ama Su Vahak program include:

- Providing interest-free loans of up to ₹10 lakh for eligible women to purchase taxis. The state government will cover the 11% annual interest charged by the bank, with the loan repayable over five years.
- Targeting the creation of 1,100 women mobility entrepreneurs over four years, starting with 200 beneficiaries in the first year and increasing incrementally each year.
- Offering an additional incentive of ₹2 lakh for those who purchase electric vehicles.
- Providing free training in various aspects including driving, vehicle maintenance, and customer service.
- Setting eligibility criteria for women between 21 and 40 years old with an annual family income up to ₹3 lakh, requiring a valid driving license and completion of skill enhancement training.
- Giving preference to women with prior experience in driving government buses, members of self-help groups, and beneficiaries of the "Subhadra Yojana"

The Vyommitra robot

Why in the News?

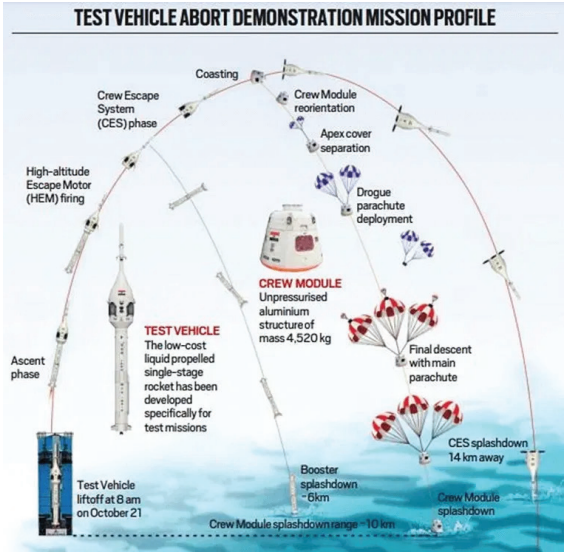
- The Vyommitra robot was developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), with key components manufactured by the Central Tool Room and Training Centre (CTTC) in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Vyommitra's development

- Primary developer: ISRO is the main developer of Vyommitra for its Gaganyaan mission.
- Key components: The CTTC in Bhubaneswar manufactured critical components, including the robot's head, arms, and partial torso.
- Collaboration: While CTTC manufactured parts, the final integration was handled at the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) in Kerala.

Features and purpose

- **"Space friend"**: The name Vyommitra is derived from the Sanskrit words vyoma (space) and mitra (friend), a perfect description of its role as a companion for astronauts.
- **Half-humanoid:** Vyommitra is a semi-humanoid robot with a head, torso, and arms, but no legs. This design allows it to perform essential tasks within the spacecraft.
- **Mission role:** Before a manned mission, Vyommitra will travel on uncrewed flights to test and validate spacecraft systems. It will simulate human functions and help scientists understand the effects of microgravity and radiation on the human body.
- **Capabilities:** The robot can perform control panel operations, monitor environmental conditions, and communicate with mission control.



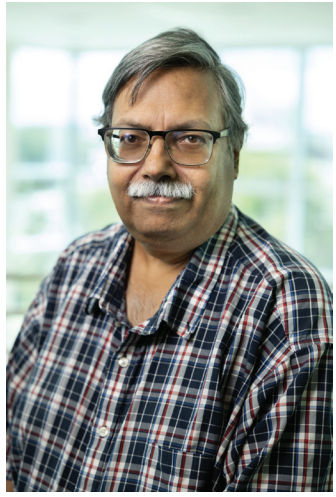
About Gaganyaan Mission

- Gaganyaan is the 1st human space flight programme of ISRO.
- Objective: To demonstrate indigenous capability of human space flight to low earth orbit.
- Launch vehicle: GSLV-Mk III, also called the LVM-3 (Launch Vehicle Mark-3).
- Payloads:
  - Crew Module: It is the spacecraft carrying human beings.
  - Service Module: It will support the crew module and is powered by liquid propellant engines.
- This mission consists of:
  - Two unmanned missions (G1 & G2): 2nd uncrewed mission (G2) will carry "Vyommitra" (a female-looking humanoid robot developed by ISRO to function on-board the Gaganyaan).
  - One manned mission (G3): The Orbital Module of the crewed mission will carry three Indian astronauts, including a woman into space for 7 days. It will orbit the Earth at a low-earth-orbit at an altitude of 300-400 km.
- India will become the 4th nation in the world to launch a Human Spaceflight Mission after the USA, Russia, and China.
- Russia and France are cooperating with India for the Gaganyaan mission.

Dr. Jaydip Mukherjee

Why in the News?

- Dr. Jaydip Mukherjee, a Director at the Geological Survey of India (GSI), was honored with the National Geoscience Award 2024 in the team category for his significant contributions to the field of geosciences.



Key points

- He was part of a distinguished team comprising Smt. Sradhanjali Subhadarshini and Shri Supriya Chakraborty, all of whom were recognized for their work in the discovery and exploration of coal, lignite, and coal bed methane (CBM) resources of economic and strategic importance.

About National Geoscience Awards

- **The National Geoscience Awards, instituted in 1966 by the Ministry of Mines**, aim to honor outstanding contributions in the fields of mineral discovery, mining technology, mineral beneficiation, and geosciences

Bijay Kumar Satpathy

Why in the News?

- Bijay Kumar Satpathy passed away on September 22, 2025.



Career Highlights

- National Champion: Satpathy clinched five consecutive national weightlifting titles from 1977–78 to 1982–83, representing both the Indian Navy and Indian Railways.
- International Medals:
  - Silver medal at the 1982 Commonwealth Games in Brisbane.
  - Gold at the 1981 Mini Commonwealth Games in Brisbane.
  - Bronze medals at the 1981 and 1983 Asian Weightlifting Championships.
- Arjuna Award: In 1982, he was honored with the Arjuna Award, one of India's highest sports accolades, by then-President Giani Zail Singh

Odisha Pro T20 League 2025

Why in the News?

- The Cuttack Panthers etched their name in history by clinching the title in the inaugural Odisha Pro T20 League 2025.



Key points

- The tournament, which ran from September 17 to 26, featured six competitive teams: Cuttack Panthers, Bhubaneswar Tigers, Puri Titans, Sambalpur Warriors, Rourkela Steelers, and Keonjhar Miner.

Odisha NCRB 2023 Report

Why in the News?

- Odisha Ranks 11th Nationally as NCRB 2023 Report Reveals Alarming Trends in Crime.

Key points

- From atrocities against women and children to Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities, as well as cyber crimes, the state ranks 11th nationally according to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) report for 2023, released by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.

- Key highlights from the report position Odisha prominently in several negative rankings:
  - **Third** in crimes against women,
  - **Fourth** in cases against Scheduled Tribes,
  - **Fifth** against Scheduled Castes, fourth in POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) cases, and
  - **Sixth** overall in crimes against children.
- The state also ranks 10th in cyber crimes. While case registration and chargesheet filing rates are satisfactory—over 85%—the conviction rate is alarmingly low at just 11.6% overall. For crimes against women, it's 9.3%; against children, 8.1%; and for SC/ST cases, under 6%—figures that raise serious concerns about justice delivery.

Guru Gopinath Swain

Why in the News?

- Guru Gopinath Swain (Padma Shri, Odisha folk artist) passed away at the age of 107.



Key points

- He was born in 1918 (15 February 1918) and began learning the Krishna Leela tradition at age 10 under his uncle.
- He was awarded the Padma Shri in 2024 in recognition of his lifelong dedication to folk art.

About Krishna Leela

- It is a vibrant and devotional folk theatre form of Odisha that dramatizes episodes from the life of Lord Krishna, especially his childhood and youth in Vrindavan and Mathura. It blends music, dance, dialogue, and storytelling, making it both a spiritual and cultural celebration.

Cultural & Artistic Features

- **Form**: It's a folk theatre tradition, performed mostly in rural Odisha, especially in Ganjam and Gajapati districts.
- **Language**: The dialogues and songs are in Odia, using a mix of classical and folk idioms.
- **Performance style:**
  - Actors wear colorful costumes, turbans, crowns, and traditional ornaments.
  - Musical instruments like mridanga, harmonium, cymbals, and violin accompany the performance.
  - The performance often begins in the evening and continues late into the night.
- **Themes**: Episodes from Bhagavata Purana and Harivamsa are popular sources.

Gyana Yagnya Mandap

Why in the News?

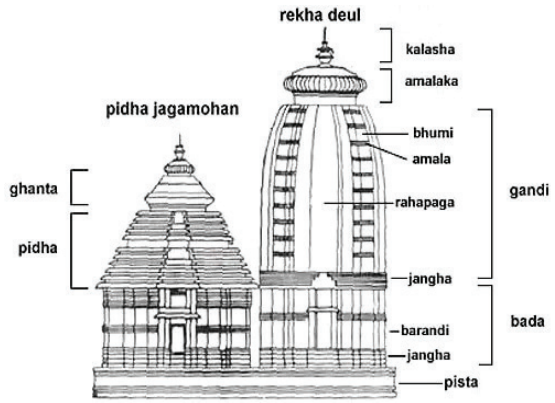
- Odisha set up a digital library named Gyana Yagnya Mandap in Puri to preserve rare records, manuscripts, and temple chronicles of Jagannath Temple.

Key points

- The Gyana Yagnya Mandap will digitally archive some of the oldest and most sacred records associated with the Jagannath Temple, including,
  - Madala Panji: The historic temple chronicle that records rituals, events, and royal patronage over centuries.
  - Palm-leaf manuscripts detailing traditional temple rituals and religious scriptures.
  - Daily ritual manuals of Lord Jagannath and associated deities.
  - Other administrative and cultural documents reflecting the temple's historical significance.

About Jagannath Puri temple

- The temple is believed to have been constructed in the 12th century by King Anatavarman Chodaganga Deva of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty.
- Jagannath Puri temple is called 'Yamanika Tirtha' where, according to the Hindu beliefs, the power of 'Yama', the god of death has been nullified in Puri due to the presence of Lord Jagannath.
- This temple was called the "White Pagoda" and is a part of Char Dham pilgrimages (Badrinath, Dwaraka, Puri, Rameswaram).
- There are four gates to the temple- Eastern 'Singhdwara' which is the main gate with two crouching lions, Southern 'Ashwadwara', Western 'Vyaghra Dwara' and Northern 'Hastidwara'. There is a carving of each form at each gate.
- In front of the entrance stands the Aruna stambha or sun pillar, which was originally at the Sun Temple in Konark.



Committee on Finance in the Lok Sabha

Why in the News?

- **Bhartruhari Mahtab** has been appointed Chairperson of the Committee on Finance in the Lok Sabha.

Key points

- Bhartruhari Mahtab is an Indian politician from Odisha. He served as the pro tem speaker of the Lok Sabha from 24th June, 2024 to 26th June, 2024 after the 2024 Indian general election.

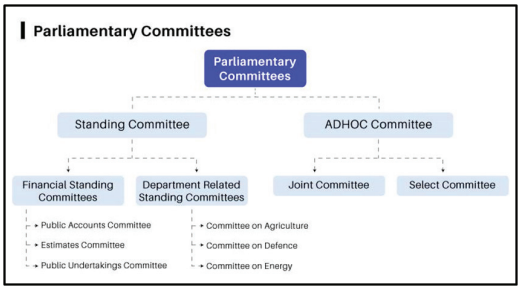


The Parliamentary Committee on Finance

- It is a permanent, Departmentally Related Standing Committee (DRSC) of the Indian Parliament that provides oversight on financial matters and policies across ministries and departments, including examining Demands for Grants and bills.
- Composed of members from both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, the Committee is constituted annually, with a term of one year, and serves a crucial role in the Parliament's control over public expenditure.
- **Composition and Tenure**
  - **Members**: The Committee has 31 members, with 21 elected from the Lok Sabha and up to 10 from the Rajya Sabha.
  - **Term:** The term of office for the members is one year.
  - **Chairperson:** The Speaker of the Lok Sabha appoints the Chairperson.
- **Functions and Powers**
  - **Legislative Scrutiny:** The Committee examines Bills and Demands for Grants presented to the Parliament.
  - **Policy Oversight:** It scrutinizes the policies and budgets related to specific ministries and

departments, ensuring financial prudence, accountability, and transparency.

- **Reports:** The Committee presents its observations and recommendations in reports, which are adopted by the Parliament.
- **Action Taken Replies**: Ministries are required to furnish action taken replies on the recommendations contained in the Committee's reports.



Role of Financial Committees in the Institutionalisation of the Indian Parliament:

- **Examine the Government's Accounts**: Examination of government expenditures fosters a culture of transparency and prudent financial management within the parliamentary system.
  - For example, the role of PAC concerning financial propriety and utilisation of funds.
  - The role of the Estimates Committee in suggesting 'economies' in public spending.
  - The role of CoPU in overviewing the accounts of PSUs.
- **Holds Government accountable**: By questioning the Government - ministers and officials on their policies, actions, and decisions.
  - For example, The Public Accounts Committee (PAC), which has the responsibility of examining the audit reports of the CAG, has the power to call officials to testify.
- **Inquiry and investigation into Government policies:** Scrutinise various aspects of government policies, programs and schemes.
  - For example, A Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance, headed by Veerappa Moily, was formed in 2016 on the government's demonetisation move.
- **Thorough Examination:** Strengthening the effectiveness of parliamentary oversight, even for less politically significant topics.
  - For example, the PAC, in a 2015 report, highlighted several concerns plaguing the defence shipyards segment, whereas no questions were asked in the Lok Sabha upon the same.

PM Dhan Dhanya Krishi Yojana-Odisha

Why in the News?

- The four districts of Odisha included in the PM Dhan Dhanya Krishi Yojana are Kandhamal, Malkangiri, Nuapada, and Sundargarh.

Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY)

- The Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY) is a new initiative approved by the Union Cabinet, aimed at addressing disparities in agricultural productivity across different regions of India.

Key Features

- Implemented through the convergence of 36 existing schemes across 11 departments.
- Incorporates schemes like Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) and PM Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY).
- Encourages local partnerships with the private sector.
- Annual outlay of ₹24,000 crore for six years.
- Follows the model of NITI Aayog's Aspirational Districts Programme.

Objectives

- Address productivity disparities between states and within districts.
- Promote higher productivity and value addition in agriculture and allied sectors.

- Enhance local livelihood creation, increase domestic production, and achieve self-reliance.

Implementation Strategy

- 100 districts will be identified based on:
  - Low productivity and cropping intensity.
  - Lesser credit disbursement.

Challenges and Considerations

- There is a trend of decreasing public spending on agriculture:
  - Decline from 3.53% in 2021-22 to 2.51% in 2025-26 of the total Central Plan outlay.
- Potential risks if public investment continues to decrease.
- Importance of private-public partnerships for self-reliance, especially in the production of food grains, edible oil, and pulses.

Operational Framework

- The scheme will focus on 'District Plans' aligned to national goals such as
  - Crop diversification.
  - Conservation of water and soil health.
  - Self-sufficiency in agriculture and allied sectors.
- Center to monitor 117 key indicators of progress on a monthly basis.
- Involvement of:
  - States and local self-governments.
  - Primary agriculture cooperative societies.
  - Agriculture universities and organizations of farmers and traders.

Odisha Urban Conclave 2025

Why in the News?

- The Housing & Urban Development Department organized the two-day event to align with the long-term goals of Viksit Odisha by 2036 and Viksit Bharat by 2047.

Key points

- The conclave was organised by the Housing & Urban Development Department, Government of Odisha.
- It was a two-day event held on 23rd & 24th October 2025, in Bhubaneswar, at the Convention Centre Auditorium, Lok Seva Bhawan Campus.
- The theme: **"Sustainable Urban Development & Governance** – Towards Viksit Odisha @2036 and Viksit Bharat @2047".
- Alternate/related theme cited: "Collaborate. Build. Progress." for the inauguration day

Focused Areas

- **Urban Governance & Infrastructure**: strengthening institutional capacity of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), improving transparency and service delivery.
- **Urban Planning & Mobility**: promoting integrated planning, inclusive mobility and transit-oriented development.
- **Digital / e-Governance:** leveraging platforms like SAHAJOG and digital tools for citizen-engagement and efficient administration.
- **Municipal Finance & ULBs**: revenue generation, creditworthiness, better budgeting in cities.
- **Housing, Sanitation & Water Supply:** focus on affordable housing, inclusive sanitation, safe drinking water in urban areas.
- **Urban Livelihoods & Schemes**: e.g., scaling up implementation of the PM SVANidhi scheme for urban informal workers.

Urbanization in Odisha

Trends and drivers of urbanization

- **Low urbanization rate**: As of the 2011 Census, Odisha was one of India's least urbanized states, with about 16.68% of its population living in urban areas, compared to the national average of over 31%. However, the urban population grew at a faster rate than the national average between 2001 and 2011.
- **Expansion of census towns**: The number of urban centers increased significantly from 138 in 2001 to 223 in 2011, primarily due to the emergence of many new census towns, which are large villages classified as urban based on population size, density, and employment criteria.

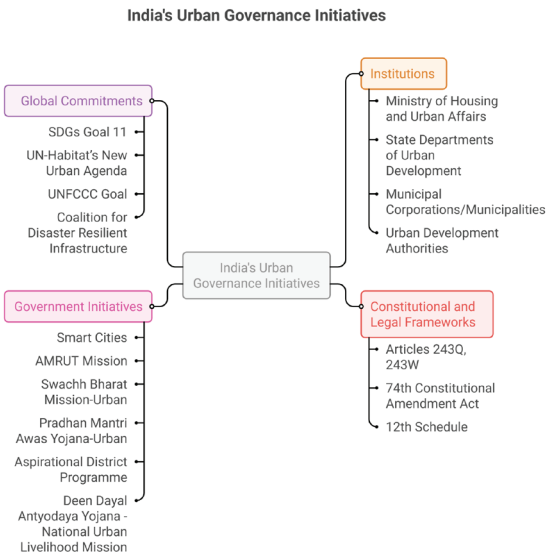
- **Major urban centers**: The process of urbanization is concentrated around key cities:
  - Bhubaneswar and Cuttack: The main political, cultural, and commercial hubs, respectively. Bhubaneswar has also emerged as a significant IT center.
  - Industrial hubs: Cities like Rourkela (steel), Jharsuguda (mining and power), and Angul (aluminum) have seen rapid urbanization driven by industrial and mining activities.
  - Educational and health hubs: Centers of education and healthcare like Sambalpur and Berhampur also contribute to urban expansion.
  - Tourism hubs: Puri, famous for the Jagannath Temple, is a key pilgrimage and tourist destination driving local urban growth.
- **Key drivers:** Urbanization in Odisha is fueled by several factors:
  - Industrialization and mining activities.
  - Rural-to-urban migration, often due to limited rural employment opportunities and vulnerability to natural disasters.
  - Improved transport connectivity through highways, railways, and ports.
  - Growth of education, health, and tourism sectors.

Urbanization in India

- Urbanisation is the process of people moving from rural areas (the countryside) to urban areas (towns and cities). This trend has been happening for centuries, but it has accelerated in recent decades. Urbanisation is identified by the United Nations as one of the four demographic mega-trends alongside population growth, ageing, and international migration.
- **Trends in Urbanisation:**
  - **According to the Asian Development Bank's 2019 report,** the global urban population has surged from 751 million in 1950 (30% of the world's population) to 4.2 billion in 2018 (55% of the world's population).
    - » Projections indicate that this figure will rise to 5.2 billion by 2030 (60% of the global population) and 6.7 billion by 2050 (68% of the global population).
  - India's urban population has grown steadily. According to the 2011 census, urbanisation increased from 27.7% in 2001 to 31.1% in 2011, representing a total of 377.1 million people and an annual growth rate of 2.76%.
  - This trend has shifted focus from large Tier 1 cities (1,00,000 and above) to medium-sized towns, influenced by various push and pull factors such as employment, education, and security.
  - **According to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** in terms of the absolute number of persons living in urban areas, Maharashtra continues to lead with 50.8 million persons which comprises 13.5% of the total urban population of the country.
    - » Uttar Pradesh accounts for about 44.4 million, followed by Tamil Nadu at 34.9 million.
- **Reasons for Urbanisation:**
  - **Trade And Industry:** Trade and industry drive urbanisation by attracting labor, stimulating infrastructure development, and providing access to markets and innovation hubs.
  - **Economic Opportunities**: Cities offer more job opportunities than rural areas. This is because they are home to businesses, factories, and other institutions.
  - **Education**: Cities have better schools and universities than rural areas. This can attract people who want to improve their education and job prospects.
  - **Better Lifestyle:** Cities provide more services like hospitals and libraries, and offer a livelier lifestyle with more social and cultural opportunities compared to rural areas.
  - **Migration:** Migration significantly contributes to urbanisation in India, leading to the growth of informal settlements. Migrants often settle

in unplanned colonies due to the high cost of living in more formal urban areas.

» This has resulted in a significant number of informal settlements, such as slums and unauthorised colonies, which lack basic amenities like clean water and sanitation.



Challenges

- **Environment Related Challenges:**
  - Air Pollution and Environmental Degradation: Urban areas in India are grappling with severe air pollution levels, primarily due to vehicular emissions, industrial activities, and construction projects.
    - » Example: According to the World Air Quality Report 2023,of the top 10 most polluted cities are in India.
  - Urban Flooding and Drainage Infrastructure: Inadequate stormwater drainage systems and encroachment on natural water bodies lead to frequent urban flooding during monsoons.
    - » India has experienced major floods in recent years, notably in Hyderabad (2020 and 2021), Chennai (November 2021), Bengaluru and Ahmedabad (2022), parts of Delhi (July 2023), and Nagpur (September 2023), forcing many residents to evacuate.
  - Urban Heat Island Effect and Lack of Green Spaces: Rapid urbanisation and loss of green spaces have led to the urban heat island effect, increasing temperatures and energy demand.
    - » Example: The extreme heat wave in Delhi has driven the city's power demand to a record high of over 8,000 megawatts in May 2024.
  - Water Scarcity and Inadequate Water Management: Many cities face acute water shortage due to rapid urbanisation, population growth, and depleting groundwater levels.
    - » Example: Chennai faced a severe water crisis in 2019, with residents relying on water tankers and desalination plants. Also, the recent water crisis in Bengaluru highlights the depth of the issue.
- **Inadequate Housing and Slum Proliferation**: According to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, the urban housing shortage in India was around 18.78 million units between 2012-27, with over 65 million people living in slums or informal settlements.
  - It results in straining infrastructure, exacerbating poverty, hindering planned development, and reducing overall livability and social cohesion within urban areas.
- **Traffic Congestion and Mobility Challenges:** Rapid urbanisation and the influx of private vehicles have led to severe traffic congestion increasing commute times and hampering productivity.
  - Example: In Bengaluru, the average traffic speed during peak hours is estimated to be around 18 km/h, resulting in significant economic losses due to lost productivity and fuel wastage.
- **Inadequate Solid Waste Management:** Indian cities struggle with the management of solid waste leading to piling garbage and health hazards.
  - Example: According to the Central Pollution Control Board, Indian cities generate approximately 62 million tons of municipal

solid waste annually, with only around 20% of it being processed or treated properly.

- **Issue of Cybersecurity and Resilient Digital Infrastructure**: With the increasing digitalization in major urban spaces, digital threats are on the rise and building resilient digital infrastructure is a critical issue.
  - The ransomware attack on AIIMS Delhi in 2022, highlights the vulnerability of urban digital systems.

Way forward

- **Environment Related Initiatives:**
  - Sponge City Concept and Permeable Urban Landscapes: Implementing the "Sponge City" concept, which involves the integration of permeable pavements, green roofs, rainwater gardens, and other water-absorbing features into urban landscapes.
  - Distributed Waste-to-Energy and Decentralised Waste Management Systems: Incentivizing community-based waste management initiatives and promoting public-private partnerships for waste collection, sorting, and processing.
  - Smart Water Management and Recycling Infrastructure: Deploying smart water metering and monitoring systems to detect leaks, optimize water distribution, and promote efficient water usage.
- **Urban Digital Twins and Predictive Modeling:** Developing digital twins of urban areas, which are virtual replicas of cities, to simulate and analyse various scenarios, infrastructure projects, and environmental impacts.
  - Integrating digital twins with urban governance platforms to enable data-driven decision-making, citizen engagement, and participatory urban planning processes.
- **Smart City Infrastructure:** Democratizing smart city technologies, such as intelligent traffic management systems, smart grids, and Securing Internet of Things (IoT)-enabled public services, to improve efficiency, reduce carbon emissions, and enhance the quality of life for citizens.
- **Cybersecurity and Digital Infrastructure Resilience**: Investing in robust cybersecurity measures, including advanced encryption, access controls, and real-time threat monitoring, to protect critical urban digital infrastructure from cyber threats.
- **Accessibility and Awareness**: The government's efforts to address urbanisation through various initiatives often face significant challenges in terms of accessibility. Therefore better dissemination of information and participative governance can be a tool of inclusivity.

Sahitya Akademi's Bal Sahitya Puraskar -2025

Why in the News?

- Odia author Rajakishore Parhi won the Sahitya Akademi's Bal Sahitya Puraskar for 2025. He was selected for his poetry book titled Kete Phula Phutichi.



Key points

- The award, which recognizes contributions to children's literature, was presented to 24 authors from across India. Each recipient received a cheque for ₹50,000 and a bronze plaque at a ceremony held on November 14, 2025, in New Delhi.

Notable winners for 2025 include

- Hindi: Susheel Shukla for Ek Batey Barah (non-fiction & memoir).
- English: Nitin Kushalappa MP for Dakshin: South Indian Myths and Fables Retold (stories).
- Odia: Dr. Rajkishore Padhi for his poetry collection Kete Phula Phutichi.
- Bengali: Tridib Kumar Chattopadhyay for Ekhono Gaye Kanta Daye (stories).
- Assamese: Surendra Mohan Das for Mainaahantar Padya (poetry).

About Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar

- The Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar is an annual Indian literary award presented by the Sahitya Akademi to writers for their exceptional contributions to children's literature in 24 Indian languages. The award, instituted in 2010, aims to encourage the creation of quality reading materials for young readers.
- **Key Details**
  - **Purpose**: To honour outstanding original works in children's literature across the languages recognized by the Akademi (22 scheduled languages, plus English and Rajasthani).
  - **Award:** The recipient receives a cash prize of ₹50,000, an engraved copper plaque, a shawl, and a citation.
  - **Eligibility**: The author must be an Indian national, and the book must be an original creative work for readers aged 9–16, published during the five years immediately preceding the award year.
  - **Selection Process**: A jury of experts in each language recommends a winner, and the Executive Board of the Sahitya Akademi makes the final declaration.

Sir Gilbert Walker Award

Why in the News?

- Dr. Mrutyunjay Mohapatra has been honored with the Sir Gilbert Walker Award by the Indian Meteorological Society (IMS) in November 2025.



Key details about the award and his contributions:

- **Purpose:** The award honors outstanding and pioneering contributions in meteorology, focusing

on the discovery of new atmospheric phenomena, understanding atmospheric processes, and developing meteorological services for societal benefits.

- **Key Contributions:** Dr. Mohapatra led the modernization of India's cyclone warning system, significantly improving forecast accuracy and preparedness, which has benefited not only India but also 13 neighboring countries in the North Indian Ocean region.
- **Other Accolades:** In 2025 alone, he also received the prestigious United Nations Sasakawa Award for Disaster Risk Reduction and the American Meteorological Society Outstanding Service Award.
- **Role:** He currently serves as the Director General of Meteorology for the IMD and is the Third Vice President of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

About Sir Gilbert Walker Award

- The award is named after Sir Gilbert Walker, who served as the Director General of Observatories (heading the India Meteorological Department) for 20 years from 1904 to 1924. He is recognized for his monumental and pioneering work on the long-range forecasting of the southwest monsoon in India.

About The Indian Meteorological Society (IMS)

- The Indian Meteorological Society (IMS) is a non-profit organization established in 1956 to advance and disseminate knowledge of meteorological and allied sciences across India. Its headquarters are in New Delhi, and it has more than 30 local chapters nationwide.
- **Objectives and Activities**
  - **Advancement of Science**s: Promoting research and innovation in meteorology, atmospheric science, and related fields.
  - **Knowledge Dissemination**: Sharing scientific knowledge among professionals, academic workers, and the general public.
  - **Application of Meteorology**: Applying meteorological and allied sciences to practical human activities such as agriculture, land use, irrigation, power development, navigation (sea and air), engineering, technology, medicine, and public health.
- **To achieve these goals, the Society engages in various activities:**
- **Publications**: It publishes the scientific research **journal VayuMandal twice a year** and an official bulletin.
- **Events:** It organizes lectures, meetings, symposia, and national conferences, such as the annual "TROPMET" series, to discuss weather and climate issues.
- **Awards:** The IMS instituted several awards, including the prestigious international Sir Gilbert Walker Gold Medal, to recognize outstanding contributions to the field of meteorology.
- Education and Outreach: Local chapters, such as the one in Kolkata, offer online courses in meteorology and related coding language.

Fully tobacco-free district of Odisha

Why in the News?

- Ganjam district is actively implementing a comprehensive campaign to become fully tobacco-free, with recent steps including declaring all government offices and areas within 100 meters of educational institutions as tobacco-free zones.

Key Initiatives and Status

- **Government Offices:** Effective November 1, 2025, all government offices in the district have been officially designated tobacco-free zones. Employees found consuming tobacco on the premises face a fine of ₹2,000.
- **Educational Institutions**: The administration is strictly enforcing a prohibition on the sale and consumption of tobacco products within a 100-meter radius of all educational institutions, with signboards posted to warn of penalties for violators.

- **Enforcement and Penalties:** Enforcement squads, comprising personnel from health, police, and excise departments, conduct regular inspections and raids. Fines are imposed on individuals found violating the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2003 (COTPA).
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Widespread awareness programs are being conducted in schools, colleges, and villages to educate the public on the harmful effects of tobacco consumption.
- **Recognition:** Ganjam has been felicitated at the state level for its outstanding performance in implementing the National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP).
- **Long-term Goal:** The ultimate aim is to make Ganjam a completely tobacco-free district through collective action from all departments and communities.

Mandia Divas (Millet Day) in Odisha

Why in the News?

- Mandia Divas (Millet Day) in Odisha is an annual observance celebrated on November 10. Odisha is the first state in India to officially recognize and celebrate this day, which coincides with the first Thursday of the Hindu month of Margasira, a time when people in the state worship Goddess Mahalaxmi and offer her millets.

Purpose and Significance

The primary objective of Mandia Divas is to promote the cultivation and consumption of millets (known as "mandia" in the local Odia language) and to highlight their significant nutritional and environmental benefits.

Key aspects of the celebration include:

- **Nutritional Security**: Millets are a "superfood" rich in nutrients and their inclusion in local diets, including mid-day meals in schools, is encouraged to combat malnutrition.
- **Farmer Empowerment:** The day recognizes the efforts of farmers, especially tribal and women farmers, who are crucial to the state's Millet Mission (Shree Anna Abhiyan).
- **Sustainable Agriculture**: Millets are climate-resilient crops that require less water and can grow in poor soil conditions, contributing to environmental sustainability.
- **Cultural Revival**: The observance aims to revive traditional crops and culinary practices that have been part of the Adivasi culture for ages.

Activities

The day is marked by various events at the state and district levels, including:

- Awareness programs and interactions with farmers.
- Workshops and discussions on processing technologies and market linkages.
- Felicitation of progressive farmers and women's self-help groups (WSHGs) for their contributions.
- Serving special millet-based menus at public events.

Through the Odisha Millet Mission, the state government has created a model for promoting millets that has been recognized and recommended by the Indian government and Niti Aayog for other states to adopt

CM inaugurated 44 new sub-registrar offices

Why in the News?

- Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi inaugurated 44 new sub-registrar offices in 13 districts on November 1, 2025. This move is a major administrative reform aimed at decentralizing land registration services and bringing them closer to the citizens.

Key points

- **Objective**: The primary goal is to simplify property registration, reduce travel time and costs for citizens (especially in rural areas), ensure transparency, and eliminate middlemen.

- **Process:** Citizens can now book slots for property registration online via the IGR Odisha portal or an e-registration mobile app and complete the sale deed transactions at their local tehsil offices.
- **Expansion Plan:** This is the first phase of a broader plan to provide registration services in all 317 tehsils in the state. The government plans to open another 56 offices by the end of 2025 and cover all tehsils in a phased manner.
- **Transparency:** All new offices are monitored through a smart surveillance system via CCTV cameras to ensure punctuality, efficiency, and a corruption-free environment.
- **Impact:** The reform is expected to boost registration activity, improve service delivery, and enhance revenue collection for the state



The SOA Sahitya Samman 2025

Why in the News?

- The SOA Sahitya Samman 2025 was awarded to renowned lyricist, poet, and author Javed Akhtar for his outstanding and lifelong contribution to Indian cinema and literature.

Key Points

- The award was presented during the inaugural function of the 3rd SOA Literary Festival, held at the Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) Deemed to be University in Bhubaneswar on November 29, 2025. The honour was conferred by the Governor of Odisha, Hari Babu Kambhampati.

Award Details

- Recipient: Javed Akhtar
- Presented For: Outstanding and lifelong contribution to Indian cinema and literature
- Award Includes: A cash prize of ₹7 lakh, a citation, a shawl, and a silver idol of Goddess Saraswati.
- Significance: This was the first time the SOA Sahitya Samman was instituted and presented, making Javed Akhtar its inaugural recipient.

Other SOA Literary Awards 2025

In addition to the main award, the SOA Yuva Sahitya Puraskar 2025 was given to:

- Suryasnata Tripathy, an Odia poet and writer, for his short story collection 'Thia Puchi Naranga'. He received a cash prize of ₹1 lakh.

The 84th Annual Session of the Indian Roads Congress (IRC)

Why in the News?

- The 84th annual session of the Indian Roads Congress (IRC) took place in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, from November 7 to 10, 2025. The event was inaugurated by the Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari.

Focus Areas and Highlights

- **Sustainable Infrastructure**: Discussions centered on addressing challenges related to rapid urbanization, technological advancements, and climate change. The use of bio-bitumen and recycled plastic waste in highway construction for enhanced durability and sustainability was also highlighted.
- **Technological Exchange**: Various technical sessions and exhibitions showcased advanced materials, products, and modern engineering techniques, with an exhibition open to the public on the final days.
- **Policy and Planning:** Key meetings, including the IRC Council and Highway Research Board meetings, addressed investment plans, policy frameworks, and the future roadmap for India's road network.
- **Odisha's Role:** This was the sixth time Odisha hosted the IRC, aligning with the state's growing focus on modern and green road infrastructure to achieve its "Developed Odisha by 2036" vision.

Odia film Maliput Melodies

Why in the News?

- The recent National Tribal Film Festival and Carnival took place in Imphal, Manipur, from November 12 to 15, 2025. The festival was part of the "Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh" celebrations and included films from various states, including Odisha.

Odisha's Participation

- Odisha was a participating state in the festival, with several feature films, documentaries, and short films showcasing the state's diverse tribal culture and storytelling traditions.
- "Maliput Melodies": A significant highlight for the state was the selection of the Odia film Maliput Melodies for the Indian Panorama section at the 56th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) 2025, which premiered after the tribal festival. This film, directed by Vishal Patnaik, is a compilation of five interconnected short stories that delve into the lives and struggles of tribal and rural communities in southern Odisha

National Tribal Film Festival & Carnival

- **Venue:** Imphal, Manipur
- **Context:** Major initiative under Tribal Pride Year, celebrated on the 150th birth anniversary of freedom fighter Birsa Munda.
- **Locations:** City Convention Centre and Manipur State Film Development Society premises.
- **Purpose:** To promote tribal cinema and creative expressions of indigenous communities and give them national recognition.

Main Features

1. **Film Screening:**
   - 23 tribal films from 9 Indian states
   - Includes feature films from Maharashtra, Odisha, West Bengal, and six Northeast states
   - These films portray tribal life, philosophy, history, and artistic traditions
2. **Cultural Carnival:**
   - Not just film screenings, but a vibrant carnival
   - Cultural exhibitions and performances are being organised

- **Duration:** Four-day festival, concluding on 15 November

Odisha Beaches Regain Blue Flag Certification

Why in the News ?

Odisha's **Sonepur Beach (Ganjam)** and **Puri Golden Beach** have regained the prestigious **Blue Flag certification** for 2025–26.

Why This Achievement Matters

- Confirms global standards of cleanliness, safety, and environmental sustainability.
- **Sonepur:** Third consecutive certification.
- **Puri:** Seventh consecutive certification — a remarkable record.

What is Blue Flag Certification?

- A global eco-label awarded by the **Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), Denmark**.
- Beaches must meet **33 stringent criteria** including water quality, environmental management, safety, and environmental education.

Key Reasons for Success

1. **Local participation:** Community-led conservation efforts in Sonepur.
2. **Advanced waste management:** Zero-liquid-discharge systems and smart waste handling.
3. **Green infrastructure:** Eco-sensitive design and wheelchair-friendly pathways.
4. **Strict monitoring:** Regular water testing, CCTV surveillance, and trained lifeguards.

National Context

In 2025–26, **13 Indian beaches** received Blue Flag status, 12 with full certification — a key milestone for sustainable coastal tourism.

Bali Yatra

Why in the News ?

Recently, the President of India extended greetings to all citizens on the occasion of the historic "Bali Yatra" festival and "Boita Bandana".

About the Bali Yatra Festival

Location: Cuttack, Odisha

Time: Celebrated every year on Kartik Purnima (October–November).

Meaning: The term "Bali Yatra" literally means — "Voyage to Bali".

This festival commemorates the historic day when ancient Kalinga's maritime traders set sail for trade voyages to Bali Island in Indonesia and other Southeast Asian regions.

Historical and Cultural Significance

- The festival is held in remembrance of nearly 2,000 years of maritime and cultural connections.
- At that time, traders from Kalinga (present-day Odisha) conducted trade with islands such as Bali, Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Burma (Myanmar), and Ceylon (Sri Lanka).
- The festival recalls the ancient "Maritime Silk Route" between India and Southeast Asia.
- It symbolizes Odisha's maritime excellence, commercial prosperity, and cultural dissemination.
- Women perform "Boita Bandana" — they make small boats (boita) out of banana leaves or paper, light a lamp inside them, and float them on the river.

Odisha Pharma Summit 2025

Why in the News ?

- The Government of Odisha will organize the Odisha Pharma Summit 2025 on **20 November 2025.**

Objective of the Summit

- To promote **investment, innovation, and employment generation** in the pharma and medical devices manufacturing sector.
- The state government has set an **investment target of ₹5,000 crore** in the pharma sector.

Main Objectives

- Establishing a pharma and medical device ecosystem in the state.
- Promoting workforce skilling aligned with industry needs.
- Implementing policy reforms to attract investment.
- Creating a globally competitive manufacturing environment.

Status of the Indian Pharma Industry

- India is the **third-largest pharmaceutical producer in the world (by volume).**
- The country's pharma industry is valued at **around US$ 50 billion.**
- Nearly **70%** of India's drug supply is for domestic use and **30%** for exports.
- India is the **largest exporter of generic medicines** globally.
- In FY2023–24, India's pharma exports stood at **around US$ 25.4 billion.**
- Additionally, the **medical devices market** is expected to reach **US$ 50 billion by 2025.**

Silicon Carbide

Why in the News ?

- The Chief Minister of Odisha laid the foundation stone for India's **first end-to-end Silicon Carbide (SiC) semiconductor manufacturing facility** in the state.

What is Silicon Carbide (SiC)?

- Silicon carbide is a hard, covalently bonded ceramic compound made of silicon (Si) and carbon (C) atoms.

Key Properties

- High **thermal conductivity**
- Very **low thermal expansion**
- Exceptional **hardness and mechanical strength**
- High **breakdown voltage** and **temperature resistance**

Shri Dilip Kumar Pradhan

Why in the News?

- The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, today announced that

Mr. Dillip Kumar Pradhan from Anugul, Odisha, has clinched the First Rank in the Best Artificial Insemination Technician (AIT) category (Non-NER) for the prestigious National Gopal Ratna Awards (NGRA) 2025.



National Gopal Ratna Awards (NGRA) 2025

- The Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying (MoFAHD) has officially announced the National Gopal Ratna Awards (NGRA) 2025.
- The awards will be presented on 26 November 2025 on the occasion of National Milk Day. This day is celebrated on the birth anniversary of Dr. Verghese Kurien, known as the 'Milkman of India'.

NGRA 2025: List of Winners by Category

1. Best Indigenous Breed Dairy Farmer

(A) Non-Northeast Region

- **First:** Shri Arvind Yashwant Patil – Kolhapur, Maharashtra
- **Second:** Dr. Kankanala Krishna Reddy – Hyderabad, Telangana
- **Third (Joint):**
  - Shri Harshit Jhooria – Sikar, Rajasthan
  - Kumari Shraddha Satyawan Dhavan – Ahmednagar, Maharashtra

(B) Northeast/Himalayan Region

- Smt. Vijay Lata – Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh
- Shri Pradeep Pangaria – Champawat, Uttarakhand

2. Best Dairy Cooperative Society / FPO / MPC

(A) Non-Northeast Region

- **First:** Meenan Gadi Ksheerolpadaka Sahakaran Sangham Ltd. – Wayanad, Kerala
- **Second (Joint):**
  - Kunnamkattupatti Ksheerolpadaka Sahakaran Sangham – Palakkad, Kerala
  - Ghinoi Milk Producers Cooperative Society – Jaipur, Rajasthan
- **Third:** TYSP L-37 Sendurai Milk Producers Cooperative Society Ltd. – Ariyalur, Tamil Nadu

(B) Northeast/Himalayan Region : Kulha Milk Producers Cooperative Society – Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand

3. Best Artificial Insemination Technician (AIT)

(A) Non-Northeast Region

- **First:** Shri Dilip Kumar Pradhan – Anugul, Odisha
- **Second:** Shri Vikas Kumar – Hanumangarh, Rajasthan
- **Third:** Smt. Anuradha Chakli – Nandyal, Andhra Pradesh

(B) Northeast/Himalayan Region : Shri Deluwar Hasan – Barpeta, Assam.

Prof. Dr. Pradipta Kishore

Why in the News?

- Prof. Dr. Pradipta Kishore Dash passed away recently on November 18, 2025, at the age of 84.

Key points

- He was the founder-director of the Silicon Institute of Technology Bhubaneswar and was known as a respected researcher, academician, and teacher.
- Prof. Dr. Pradipta Kishore Dash was the first Vice-Chancellor of Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) Deemed to be University, appointed in 2007.

Humane Sagar

Why in the News?

- Odisha's popular singer Humane Sagar dies at 36.



Career and Legacy

- **Rise to Fame:** Hailing from a musical family in Titlagarh, Odisha, Sagar gained widespread recognition after winning the second season of the reality singing competition Voice of Odisha in 2012.
- **Playback Debut:** He made his debut in 2015 with the title track of the film Ishq Tu Hi Tu, which became an instant hit and made him an overnight sensation.
- **Impact:** Known for his raw emotional depth and soulful voice, he went on to record hundreds of film songs and independent albums. His music, ranging from love ballads to heartbreak numbers, resonated deeply with the youth of Odisha.
- **Discography**: Popular songs and albums include hits like "Tu Megha Heija," "Mana Khojuthila Gote Premika," and the album Niswasa.

44th India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2025

Why in the News?

- The Odisha Pavilion won the Gold Medal for "Excellence in Display" in the States and Union Territories category at the 44th India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2025.

Award Details

- **Award Category:** States & Union Territories – Excellence in Display
- **Medal Awarded**: Gold Medal / First Position
- **Significance:** This is the fourth consecutive year that the Odisha Pavilion has received a top performance award at the IITF.
- **Theme:** The pavilion effectively showcased the state's vision of 'Prosperous Odisha by 2036' and the national theme 'Ek Bharat, Shreshth Bharat' (One India, Best India) through a comprehensive display of its culture, handicrafts, agriculture, and development initiatives

The Global Energy Leaders' Summit (GELS) 2025

Why in the News?

- The Global Energy Leaders' Summit (GELS) 2025 is currently taking place in Puri, Odisha, from December 5 to 7, 2025. The summit is designed to shape India's long-term energy roadmap and transition to clean power.

Key Details

- **Dates:** December 5 to December 7, 2025. (The event is currently underway).
- **Location:** Puri, Odisha.
- **Theme:** "Powering India: Sufficiency, Balance, Innovation," focusing on ensuring adequate power, harmonizing ecological needs with economic activities, and fostering technological and policy innovations.
- **Organizers & Partners**: Hosted by the Government of Odisha in partnership with the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (TBI) and the Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IITK).
- **Participants:** The summit brings together Union and State energy ministers, over 30 national and international energy experts, policymakers, and industry leaders.
- **Objective:** To serve as India's premier high-level platform (described as a "COP for India's energy sector") for dialogue, cooperation, and

the exchange of successful power-sector models among states

The Odisha Masters 2025

Why in the News?

- The Odisha Masters 2025 is a BWF Tour Super 100 international badminton tournament scheduled to take place from December 9 to 14, 2025, at the Jawaharlal Nehru (JLN) Indoor Stadium in Cuttack, Odisha

Event Details

- Dates: December 9–14, 2025
- Venue: Jawaharlal Nehru (JLN) Indoor Stadium, Cuttack
- Category: BWF Tour Super 100
- Prize Money: USD 110,000
- Participants: Athletes from 22 countries are expected to compete across five categories.

The Ekta Padayatra (Unity March)

Why in the News?

- The Ekta Padayatra (Unity March) was launched in Nilagiri, Balasore district, Odisha on November 13, 2025, to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

Key Points

- The march, inaugurated by Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, aimed to promote national unity and integrity, highlighting Sardar Patel's role. Participants carried a long Tricolour flag. The Chief Minister also visited a temple and inaugurated a photo exhibition before the padayatra

Odisha CM Majhi unveils projects worth Rs 1,955 crore, says govt committed to uplift tribals

Why in the News ?

- Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi unveiled development projects worth Rs 1,955 crore in Sundargarh district on the occasion of Janjatiya Gaurav Divas celebration, marking the 150th birth anniversary of legendary tribal freedom fighter Birsa Munda, at Rourkela on Saturday.

Key points

- **Projects Inaugurated:** Development projects valued at around Rs 1,345 crore were inaugurated.
- Foundation Stones Laid: Foundation stones were laid for additional projects worth approximately Rs 609 crore.
- **Memorial**: A state-of-the-art memorial in honour of Birsa Munda, featuring a 150-foot statue, is planned for the Sundargarh district, with a suitable location currently being identified.
- **Birsa Munda Road and Park:** A road from Hanuman Batika Square to Power House Square in Rourkela was officially named "Birsa Munda
- Road," and plans were announced for a new Birsa Munda Park near Shaktibazar in Koel Nagar.

Odisha's "Zero Fatality Fortnight" (ZFF)

Why in the News ?

- Odisha's "Zero Fatality Fortnight" (ZFF) is a state-wide road safety campaign aimed at achieving zero road accident deaths through intensive enforcement, awareness drives, and engineering improvements. The latest observance was held from November 16 to 30, 2025.

Key Components of the Initiative

The campaign, led by the Commerce and Transport Department in coordination with police and district administrations, focuses on the four pillars (4Es) of road safety:

- **Enforcement:** Authorities adopted a zero-tolerance policy for traffic violations. Strict action was taken against overspeeding, drunk driving, using mobile phones while driving, and not wearing helmets or seat-belts.
- **Engineering:** District authorities were directed to identify and fix road "black spots" (accident-prone areas). Measures included repairing damaged

stretches, installing proper signage, and removing design flaws.

- **Education**: Large-scale awareness programs were conducted in schools, colleges, and community centers to promote safe road behavior. The public was encouraged to act as "Good Samaritans" by helping accident victims promptly.
- **Emergency Care**: The initiative collaborated with hospitals and emergency services to ensure rapid response and treatment for accident victims.

Odisha Cabinet approves GCC policy intending to set up five GCC hubs in State

Why in the News ?

- The Odisha government has recently approved the Odisha Global Capability Centre (GCC) Policy 2025, aimed at transforming the state into a premier hub for multinational corporations (MNCs) to establish their business functions, including IT, finance, R&D, and analytics.

Key Objectives and Incentives

- The policy envisions facilitating more than ₹1,000 crore investment, establishing at GCC hubs at Bhubaneswar-Cuttack- Puri-Paradip and Bargarh-Jharsuguda-Sambalpur economic regions, and generating over 50,000 direct and indirect employment opportunities across the State.

Implementation and Governance

The GCC policy works in conjunction with the existing Odisha IT Policy 2025 and aims to promote development outside of Bhubaneswar.

- The Odisha Computer Application Centre (OCAC) is the designated nodal agency for implementing the policy.
- A Policy Advocacy & Vision Group (PAVG) consisting of industry and academic experts will provide guidance on execution.
- An online system has been introduced to streamline the process of accessing benefits.

National Indoor Athletics Championships-2026

Why in the News ?

- The inaugural National Indoor Athletics Championships will be held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, from March 24-25, 2026, at the Kalinga Stadium indoor facility. There has not been a national indoor championship in Odisha in 2024 or 2025.

Upcoming Event Details

- Event: First National Indoor Athletics Championships
- Location: Kalinga Stadium indoor stadium, Bhubaneswar, Odisha
- Dates: March 24-25, 2026
- Organizer: Athletics Federation of India (AFI)

This event marks the first time India will host a national-level indoor athletics competition, which aligns with the AFI's goal to strengthen the domestic ecosystem and prepare athletes for global events like the Commonwealth and Asian Games. Key events will include pole vault and men's indoor heptathlon.

Baladevjew Temple in Kendrapara

Why in the News ?

- The Baladevjew Temple in Kendrapara is set to receive approximately ₹100 crore for a major renovation and beautification project under the "Parikrama Project.

The "Parikrama Project,"

- The "Parikrama Project," officially named the Shree Jagannath Heritage Corridor, is a major development initiative surrounding the historic 12th-century Jagannath Temple in Puri, Odisha, India.

Baladevjew Temple in Kendrapara

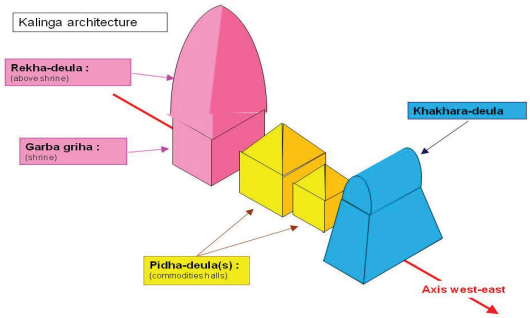
- **Deities:** Lord Balarama (Baladevjew), Lord Jagannath, and Goddess Subhadra.
- **Architecture**: The current temple was constructed in 1761 AD during Maratha rule in Odisha and

reflects the ancient Kalinga architectural style. The complex is spread over two acres and includes a beautiful garden.

- **Historical Significance:** The original temple was demolished in 1661 during the Mughal era. Devotees secretly moved the deities, and the temple was later rebuilt at its current location.

Kalinga Architecture

- **About:**
  - The Indian temples are broadly divided into Nagara, Vesara, Dravida and Gadag styles of architecture.
  - However, the temple architecture of Odisha corresponds altogether to a different category for their unique representations called Kalinga style of temple architecture.
  - This style broadly comes under the Nagara style.
- **The Architecture:**
  - In Kalinga Architecture, basically a temple is made in two parts, a tower and a hall. The tower is called deula and the hall is called jagmohan.
  - The walls of both the deula and the jagmohan are lavishly sculpted with architectural motifs and a profusion of figures.
  - The most repeated form is the horseshoe shape, which has come from the earliest times, starting with the large windows of the chaitya-grihas.
  - It is the deula which makes three distinct types of temples in Kalinga Architecture:
    - » Rekha Deula.
    - » Pidha Deula.
    - » Khakhara Deula.
  - The former two are associated with Vishnu, Surya and Shiva temples while the third is mainly with Chamunda and Durga temples.
  - The Rekha Deula and Khakhara Deula house the sanctum sanctorum while the Pidha Deula constitutes outer dancing and offering halls.



Hydrogen Valley Innovation Clusters

Why in the News ?

- The Hydrogen Valley Innovation Cluster (HVIC) in Bhubaneswar is led by IIT Bhubaneswar and funded by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.
- It is one of four initial green hydrogen valley projects supported by the Department of Science and Technology.
- The cluster aims to pilot the complete green hydrogen ecosystem, from production and storage to transportation and application, targeting the steel and mobility sectors. The initiative is supported by a consortium of institutions, industries, and government bodies.

Consortium partners

Research and Academic Institutions:

- IIT Bhubaneswar: Leads the initiative and contributes R&D support for technological advancements in hydrogen generation.
- National Institute of Science Education and Research (NISER) Bhubaneswar: Provides R&D support for existing hydrogen technology.
- Bhubaneswar City Knowledge Innovation Cluster (BCKIC) Foundation: Coordinates industrial partnerships and fosters innovation.
- Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) Bhubaneswar: Fosters innovation, leadership, and entrepreneurship.

Industry Partners:

- Hero Future Energies (HFE): Acts as the industrial partner for IIT Bhubaneswar, focusing on solutions for green hydrogen applications in steel production and heavy-duty mobility.
- Odisha Mining Corporation Limited (OMC): Committed to using green hydrogen in the mobility sector.
- Dalmia Cement (Bharat) Ltd.: Committed to procuring green hydrogen for its factory in Odisha.
- Jindal Steel and Power Limited (JSPL): Uses green hydrogen in its steel and mobility sectors.

Government Agencies and Supporting Entities

- NTPC Limited: Signed an MoU with GRIDCO and CRUT to develop green hydrogen mobility in Bhubaneswar. It will establish a fueling station and deploy hydrogen-powered buses.
- Metsol, Sweden: Assists with developing process know-how for producing green iron and steel.

Projects and applications

- Green hydrogen mobility: NTPC will set up a green hydrogen fueling station and operate hydrogen-powered buses on a pilot basis within the city.
- Steel sector: The cluster targets the steel industry for hydrogen applications, with partners like Jindal Steel and Power.
- Industrial processes: Green hydrogen will be used in hard-to-abate sectors, including mining and steel production.

Broader green hydrogen development in Odisha

Beyond the Bhubaneswar cluster, other green hydrogen initiatives are active in the state:

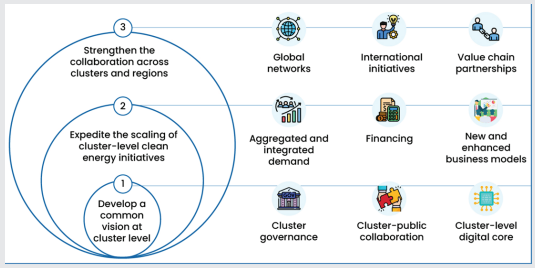
- Paradip Port Authority (PPA): Recognized as a Green Hydrogen Hub under the National Green Hydrogen Mission. It is planned to be the nucleus for a green hydrogen hub with a ₹40,000 crore investment.
- Gopalpur Industrial Park: Developing into a green hydrogen hub, with projects by Hygenco, Avaada Group, ACME Clean Energy, and Ocior Green Hydrogen.
- ACME Group and Avaada Group: Received approval for green hydrogen and ammonia projects in the Jagatsinghpur and Ganjam districts, respectively.

The Union Minister of Science and Technology recently announced that four Hydrogen Valley Innovation Clusters (HVICs) are being developed across the country.

What are Hydrogen Valley Innovation Clusters?

These clusters are being developed to demonstrate the complete green hydrogen value chain—from production to storage, transport, and utilisation.

Total Investment: ₹485 crore



Objectives:

- Create a local hydrogen ecosystem by linking supply and demand across transport, industry, and energy sectors
- Promote research, innovation, and skill development

The concept originated with the Department of Science & Technology and has now been integrated into the National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM).

Locations of the Four Hydrogen Valley Clusters:

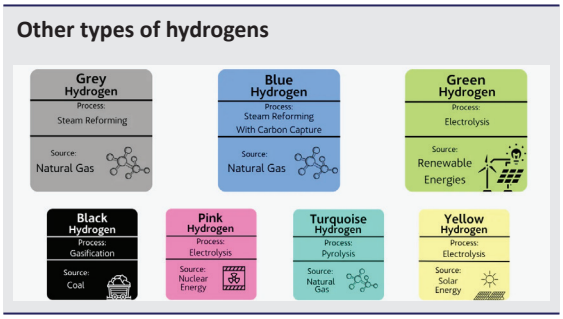
1. Pune (Maharashtra)
2. Jodhpur (Rajasthan)
3. Bhubaneswar (Odisha)
4. Kerala

What is Green Hydrogen?

- Green hydrogen is produced using renewable energy sources such as solar or wind power.

Water is split into hydrogen and oxygen via electrolysis.

- According to Government of India standards, if total emissions during the production of 1 kg of hydrogen are less than 2 kg of CO_2 equivalent, it is considered green hydrogen.
- Green hydrogen can also be produced from biomass (such as agricultural waste) if emissions remain within the specified limit.



Green Hydrogen Advantages

- Energy storage: Green hydrogen can be stored for long periods, making it suitab for grid stability by providing energy when renewable sources are intermittent.
- Monetary benefits: The oxygen produced as a by-product during electrolysis can be monetised for industrial and medical applications.
- Flexible energy carrier: Hydrogen can be used for various energy applications, including integrating renewable energy sources and transportation.
- Reduced emissions: Unlike grey hydrogen (produced from methane), green hydrogen production does not release greenhouse gases, and its byproduct is environmentally friendly water vapour.
- Global dominance: Several countries are experimenting with blending green hydrogen with natural gas for power generation, industrial applications, and residential use.

Green Hydrogen Disadvantages

- High cost: The production of green hydrogen through electrolysis using renewable energy sources is more expensive, making hydrogen costlier to obtain.
- High energy consumption: The production of green hydrogen requires more energy than other fuels.
- Safety concerns: Hydrogen is highly volatile and flammable, necessitating extensive safety measures to prevent leaks and explosions.

Green Hydrogen Production Methods

- Green hydrogen production involves water electrolysis, where water (H2O) is split into hydrogen (H2) and oxygen (O2) using electricity from renewable sources. There are three main methods:
- Alkaline electrolysis: The most mature technology, uses an alkaline solution (KOH or NaOH) as the electrolyte.
- Despite its high efficiency and low cost, it requires expensive materials like nickel and platinum as electrodes.
- Proton exchange membrane electrolysis: An advanced method using a solid polymer membrane as the electrolyte.
- It offers higher efficiency and faster response times, but the high cost of the membrane and precious metal catalysts is a challenge.
- Solid oxide electrolysis: A high-temperature process (700°C to 1000°C) using a solid ceramic material as the electrolyte.
- It offers high efficiency and the potential for co-electrolysis (simultaneous conversion of water and CO2 into H2 and CO), but the high temperatures and need for specialised materials make it more complex and expensive.

Green Hydrogen in India

- India has set its sights on becoming energy-independent by 2047 and achieving Net Zero by 2070. To achieve this target, increasing renewable energy use across all economic spheres is central to India's Energy Transition. Green Hydrogen is considered a promising alternative for enabling this transition.
- Financial funding: India has sanctioned a $2 billion incentive scheme to boost green hydrogen production. The initiative aims to improve the affordability of green hydrogen, positioning India as a significant exporter. Presently, the cost of green hydrogen in India is $4-5 per kg.
- **Green Hydrogen Standard for India:**
  - Definition: It defines green hydrogen as having a well-to-gate emission of not more than 2kg

carbon dioxide equivalent per kg hydrogen, encompassing various production processes like electrolysis and biomass-based methods.
  - Scope: The standard covers water treatment, electrolysis, gas purification, drying, and compression of hydrogen, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of the production process.
  - Nodal Authority: The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) under the Ministry of Power is responsible for accrediting agencies monitoring and certifying green hydrogen production projects.
- **National Green Hydrogen Mission:**
  - Initiated in January 2023, this mission targets an annual production of 5 million metric tonnes of green hydrogen by 2030, leveraging 125 gigawatts of renewable energy.
  - It encompasses the SIGHT program, offering substantial financial backing to boost domestic electrolyser manufacturing and green hydrogen production, reinforcing India's vision to emerge as a leading green hydrogen economy.

Paradip Port Authority (PPA)

Why in the News ?

- The Paradip Port Authority (PPA) has achieved the **fastest 100 Million Metric Tonnes (MMT) cargo throughput** in its history.

Key points

- PPA has crossed the **100 MMT cargo mark for the ninth consecutive year**, and this time the achievement came **12 days earlier** compared to the previous financial year.
- Paradip Port is one of India's major ports, operated by the Paradip Port Authority under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- It is a **deep-water port** located in the Jagatsinghpur district of Odisha, handling large volumes of **coal, POL, iron ore, steel, containerized cargo, and coastal shipments**.
- The port is situated near the confluence of the **Mahanadi River and the Bay of Bengal**.
- The **foundation stone** of Paradip Port was laid on **3 January 1962** by Prime Minister **Jawaharlal Nehru**.
- On **1 June 1965**, the Government of India took over the management of the port from the Government of Odisha.
- On **18 April 1966**, it was declared the **8th major port of India**, becoming the **first major port established on the eastern coast after Independence**.
- The port functions as an **autonomous body** under the **Major Port Trusts Act, 1963**, and is administered by a Board of Trustees.
- The port handles a diverse range of cargo, with **coal accounting for nearly 45%** of its throughput.
- It has **modern mechanized cargo-handling facilities**, which have improved its operational performance consistently.
- Paradip Port is **well-connected** through the railway network and coastal shipping routes, making cargo transportation more efficient.

Port development role in economy

- Port development plays a crucial role in transforming Odisha into the Eastern Maritime Gateway of India by driving economic growth, creating employment, and establishing the state as a major logistics and industrial hub.

Key aspects of this role include:

- **Economic Catalyst:** Ports serve as engines of economic growth by facilitating trade and industrial development. The state government is prioritizing port-based economic growth through the establishment of Coastal Economic Zones and port-linked industrial clusters.
- **Infrastructure Development:** The development includes modernizing existing ports (like Paradip, which is set to become a mega-port) and establishing new greenfield ports at locations such as Bahuda and Inchudi. This involves significant investment in road and rail connectivity to the

hinterland (Odisha, Jharkhand, and Chhattisgarh) to ensure efficient cargo movement and reduce logistics costs.

- **Job Creation**: Port-led industrialization is expected to generate significant employment opportunities, both direct and indirect, for local populations.
- **Private Participation**: The state actively encourages private investment through Public-Private Partnership (PPP) models (e.g., Adani Ports at Dhamra and Gopalpur, JSW at the proposed Jatadhar Muhan jetty, and Tata Steel at Subarnarekha).
- **Diverse Maritime Ecosystem**: Beyond cargo handling, the development vision encompasses a wide range of maritime activities, including:
  - Shipbuilding and repair facilities.
  - Coastal shipping and inland waterways transport.
  - Development of fishing harbors, jetties, and cruise terminals to promote tourism and support local communities.
  - Development of green hydrogen hubs and other downstream industries around the ports.

Challenges

- **Inadequate Infrastructure:** Ports face dredging limitations, making them unsuitable for large vessels, and outdated equipment reduces efficiency.
- **Connectivity Issues**: Poor road, rail networks, and last-mile connectivity hinder smooth cargo evacuation and logistics.
- **Operational Inefficiencies**: Longer ship turnaround times and inefficient cargo handling delay operations and reduce productivity.
- **Regulatory and Financial Barriers**: Complex regulations and lengthy project timelines hinder timely project approvals and financing.
- **Environmental Compliance Issues:** Environmental challenges like spills and non-compliance lead to penalties and operational disruptions.
- **Labour Issues:** A shortage of skilled labour and inefficient management affect port productivity and service quality....

The state's Port Policy 2022 and alignment with national schemes like 'Sagarmala' and 'Gati Shakti' provide the policy framework for this integrated and sustainable maritime development.



Performance of States in GST and Direct Tax Collection

Why in News?

A structural shift is being observed in India's tax system, where small and medium-sized states are emerging as the fastest-growing contributors in both GST and direct taxes.

Odisha Tops GST Growth

- Odisha recorded the highest GST growth in the country with a CAGR of 22.4% during FY 2018–2025.
- GST collection increased from ₹14,849 crore (FY 2018) to ₹60,928 crore (FY 2025).

Telangana Leads in Direct Tax Growth

- Telangana emerged as the fastest-growing state in direct tax collection.
- The state recorded a CAGR of 50.7% during FY 2019–2024.
- Direct tax collection increased from ₹10,860 crore (FY 2019) to ₹84,439 crore (FY 2024).

Key Reasons for Rapid Direct Tax Growth in Telangana

- Emergence of Hyderabad as a global IT hub
- Rapid expansion of Global Capability Centres (GCCs)
- Growth in R&D, pharmaceuticals, and real estate sectors

Contribution of Large States

- Maharashtra remains the largest contributor to India's tax revenue.
- GST collection in FY 2025: ₹3.59 lakh crore
- Direct tax collection in FY 2024: ₹7.62 lakh crore

This reflects Maharashtra's strong industrial and economic base.

Dhanu Yatra in Bargarh, Odisha

Why in the News?

Recently, the famous 'Dhanu Yatra' was inaugurated in Bargarh district of Odisha.

About Dhanu Yatra

- Dhanu Yatra is considered the world's largest open-air theatre.
- It attracts thousands of spectators from India and abroad.
- It is an 11-day annual cultural festival.
- The event brings together mythological narratives, folk traditions, and theatrical performances.



Mythological and Cultural Significance

- During Dhanu Yatra, the entire town of Bargarh transforms into the mythological city of Mathura.
- Episodes from the life of Lord Krishna are enacted, including his birth, childhood exploits, and the eventual slaying of King Kansa.

National Recognition: The Government of India has granted Dhanu Yatra the status of a 'National Festival'.

Odisha Masters

Why in the News?

- It is part of the **BWF (Badminton World Federation) Super 100 series**. It was held at **Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, Cuttack**.



India's impressive performance (singles winners):

- **Women's Singles: Unnati Huda** (top-seeded) defeated **Isharani Barua** 21-17, 21-10 in the final to win the title. This is her **third BWF Super 100 title**.
- **Men's Singles: Kiran George** (second-seeded) defeated **Muhammad Yusuf** of Indonesia 21-14, 13-21, 21-16 in the final to win the title.

Doubles winners (dominated by foreign pairs):

- **Mixed Doubles:** Indonesian pair **Marwan Faza / Aisyah Pranata**.
- **Men's Doubles:** Indonesian pair **Ali Fathir Rehan / Devin Artha Wahidi**.

Women's Doubles: Bulgarian pair **Gabriela and Stefani Stoeva** (defeated a Malaysian pair)

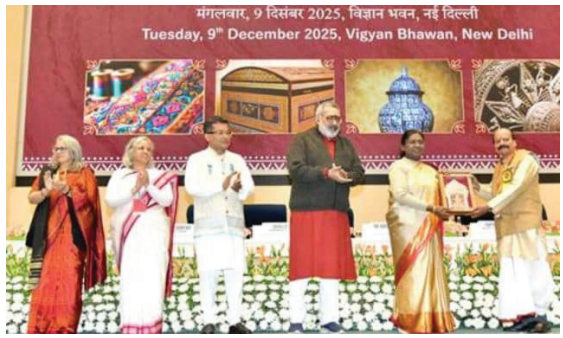
Shilp Guru Award

Why in the News?

President Droupadi Murmu presented the Shilp Guru Awards and National Handicrafts Awards for the years 2023 and 2024 during the National Handicrafts Week held in December 2025. The event was organized by the Ministry of Textiles at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi.

Significance of the Awards

- **National Handicrafts Awards (since 1965):** Conferred on skilled artisans for their outstanding contribution to the preservation of traditional craft arts.
- **Shilp Guru Award (since 2002):** The highest national honour in the handicrafts sector, awarded to highly experienced and master artisans.



Award Distribution (2023–24)

- **Total awards given:** 48
  - 12 Shilp Guru Awards
  - 36 National Handicrafts Awards
  - 2 Design and Innovation Awards

Diversity of Recognised Crafts

The awarded artisans represent a wide range of crafts, including metal crafts, woodwork, hand printing (such as batik), Pattachitra painting, leather puppetry, terracotta, stone carving, cane and bamboo crafts, carpet weaving, and others.

Names of Some Awardees and Their Crafts (Illustrative)

- **Ajit Kumar Das (West Bengal):** Hand-painted textiles
- **Sudhir Kumar Maharana (Odisha):** Pattachitra painting
- **D. Shivamma (Andhra Pradesh):** Leather puppetry
- **Khatri Gulamhusain Umar (Gujarat):** Tie and dye (bandhani and dyeing)
- **Kamlesh Sharma (Rajasthan):** Woodcraft
- **Subhash Arora (Haryana):** Metal craft / Dhokra art
- **Shobharani Poddar (West Bengal):** Jute craft

Chenchu Tribe

Why in the News?

- **NSU** organized an exhibition at **Ahobila Peruveta Utsavam**, highlighting the unique traditional

association of the **Chenchu tribe** with Ahobilam Temple and Lord Narasimha.

Location and distribution:

- Primarily in **Nallamala forests, Andhra Pradesh**; also found in **Telangana, Karnataka, and Odisha**.
- Locally, Chenchu villages are called **"Penta"**, with huts grouped based on kinship.

Language:

- Speak various dialects of **Telugu**, belonging to the **Dravidian language family**.

Social structure:

- The village head, called **"Peddamanishi"**, maintains social harmony.
- Included among **Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG)** of Andhra Pradesh.
- Strong cultural and historical link with **Srisailam Temple (Lord Shiva and Goddess Bhramaramba)**.

Odisha Regional AI Impact Conference 2025

The **Government of Odisha** will host the **Regional AI Impact Conference** on **19–20 December**.

- The objective is to position Odisha as a **key contributor** to India's emerging **Artificial Intelligence (AI) ecosystem** in governance and public service delivery.
- Along with the **Odisha AI Policy 2025** and supporting policies related to **FinTech, Global Capability Centers (GCCs), and advanced electronics**, the focus is on:
  - Responsible AI adoption
  - Investor-friendly environment
  - Promotion of innovation

Alignment with the National AI Roadmap

- This conference is part of preparations for the **India AI Impact Summit** to be held in **February 2026**.
- Regional AI Impact Summits will be organized in **eight states**: **Madhya Pradesh, Kerala, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Meghalaya, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, and Odisha**.

Theme of the Conference"Three Ps: Planet, People, and Progress"

Release of India's Constitution in Santhali Language

- On **25 December 2025**, **President Droupadi Murmu** released the **Indian Constitution in Santhali** at **Rashtrapati Bhavan**
- Published in **Ol Chiki script**
- Marks the **100th anniversary of Ol Chiki script (2025)**

Santhali Language Background:

- One of India's **oldest living tribal languages**
- Spoken in **Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal, Bihar**
- Included in **Eighth Schedule** through the **92nd Constitutional Amendment (2003)**

Constitutional & Political Relevance:

- Grants official recognition and promotes use in **education, administration, and public life**
- Aligns with **Article 29** (protection of culture & language) and **Article 350A** (education of linguistic minorities)

Promotes **constitutional literacy** and participatory democracy.

The 23rd All India Gandarpur Cup Football Tournament

Why in the News?

The 23rd All India Gandarpur Cup Football Tournament is currently taking place at the Biju Pattnaik Mini Stadium in Gandarpur, on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar, Odisha. Organized by the United Youth Sports Club, the 2025 edition of the tournament began on December 14 and is scheduled to conclude on December 21, 2025.

Tournament Details (2025 Edition)

- **Participation**: Approximately 40 football clubs are competing, representing both urban and rural areas.

- **National Character**: While focused on Odisha, the tournament features teams from across the country, including participants from Kolkata and Jharkhand.
- **Divisions:** The event is structured into three divisions (including 'A' and 'B' divisions) to accommodate the growing number of teams.
- **Inauguration**: The tournament was inaugurated by BJP National Vice President and Kendrapara MP Baijayant "Jay" Panda, with Mahakalpada MLA Durga Prasan Nayak also in attendance.
- **Inaugural Match:** On the opening day, Odisha Police defeated Sunrise Club, Cuttack, on penalties (6-1) after a 1-1 draw in regulation time.

Prize Money Structure

- The president of the sports outfit, Gyana Ranjan Rout, announced the following cash prizes for the 2025 competition:
- Urban/Rural Winners: ₹1,00,000 each.
- Urban/Rural Runners-up: ₹75,000 each.

Event Context

- The Gandarpur Cup is a grassroots football initiative aimed at nurturing discipline, teamwork, and competitive spirit among young athletes in Odisha. Earlier in the 2025 season (April), the "All Odisha Gandarpur Cup" saw JJFC Mundamuhan emerge as champions.

Suryasnata Tripathy

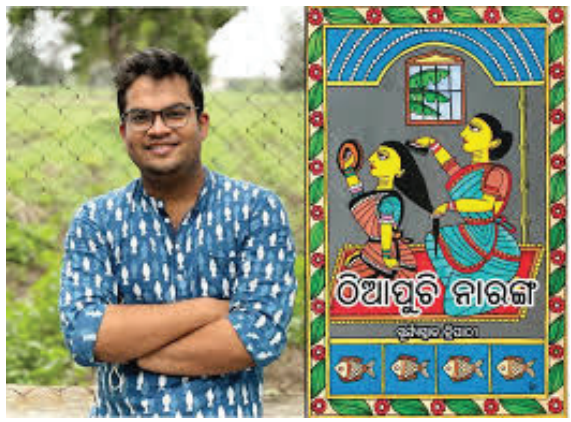
Why in the News?

In 2025, Odia poet and writer Suryasnata Tripathy was honored with the inaugural SOA Yuva Sahitya Puraskar.

Key points

Work Recognized: He received the award for his 2024 short story collection titled **Thia Puchi Naranga,** which contains 12 stories exploring human emotions and contemporary experiences.

- **Ceremony:** The award was presented on November 30, 2025, during the valedictory session of the 3rd SOA Literary Festival held at Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) Deemed to be University in Bhubaneswar.
- **Award Contents:** The honor included a cash prize of ₹1 lakh, a silver plaque, a citation, and a shawl.
- **Significance**: **This was the first year the award was instituted by SOA University to celebrate emerging voices in Odia literature.**



About Suryasnata Tripathy:

- He is an Assistant Professor at IIT Ropar and previously won the national Kendra Sahitya Akademi Yuva Puraskar in 2017. Beyond poetry and fiction, he is a playwright and has recently ventured into cinema with the Odia feature film Indradhanu.

The 19th Digital Transformation Conclave & Awards 2025

Why in the News?

The 19th Digital Transformation Conclave & Awards 2025 was a major national event held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, on December 4–5, 2025.

Key points

Location: Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

- **Theme:** "Innovation, Intelligence, Impact," centered on leveraging AI and digital public infrastructure (DPI) for citizen-centric service delivery.
- **Host Partners:** Electronics & IT Department (Govt. of Odisha) and OCAC.

Major Focus Areas

- **AI and Data Governance**: Discussions on adopting AI for smarter governance and building resilient data ecosystems.
- **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI):** Strategies for enhancing national-scale digital services like Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).
- **Cybersecurity:** Sessions led by experts on strengthening India's cyber resilience and digital sovereignty.
- **State-Specific Progress:** Highlighting Odisha's GCC Policy 2025 and its goal to generate 1 million jobs through technology hubs.

Key Winners (19th Edition - Bhubaneswar)

- **NIC-Odisha:** Received the Excellence in Digital Governance award for its DEPMOS project, which digitizes and automates registration, inspections, and rate contracts for MSMEs.
- **KITE (Kerala Infrastructure and Technology for Education):** Won the Education Technology Transformation Award for its innovative AI platform used in general education.
- **C-DOT (Centre for Development of Telematics):** Honored with the Cybersecurity Excellence in Governance award for its AI-powered unified enterprise cybersecurity solution, TRINETRA.

Other Notable Digital Transformation Awards in 2025

While the Bhubaneswar conclave was a specific regional event, other major national and international digital transformation honors were conferred in 2025:

Reserve Bank of India (RBI): Awarded the global Digital Transformation Award 2025 by Central Banking (London) for its in-house digital initiatives Pravaah (regulatory applications) and Sarthi (internal workflow automation).

- **Odisha Power Generation Corporation (OPGC)**: Conferred with the National ET PSU Silver Award for leadership in digital transformation.
- **National Awards for e-Governance (NAeG) 2025:** Significant winners included the Mining Tenement System (Ministry of Mines), Digi Yatra (Ministry of Civil Aviation), and Bhashini (MeitY).

Award Categories and Objectives

The awards at the Bhubaneswar conclave focused on four primary pillars:

Governance: Excellence in Digital Governance, Paperless Governance, and Open Data & Transparency.

- **Technology Leadership**: AI-Powered Policy Making, Emerging Technology Adoption, and Blockchain for Governance.
- **Sectoral Innovation:** Smart City, Digital Health, and Edu-Tech Transformation.
- **Sustainability & Security:** Cybersecurity Excellence and Green Digital Initiatives

The 7th edition of the Odisha State Book Festival

Why in the News?

The 7th edition of the Odisha State Book Festival (also known as the Odisha State Book Fair or Rajdhani Pustak Mela) was held from December 6 to December 17, 2025, at the IDCO Exhibition Ground in Bhubaneswar.

Key points

Inauguration: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi officially inaugurated the event. Special guests included 2022 Booker Prize winner Shehan Karunatilaka and Jnanpith Awardee Dr. Pratibha Ray.

- **Thematic Pavilions:** Two special pavilions were a major draw:
  - One celebrating Odisha's Women Freedom Fighters.
  - Another dedicated to the life of **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in honor of his 150th birth anniversary.**
- **Cultural Tributes:**
  - Main Gate: Named after **Maa Ramadevi.**
  - Main Stage: Named after **Ramakanta Rath.**
  - Inner Gate: Named after saint-poet **Bhima Bhoi.**

- **Linguistic Diversity**: A notable feature was a dedicated stall for Santali literature written in the Ol Chiki script, showcasing linguistic pride and cultural preservation.

Integrated development project for the Maa Tarini Temple

Why in the News?

Odisha CM Launches **Rs 312 Crore** Development Project for **Maa Tarini Temple in Keonjhar.**

Key points

This ambitious project aims to transform the shrine into a world-class religious and tourism destination within one year.

- The Chief Minister highlighted that this project is part of a larger ₹35,000 crore development vision for Keonjhar, which includes plans for a mega steel plant, tech parks, and textile zones to boost the regional economy.

About Maa Tarini Temple

- **Deity & Iconography**: Maa Tarini is depicted with a red face, two large eyes, and a mark for a nose, symbolizing the simplicity of tribal beliefs. She is considered the force of life.
- **Cultural Significance**: Deeply connected to the **Sabar tribal culture**. A key ritual involves devotees sending coconuts via public transport from across the state, which are delivered to the temple—a unique practice often cited in cultural studies.
- **Historical Context:** Legend says King Govind Bhanjdeo of Keonjhar brought the deity from Puri in 1480.

About Odisha temple architecture

- The main architectural features of Odisha temples are classified into three orders, i.e., **rekhapida, pidhadeul and khakra.**
- Most of the main temple sites are located in ancient Kalinga—modern Puri District, including Bhubaneswar or ancient Tribhuvanesvara, Puri and Konark.
- In general, the shikhara, called deul in Odisha, is vertical almost until the top when it suddenly curves sharply inwards.
- Deuls are preceded, as usual, by mandapas called jagamohana in Odisha.
- Odisha temples usually have boundary walls.
- The ground plan of the main temple is almost always square, which, in the upper reaches of its superstructure, becomes circular in the crowning mastaka.
- Compartments and niches are generally square, the exterior of the temples are lavishly carved, their interiors generally quite bare.

National CA conferences in 2025

Why in the News?

The 2025 National CA Conference for members in Bhubaneswar is scheduled for December 12th to 14th, 2025, at the SOA Auditorium, Bhubaneswar.

Key points

Theme and Deliberations: The discussions centered on the evolving role of the CA profession in nation-building, encompassing topics like governance, technology, sustainability, leadership, and future readiness in India's journey towards 2047 (Amrit Kaal).

- **Dignitaries:** The conference was attended by eminent personalities, including the ICAI President, CA Charanjot Singh Nanda, Central Council Members, and other dignitaries.

OSWALI (Odisha State Watermanship and Lifeguard Institute)

Why in the News?

Odisha launched OSWALI (Odisha State Watermanship and Lifeguard Institute), the first national-level water rescue and lifeguard training facility in India established outside the Indian Navy.

Key points

Location: Situated at Ramchandi near Konark, Puri district.

- **Purpose**: To create a professional pool of responders for water-related emergencies, coastal security, and disaster management during cyclones and floods.
- **Training Scope**: Specializes in coastal rescue operations, rip-current management, life-saving techniques, and water sports safety standards.
- **Target Audience:** Personnel from Odisha Fire and Emergency Services, NDRF, paramilitary forces, Odisha Police, and trained volunteers.

Partnerships and Operations

- **Collaboration:** The Odisha Tourism Department signed an MoU with NIWS (National Institute of Water Sports), Goa, to develop professional water sports safety and capacity building in the state.
- **National Reach:** The institute already hosts trainees from other states, including Uttarakhand, Nagaland, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh.
- **Public Safety:** It will train lifeguards specifically for deployment at major tourist attractions and hotels to ensure tourist safety.

The 15th International Sand Art Festival

Why in the News?

The 15th International Sand Art Festival was held from December 1st to 5th, 2025, at Chandrabhaga Beach near Konark, Odisha.

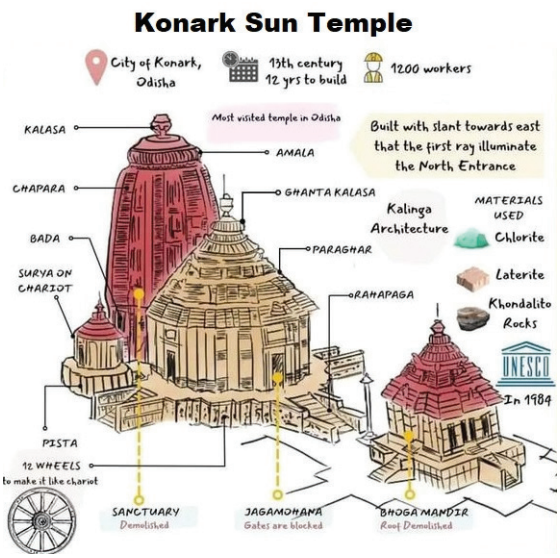
Key points

Global Participation: Around 140 artists from various Indian states and countries like Spain, Japan, Russia, Portugal, and Sri Lanka participated, showcasing diverse techniques and cultural perspectives.

- **Artistic Themes:** Artists created intricate sculptures centered around powerful themes, including culture, the environment, women's empowerment, and social messages.
- **Concurrent Events:** The festival ran in parallel with the annual Konark Dance Festival, allowing visitors to enjoy spectacular classical dance performances at an open-air auditorium near the illuminated **Sun Temple** in the evenings.
- **Related Fair:** The Subhadra Shakti Mela, featuring over 150 stalls managed by women's self-help groups selling handicrafts and organic products, was also launched alongside the festival to promote women entrepreneurs.

About Konark Sun Temple

- It is located on the coastline of Odisha in the Puri district.
- Also called the Surya Devalaya, the temple is dedicated to the Hindu sun god Surya.
- Textual evidence indicates that Narasimha I (who reigned between 1238 and 1264) of the Eastern Ganga dynasty built the temple in 1250 CE.
- It was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1984.



Konark Sun Temple Features

- It is a classic example of the Odisha style of architecture, or **Kalinga architecture.**
- The height of the Sun Temple at Konark is estimated to be around 227 feet, making it one of the tallest temples ever built in the country.

- The temple complex has the appearance of a 100-foot-high solar chariot, with 24 wheels and pulled by six horses, all carved from stone.
- It is oriented towards the east so that the first rays of the sunrise strike the main entrance.
- The wheels of the temple are sundials, which can be used to calculate time accurately to a minute.
- Around the base of the temple, there are images of animals, foliage, warriors on horses, and other interesting structures.
- The temple also features elaborate stone carvings depicting scenes from Hindu mythology.
- The temple was constructed using three types of stones – the laterite stone for the boundary walls, flooring, and staircase; Khondalite for the structure; and Chlorite stone for the door jams and lintel.
- The use of iron strips to hold the structure together can be seen amongst the ruins of the temple.
- The temple was called Black Pagoda, attributed to its dark facade, by the Europeans who used it for navigation for their ships.
- It is said that the temple could draw ships to the shore due to its magnetic powers.
- The temple remains a site of contemporary worship for Hindus, during the annual **Chandrabhaga Festival, around the month of February.**

30th National Road Cycling Championship 2025

Why in the News?

Sambalpur is hosting the 30th National Road Cycling Championship 2025, which commenced on 2 December and will continue until 6 December.

Key points

It is the first time western Odisha has been chosen as the venue for the prestigious national event.

- **Rajasthan** emerged as the overall winner with 21 medals, followed by Maharashtra and Haryana.
- Odisha won 3 medals.

Notable Individual Results

- Best Men Rider: Vishavjeet Singh (RSPB), who won two gold medals.
- Best Women Rider: Anjali Jakhar (Rajasthan), who secured three gold medals.
- Men Elite Road Race: Won by Vishavjeet Singh (RSPB), with Niraj Kumar (RSPB) and Siddhesh Patil (Maharashtra) in second and third, respectively.
- Women Elite Road Race: Won by Ganga Dandin (Karnataka).
- Men Elite Individual Time Trial (ITT): Won by Naveen John (Karnataka).
- Women Elite Individual Time Trial (ITT): Won by Harshita Jakhar (Rajasthan), with local cyclist Swasti Singh (Odisha) taking silver.
- Men Under-23 ITT: Won by Akshar Tyagi (Delhi).

Official residences of the Governor have been officially renamed "Lok Bhavan

Why in the News?

The Union Home Ministry issued a directive based on which the official residences of the Governor in Bhubaneswar and Puri have been officially renamed "Lok Bhavan.

Key points

An official notification was issued by the Governor's Secretariat, confirming the change of name from "Raj Bhavan" to "Lok Bhavan, Bhubaneswar" and "Lok Bhavan, Puri" for all official purposes, effective December 1, 2025.

Odisha Players in Women's Blind World Cup (2025)

Why in the News?

Four Odisha players who represented India in the inaugural Women's Blind T20 World Cup (often called Blind World Cup.



Odisha Players in Women's Blind World Cup (2025)

1. Phula Saren – from Balasore district
   - Played a key role in India's World Cup win and was Player of the Match in the final.
   - Basanti Hansda – from Mayurbhanj district
   - Also featured prominently and was Player of the Match in the semi-final.
   - Jamuna Rani Tudu – from Mayurbhanj district
   - Member of the victorious Indian women's blind cricket team.
   - Parbati (Parvati) Marndi – from Mayurbhanj district
   - Part of the ODI squad that lifted the Women's Blind T20 World Cup trophy.

The Odisha "Oil Awareness Board" initiative

Why in the News?

The Odisha government has directed the installation of "Oil Awareness Boards" across various public childcare and community facilities such as Anganwadi Centres, Child Care Institutions, One-Stop Centres, Shakti Sadan, Shakti Nivas, and other residential government-run sites.

Key points

- The initiative, directed by the Women and Child Development (WCD) Department, aims to promote healthy eating habits and combat rising cases of heart disease, obesity, fatty liver, and high blood pressure linked to junk food consumption.
- The goal is to educate people — especially caregivers and children — about the oil content in commonly eaten foods and the health risks associated with high-oil diets like obesity, heart disease, fatty liver, and high blood pressure.
- **To reach a wider audience, the boards will be bilingual in Odia and English.**

Tanvi Patri

Why in the News?

Odisha's Tanvi Patri Shines with Double Crown at 37th Sub-Junior National Badminton Championship



Key points

The 37th National Sub-Junior Badminton Championship concluded triumphantly at the Dalmia Bharat Gopichand Badminton Excellence Centre (Shuttle) within the Kalinga Stadium premises in Bhubaneswar.

- Odisha's young shuttler Tanvi Patri emerged as the star of the event, clinching a double crown by winning the girls' singles titles in both the Under-15 and Under-17 categories.

Maliput Melodies — an Odia feature film

Why in the News?

At the 56th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) 2025 held in Goa (Nov 20–28, 2025), Maliput Melodies — an Odia feature film — was selected for screening in the prestigious Indian Panorama section and earned acclaim from audiences and critics alike.

Key points

Film Type & Theme: The 128-minute feature is an anthology of four short films showcasing rural life, culture, and natural beauty in the Koraput district of Odisha. The four episodes are titled Kanophulo (earring), Rangomati (red soil), Baido Karia (music group), and Village Marriage.

- **Acclaim**: The movie was noted for its heartfelt portrayal of Odia heritage and its ability to resonate with a wider audience, bringing Odia storytelling to a national stage.

Global Energy Leaders' Summit (GELS) 2025

Why in the News?

The Global Energy Leaders' Summit (GELS 2025) was a major international energy conference hosted by the Government of Odisha in Puri, Odisha.

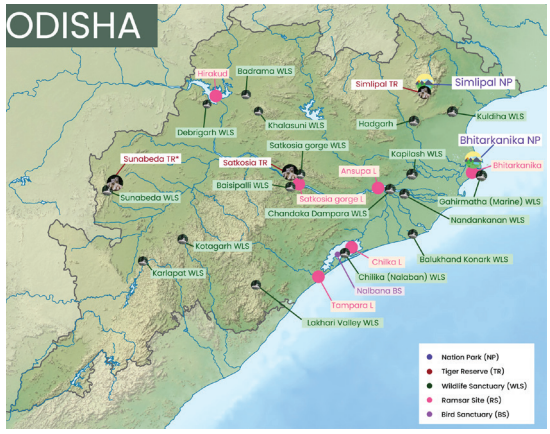
Key points

- **Vision**: GELS 2025 marked the beginning of a long-term Community of Practice, with India confident that states like Odisha will lead the next phase of national green growth and energy innovation.
- **Record:** Speaking at GELS, the Minister announced India's highest-ever annual addition of non-fossil capacity, 31.25 GW, including 24.28 GW of solar, showcasing the country's accelerating clean energy progress.
- **Contribution:** He highlighted that as the world added its second terawatt of renewable capacity by 2024, India alone contributed 46 GW of solar between 2022–24, becoming the third-largest contributor globally.
- **Growth:** GELS underscored India's transformative solar expansion, rising from 2.8 GW to ~130 GW in 11 years, a 4,500% growth, making India a global model for rapid renewable deployment.
- **Balance:** The summit addressed India's dual challenge of being the second-largest coal consumer while simultaneously scaling renewables to remain competitive amid global industrial and trade transitions.
- **Capacity:** Odisha's clean energy progress was spotlighted at GELS, with 3.1 GW of renewable capacity, representing 34% of its total power capacity and marking strong state-level adoption.
- **Initiative:** A major announcement at the summit was the approval of a 1.5 lakh rooftop solar ULA model under PM Surya Ghar for Odisha, expected to benefit 7–8 lakh people, particularly low-income households.
- **Adoption:** GELS highlighted Odisha's rooftop solar uptake: 1.6 lakh applications, over 23,000 installations, and ₹147 crore in subsidies transferred to 19,200 families, reflecting strong implementation.

Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary

Why in the News?

AI-powered cameras have been deployed in Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary in Odisha to strengthen wildlife protection and combat poaching and illegal activities.



About Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary:

It is a major wildlife sanctuary in Odisha which was established in 1984.

- It is spread across the Chota Nagpur Plateau region.
- It is connected with Simlipal Reserve via Nato and Sukhupada Hill ranges.
- Flora: It contains mixed deciduous forest.

- Fauna: It consists of a lot of wild animals like tigers, elephants, leopards, bison, gaur, giant squirrels and sambar etc..

Sumit Singh

Why in the News?

Sumit Singh, an ultra-runner from Rourkela, Odisha, has achieved the treadmill records.



Key points

- **48-Hour Manual Treadmill Run:** Covered a distance of 201.5 kilometers (approximately 125.2 miles) in a continuous 48-hour run on a manual treadmill. The event took place from December 13 to December 15, 2025, at the Civic Centre in Rourkela.
- **12-Hour Manual Treadmill Run**: Set a Guinness World Record by covering 68.04 kilometers on a manual treadmill on March 12, 2024. This achievement was officially certified by Guinness World Records.
- **33 Full Marathons in One Month:** Completed 33 full marathons (totaling 1,392.6 km) between April 25 and May 24, 2023, at Uditnagar Stadium, Rourkela. This feat earned him a record from the International Book of Records.

Odisha Food Festival-2025

Why in the News?

One of the biggest culinary celebrations in Odisha in 2025, organized by Biswa Odia Pariwar.

Key points

- **Odisha Food Festival** (Odisha Khadya Mahotsav): Held from December 23 to December 29, 2025, at the IDCO Exhibition Ground in Bhubaneswar.
- This festival emphasizes authentic Odia food, including dishes that are disappearing or rarely featured in mainstream menus. There's a strong intent to revive and promote heritage foods, especially those with cultural significance.

Ashok Basa-World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO)

Why in the News?

The WFEO Executive Board appointed Basa in accordance with its Rules of Procedure.



About WFEO

- **WFEO, which UNESCO established in 1968,** stands as the largest international professional body of engineers and engineering organisations.
- It represents nearly 100 countries and promotes engineering as a driver for sustainable development, good governance, and global cooperation.

About Ashok Basa

- Basa created history as the first Indian to serve as the Internal Auditor of WFEO since its inception.
- Earlier, he served as Executive Vice President of WFEO (2022–2025) and became only the second Indian to hold that prestigious leadership role. In addition, he chaired the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) during 2022–2023 and 2023–2025.

Odisha Investors' Meet & Roadshow

Why in the News?

The recent Odisha Investors' Meet and Roadshow in Hyderabad, held from December 18-19, 2025, generated significant investment proposals worth approximately ₹67,000 crore.

Key points

- **Total Investment Potential**: Around ₹67,000 crore in investment proposals were generated.
- **Job Creation**: These investments have the potential to create nearly 56,000 employment opportunities.
- **MoUs Signed:** 13 MoUs were signed, accounting for approximately ₹27,650 crore in investments.
- **Key Sectors of Interest:** Strong interest was observed in pharmaceuticals, medical devices, electronics, information technology (IT), textiles, and advanced manufacturing.

Industry Engagements

- **G2B Meetings:** 15 Government-to-Business (G2B) meetings were conducted with major companies such as Indorama Industries, Jindal Poly Films, and Maruti.
- **Sectoral Discussions:** A dedicated roundtable was held with pharmaceutical industry leaders to discuss the state's new Pharmaceutical Policy and the development of related industrial parks.
- **Defense Sector Focus:** The Chief Minister visited Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) to explore collaboration opportunities for Odisha's MSMEs in defense manufacturing.

Strategic Objectives

- Robust industrial infrastructure
- Dedicated industrial parks
- Ease of doing business initiatives
- Skilled workforce availability
- Policy-driven growth model

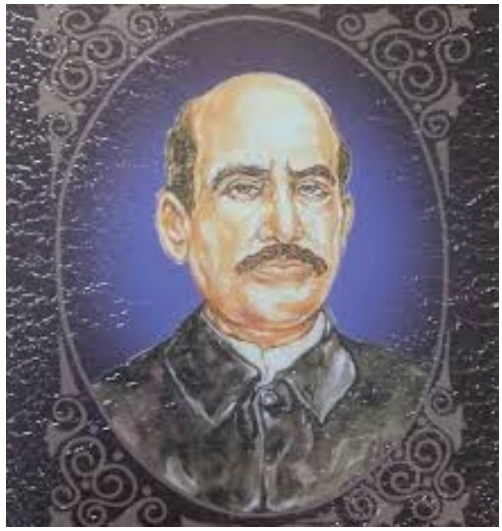
Pallikabi Nanda Kishore Bal

Why in the News?

The 150th birth anniversary of Pallikabi Nanda Kishore Bal was celebrated on December 22, 2025.

The 150th-anniversary events included:

- **Grand Commemorations:** State-wide tributes were held, including a major event at the Golden Jubilee ground in the Pragativadi premises on December 23, 2025.
- **Digital Tributes**: Leaders and cultural departments across the state paid homage on social media, emphasizing his role in connecting Odia culture to its rural roots.
- **Cultural Programs**: Various literary forums organized recitals and discussions focused on his contributions to pastoral literature and his sharp awareness of social issues.



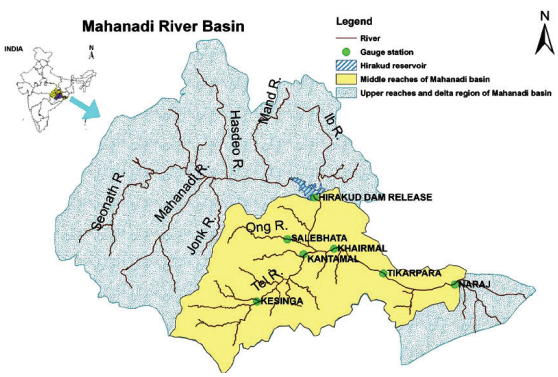
About Pallikabi Nanda Kishore Bal

- **Birth Date**: December 22, 1875.
- **Birthplace:** Kusupur village in the Cuttack district of Odisha.
- **Title:** Popularly known as "Palli Kabi" (Poet of Rural Life) for his vivid and tender depiction of rural Odisha.
- **Literary Impact:** He was a pioneer of modern Odia poetry and children's literature, known for works such as Kanakalata, Palli Chitra, and the famous children's rhymes Nana Baya Geeta.
- **Notable Works**
  - **Palli Chitra (Picture of the Countryside):** His most famous collection, portraying the vivid reality of village life.
  - **Kanakalata:** A notable novel that reflects social issues of the time.
  - **Nana Baya Gita**: A highly popular collection of nursery rhymes and lyrics for children that remain iconic in Odia households.
  - **Other Works**: Nirjharini (The Stream), Basanta-Kokila, Tarangini, and Charuchitra.

High-level all-party committee to address Mahanadi River water sharing dispute

Why in the News?

The Odisha government constituted an eight-member high-level all-party committee to address the long-standing Mahanadi River water sharing dispute with Chhattisgarh.



Committee Leadership and Members

- The committee is chaired by **Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo.**
- It includes representatives from the BJP, BJD, and Congress to ensure a unified state approach.
- **Key members include:**
  - Suresh Pujari: Minister, Revenue & Disaster Management
  - Prithviraj Harichandan: Law Minister
  - Sampad Chandra Swain: Industries Minister
  - Saroj Kumar Pradhan: Government Chief Whip
  - Niranjan Pujari: BJD MLA and former minister
  - Jayanarayan Mishra: BJP MLA
  - Sofia Firdous: Congress MLA

About Mahanadi River water sharing dispute

- The Mahanadi River water sharing dispute is a major inter-state conflict between Odisha (lower riparian) and Chhattisgarh (upper riparian).
  - **Odisha's Allegation:** Chhattisgarh built multiple barrages (more than 500 anicuts and 30 barrages) in the upper catchment without consultation, significantly reducing non-monsoon water flow into the Hirakud Reservoir. This impacts irrigation, drinking water, and the ecology of the Mahanadi delta.
  - **Chhattisgarh's Stand:** The state claims 52.9% of the total catchment area lies within its borders and asserts its right to use this water for its own development and irrigation needs.

Concerns of Odisha

Chhattisgarh has opened 20 gates at Kalma Barrage through which 1,000-1,500 cusecs of water is flowing into Mahanadi's low catchment area during the non-monsoon season.

- Chhattisgarh's reluctance to release water during non-monsoon seasons has often resulted in the non-availability of water in the lower catchment of Mahanadi.
  - This also affects the Rabi crops and aggravates the drinking problem in Odisha.

- However, this time Chhattisgarh has released water without any intimation, which raised concerns over its management of Mahanadi River water.
  - The state faced flood in upper catchment during monsoon and thus, opened gates without any intimation to Odisha.

Constitutional Provisions:

- **Entry 17 of the State List** deals with water i.e., water supply, irrigation, canal, drainage, embankments, water storage and hydro power.
- **Entry 56 of the Union List** empowers the Union Government for the regulation and development of inter-state rivers and river valleys to the extent declared by Parliament to be expedient in the public interest.
- **According to Article 262, in case of disputes relating to waters:**
  - Parliament may by law provide for the adjudication of any dispute or complaint with respect to the use, distribution or control of the waters of, or in, any inter-State River or river valley.
  - Parliament may, by law, provide that neither the Supreme Court nor any other court shall exercise jurisdiction in respect of any such dispute or complaint as mentioned above.

Mechanism for Inter-State River Water Disputes Resolution

- **As per Article 262,** the Parliament has enacted the following:
  - **River Board Act, 1956:** This empowered the GoI to establish Boards for Interstate Rivers and river valleys in consultation with State Governments. To date, no river board has been created.
  - **Inter-State Water Dispute Act, 1956**: In case, if a particular state or states approach the Centre for the constitution of the tribunal, the Central Government should try to resolve the matter by consultation among the aggrieved states. In case, if it does not work, then it may constitute the tribunal.
  - **Note**: Supreme Court shall not question the Award or formula given by tribunal, but it can question the working of the tribunal.
- **The Inter-State Water Dispute Act, 1956** was amended in 2002, to include the major recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission.
  - The amendments mandated a one-year time frame to set up the water disputes tribunal and also a 3-year time frame to give a decision.

Issues

Protracted proceedings and extreme delays in dispute resolution. Water disputes such as the Godavari and Cauvery disputes in India have faced long delays in resolution.

- Opacity in the institutional framework and guidelines that define these proceedings; and ensuring compliance.
- The composition of the tribunal is not multidisciplinary, and it consists of persons only from the judiciary.
- The absence of water data that is acceptable to all parties currently makes it difficult to even set up a baseline for adjudication.
- The growing nexus between water and politics has transformed the disputes into turfs of vote bank politics.
  - This politicisation has led to increasing defiance by states, extended litigations and subversion of resolution mechanisms.

Way forward

- Bring Inter-state water disputes under the Interstate Council constructed by the president **under article 263** and need for consensus-based decision making.
- States must be motivated for water use efficiency in every domain and water harvesting and water recharging to reduce the demand on river water and in situ water source.
- Need of a single water management agency for both ground and surface water on scientific basis and also for technical advice on union, river basin, state and district level for water conservation and water management.

- Tribunals must be fast track, technical and also have a verdict enforceable mechanism in a time bound manner.
- A central repository of water data is necessary for informed decision making. It is important for the central government to take a more active role in resolving inter-state water disputes.

Solar-powered cold storage facilities

Why in the News?

The Odisha government has announced a plan to set up a larger network of solar-powered cold storage facilities, with 239 units already established this financial year (2025-26) to assist farmers and rural producers.

Key points

- **Objective:** The primary goal is to minimize post-harvest losses of perishable produce (fruits and vegetables), prevent distress sales, ensure better incomes for farmers, and reduce the state's dependence on external sources for these commodities.
- **Initial Plan:** The government's initial plan, announced in late 2022, was to install solar-powered cold storage in 1,000 panchayats in the first phase under the 5-T programme, with an estimated investment of around ₹15 lakh per unit for a 1 Metric Tonne (MT) capacity pre-cooler.
- **Recent Status**: As of a recent assembly session in December 2025, it was confirmed that 239 such solar-powered cold rooms have already been set up during the current financial year.
- **Funding and Subsidies:** The state has approved a total budget outlay of ₹252 crore for cold storage schemes to be implemented over five years (2025-26 to 2029-30). The government offers significant capital investment subsidies (up to 60% for specific categories) and electricity tariff subsidies to encourage the development of these facilities.
- **Nodal Agencies:** The Odisha Renewable Energy Development Agency (OREDA) is involved in promoting and implementing the use of solar energy for such facilities, while the Agricultural Promotion and Investment Corporation of Odisha Limited (APICOL) is a nodal agency for implementation of related schemes.

Cold Storage

- The cold chain infrastructure is a crucial part of agriculture and allied sectors. The produce, particularly fresh produce like fruits and vegetables, is perishable and requires a temperature-controlled supply chain involving efficient storage, transportation, and distribution to increase the shelf life of the food grains, fruits, vegetables, livestock products, etc.
  - As per an estimate, the Indian cold chain market size grew to INR 1.8 lakh Cr in 2022, and it is expected that it will reach approximately INR 3.8 lakh Cr by 2028, exhibiting a growth rate (CAGR) of about 12.3% during 2023-2028.
- **Need for Cold Storage:** Availability of proper cold storages are important for preserving perishable commodities like milk, meat, eggs, vegetables, fruits, ornamental flowers and other floricultural goods.
  - These cold storages give perishable food items a longer shelf life by preventing them from rotting due to humidity, high temperature and micro-organisms. This results in a decrease in loss due to spoilage.
  - It will significantly reduce waste, create a surplus for exports, and enhance the income of farmers.
  - This will also go a long way in achieving the Sustainable Development Goal of zero hunger, which aims to end all forms of hunger and malnutrition and double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers.

Schemes Related to Storage in India

National Policy on Handling and Storage of Food Grains

- It aimed to reduce storage and transit losses and to introduce bulk handling, storage and transportation of foodgrains procured by the FCI.

The Gramin Bhandaran Yojana

- It aims to build specialised storage facilities in rural areas to accommodate farmers' needs for storing agricultural output and encouraging agricultural produce grading, standardisation, and quality assurance to increase marketability.
  - Warehouse Infrastructure Fund
- It was established to provide loans to public and private sectors to build cold chain infrastructure, including silos, storage, and warehouses.
  - Negotiable Warehouse Receipt (NWR) or Electronic NWR
- The Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA) was established to introduce the Negotiable Warehouse Receipt (NWR)/ Electronic Negotiable Warehouse Receipt (e-NWR) system in India in order to encourage farmers (as well as businesses) not to sell their produce right after harvest, when prices typically fall to their lowest levels of the year.
  - They can keep their produce in WDRA-approved warehouses that provide NWRs or e-NWRs.
  - Farmers can use e-NWR to apply for institutional financing from banks using their NWR or e-NWR as collateral.
- **Private Entrepreneurs Guarantee (PEG) Scheme**
- It is being implemented for construction of storage godowns in Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode through private entrepreneurs, Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) and State Warehousing Corporations (SWCs).
  - It aims to overcome storage constraints and ensure safe stocking of foodgrains across the country.
- **Central Sector Scheme for construction of godown**s
- It focuses on augmenting capacity in the North Eastern Region (NER) along with few other States.

Schemes Targeting Cold Storage in India

- **PM Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY)**
- For Development of cold storage facilities, specialised packaging units, warehousing facilities, etc.
  - One component of PMKSY is Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure scheme, which promotes integrated and complete cold chain facilities without any break from the farm gate to the consumer, to reduce losses by improving efficiency in collection of farmers produce, storage, transportation, and minimal processing.
  - Both horticultural and non-horticultural produce are eligible for support under this scheme.
  - Under this scheme, as of December 31, 2022, cold storage capacity of 8.38 lakh MT has been created.
  - **Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH)**
- Under this, financial assistance is provided for various horticulture activities, including construction/Expansion/ Modernisation of cold storages of capacity up to 5000 MT in the country.
  - **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana**
- It addresses critical gaps in fish production, productivity, quality, technology, post-harvest infrastructure — with emphasis on a seamless cold chain — and management, modernisation, and strengthening of the value chain, reduction of post-harvest losses, traceability, etc.
  - The scheme aims to enhance fish production to 22 million MT, exports to INR 1 lakh Cr, and generate about 55 lakh direct and indirect employment opportunities by 2024-25.
  - **Priority Sector Lending:**
- It covers loans for the construction of storage facilities (warehouse, market yards, godowns, and silos), including cold storage units/cold storage chains designed to store agricultural produce/ products, irrespective of their location.
- **Integrated Cold Chain Availability Platform:**
- It is envisaged to be a national database that enables active linkage between multiple cold-chain assets across owners, promoting integration of use though collaboration.

– It is a joint effort of various institutions like National Horticulture Board, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority, Ministry of Food Processing Industries and National Centre for Cold-chain Development.

500-MT cold storage

- The facility, constructed by the Regulated Market Committee, was formally inaugurated by local MP and BJP National Vice-President Baijayant Panda.
- 500-MT cold storage capacity boost for farmers in Odisha's Kendrapara.

Odisha aims for 15 fully operational airports by 2047

Why in the News?

Odisha aims for 15 fully operational airports by 2047 to boost connectivity and aviation growth.

Key points

This goal is part of the state's long-term "Vision of Vikshit Odisha 2036-47" plan to boost connectivity and aviation growth.

Current Status

- Total Airstrips: Odisha has a total of 19 airports or airstrips, including 12 that are state-owned.
- Operational Airports: Currently, only five civilian airports are fully functional:

Future Plans

- Biju Patnaik International Airport (Bhubaneswar) - the state's only international airport
- Veer Surendra Sai Airport (Jharsuguda)
- Jeypore Airport
- Utkela Airport
- Rourkela Airport

The expansion plan involves several key initiatives to establish Odisha as a leading aviation hub in Eastern India:

Puri International Airport: Plans are progressing for a new greenfield international airport at Puri.

- **Aviation Ecosystem Development**: The government is planning a comprehensive state aviation policy to attract private investment, streamline regulations, and promote the establishment of Flight Training Organisations (FTOs) to develop a skilled workforce.
- **MRO Facilities:** Recognizing Maintenance, Repair & Overhaul (MRO) facilities and aviation manufacturing as a thrust sector to strengthen the aviation value chain.
- **Revenue Generation:** The state government anticipates generating an annual revenue of ₹5,000 crore from aviation-related services by 2047.

Aviation market in India

Market Growth and Global Position: India is the 3rd-largest domestic aviation market after the USA and China. India now accounts for 69% of South Asia's airline traffic.

- India is expected to become the 3rd-largest air passenger market (international and domestic) by 2030.
  – The passenger traffic (international and domestic) during FY25 (till September 2024) stood at 196.91 million.
  – **Employment Generation:** The aviation industry directly employs 369,700 people and contributes USD 5.6 billion in economic output.
- When tourism and related industries are included, aviation supports 7.7 million jobs and contributes USD 53.6 billion, which is 1.5% of India's GDP.
  – **Infrastructure:** Operational airports increased from 74 in 2014 to 157 in 2024, with a target of 350-400 airports by 2047. Additionally, 21 greenfield airports were approved, with 11 already operational.
- Aircraft movement increased at a Compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 3.85% from 2.05 million in FY17 to 2.67 million in FY24.
  – New terminals and greenfield airports are under development (e.g., Bagdogra Civil Enclave, Dehradun terminal).

Challenges in India's Airways Sector

- **Grounded Fleet Crisis**: Over 160 aircraft (~25% of the total fleet) remain non-operational due to financial struggles and supply chain disruptions, severely impacting airline capacity. (DGCA)
- **Market Concentration & Financial Stress:** A duopoly of IndiGo (60%) and Tata Group airlines (20%) limits competition, while airlines are projected to incur $1.6–1.8 billion losses in FY24 due to high fuel costs and weak financial structures. (IATA)
- **Regulatory & Tax Burden:** Aviation fuel taxes (40–50%), among the highest globally, along with outdated regulations like the Aircraft Act (1934) and airport monopolies, increase compliance costs and operational inefficiencies. (IATA)
- **Low Air Travel Penetration & Manpower Shortages:** With only 0.13 seats per capita, India's aviation growth is constrained compared to China (0.49) and Brazil (0.57).
  - Additionally, a shortage of pilots, engineers, and cabin crew leads to increased turnaround times and flight delays. (IATA)
- **Others:** Delayed aircraft deliveries from Boeing and Airbus, unrealistic airline expansions (Kingfisher, Jet Airways, Go First), limited tier-2 & tier-3 connectivity despite UDAN, and insufficient sustainability measures hinder sectoral growth.

Key Government Initiatives in India's Civil Aviation Sector

- **UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) (2016):** Enhances regional air connectivity by subsidizing unserved and underserved routes, making air travel affordable for the common citizen. (MoCA)
- **National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP) (2016):** Strengthens domestic aviation, rationalizes MRO (Maintenance, Repair & Overhaul) taxation, and allows greater international expansion. (MoCA)
- **NABH (NextGen Airports for Bharat) Nirman:** Focuses on modernizing and expanding airport capacity to meet growing passenger demand. (MoCA)
- **Make in India** – Aviation: Promotes domestic aircraft components, systems, and airport infrastructure manufacturing. (DPIIT)
- **DigiYatra:** Introduces biometric-based seamless travel to enhance airport efficiency and passenger experience. (MoCA)
- **GAGAN (GPS-Aided GEO Augmented Navigation): I**mproves flight navigation accuracy, enhancing operational safety and efficiency. (ISRO + AAI)
- **Krishi Udan Scheme:** Provides subsidies for air transport of perishable agricultural products to boost farmer incomes. (MoCA)
- **Aircraft Leasing & Financing at GIFT City:** Develops India's domestic aircraft leasing ecosystem to reduce dependence on foreign leasing firms. (IFSCA)
- **Open Sky Policy:** Liberalizes airspace for international carriers, encouraging global connectivity. (MoCA)
- **100% FDI in Aviation:** Allows full foreign investment in greenfield airports and up to 49% in airlines via automatic routes to attract global capital. (DPIIT)

Way Forward for India's Airways Sector

"A common man who travels in slippers should also be seen in aircraft. This is my dream." – PM Narendra Modi

- **Airport Infrastructure Expansion**: Develop new airports and modernize existing ones for increased capacity and efficiency.
- **Boost Regional Connectivity:** Strengthen the UDAN scheme and enhance last-mile air connectivity.
- **ATF Tax Rationalization:** Bring Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) under GST for cost reduction.
- **Fleet Modernization & Indigenous Manufacturing:** Promote aircraft leasing at GIFT City and develop domestic MRO facilities.
- **Strengthening International Competitiveness:** Improve bilateral air agreements and develop India as a global transit hub.

- **Sustainable & Green Aviation**: Scale up Sustainable Aviation Fuel & promote carbon-neutral airports.
- **Others:** Ensure financial stability, boost skill development, enhance cargo infrastructure, and elevate passenger experience through digitalization.

Maritime investment plan of over ₹46,000 crore

Why in the News?

Odisha CM announces ₹46,000 crore investment plans for new port, shipbuilding project.

- The announcement, made during the **Boita Bandana Utsav** and Paradip Port Foundation Day celebrations, includes several major infrastructure projects:

Key Projects and Investments

- **New Deep-Water Port at Bahuda:** A new port will be established at Bahuda in the Ganjam district with an estimated investment of ₹21,500 crore. This project is planned in collaboration with the Paradip Port Authority.
- **Shipbuilding and Repair Centre:** A major facility will be developed at the mouth of the Mahanadi River near Paradip, requiring an investment of ₹24,700 crore. This is intended to position Odisha as a national shipbuilding hub.
- **World-Class Cruise Terminal:** A premier terminal will be built in Puri to integrate tourism with the state's maritime and blue economy.

Strategic Vision

- **Capacity Expansion:** The plan aligns with the Maritime India Vision 2030 and Viksit Bharat 2047, aiming to increase Paradip Port's cargo handling capacity from 150 million tonnes in 2025 to 500 million tonnes by 2047.
- **Additional Infrastructure:** The CM also announced plans for a greenfield airport in Paradip and developing the town as a green hydrogen hub.
- **National Alignment:** These initiatives are designed to complement central government policies such as Sagarmala, PM Gati Shakti, and the National Logistics Policy.
- **Challenges**

Competition from China: In less than 70 years, China has become a global maritime power, with a large navy, coast guard, the largest merchant fleet, and leading ports.

- **Inefficient Port Infrastructure**: The modernization of existing ports and the construction of new ports have faced delays, and many objectives under the Maritime Agenda 2010-2020 were not met by 2020.
- **Lack of Private Sector Participation:** India's maritime economy, particularly in the context of port-led industrialization, still suffers from insufficient involvement of private players.
- **Sustainability Concerns**: Maritime trade and port development often face environmental scrutiny, especially with regard to coastal ecosystem degradation and the environmental impact of large infrastructure projects.
- **Geopolitical Challenges:** The shifting geopolitical dynamics and new global maritime challenges, such as threat of non-state actors pose risks to India's maritime trade.
- **Dependence on Foreign Shipbuilding**: Despite strides in indigenous shipbuilding, India remains largely dependent on foreign technology for shipbuilding and maritime equipment.

Way forward

Fast-Tracking Port Modernization: The Sagarmala Programme, launched to promote port-led industrialization, should be expedited, with a focus on prioritising the modernisation of domestic shipyards, reducing bureaucratic hurdles and ensuring timely project implementation.

- **Incentivizing Private Investment:** The government should provide more incentives for private participation in the maritime sector through favourable policies, tax breaks, and investment-friendly regulations.
- **Promotion of Port-Led Industrialization:** India should focus on creating industrial clusters

around ports, making use of the Make in India initiative.

- **Promotion of Green Shipping:** The promotion of alternative fuels like LNG (liquefied natural gas) and renewable energy sources for vessels can reduce the carbon footprint of maritime trade.
- **Multilateral Maritime Cooperation:** India should increase its engagement with regional and multilateral security frameworks, such as the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) to ensure cooperative maritime security.

Tsunami Ready' Coastal Villages of Odisha

Why in News:

- At present, 24 coastal villages of Odisha have been recognised as 'Tsunami Ready Villages' under UNESCO's Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme.
- This recognition has been granted based on verification by the National Tsunami Ready Recognition Board.

'Tsunami Ready' Village:

- A village is certified as 'Tsunami Ready' when the following arrangements are ensured—
  - High level of public awareness regarding tsunamis
  - Tsunami risk assessment, preparedness, and hazard mapping
  - Display of evacuation route maps at public places
  - Availability of a 24×7 tsunami warning system
  - Regular mock drills and community participation

UNESCO–IOC Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme (TRRP)

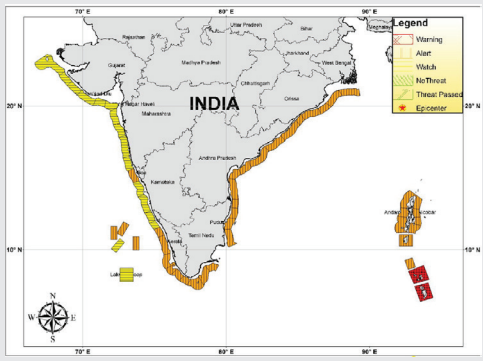
- **Introduction:**
  - TRRP is an international, voluntary, and community-based initiative of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (UNESCO-IOC).
- **Objective**: To promote tsunami risk prevention and mitigation in coastal regions worldwide.
- **Working Mechanism:**
  - Assessment based on 12 preparedness indicators
  - Renewal of recognised communities every four years

UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC)

- **Established**: 1960
- **Headquarters:** Paris, France
- **Objective**:To promote international cooperation in ocean science for improved management of oceans, coasts, and marine resources.
- **Member Countries:** 152 (India is a member)
- **Important Role:**Coordination of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030)

About Tsunami

- Tsunamis are giant waves caused by earthquakes or volcanic eruptions under the sea.
- It is also caused by landslides, nuclear explosion, seamount collapse, and meteorite impact.
  - Out in the depths of the ocean, tsunami waves do not dramatically increase in height.
- But as the tsunami approaches land, they build up to higher and higher heights as the depth of the ocean decreases.
  - The speed of tsunami waves depends on ocean depth rather than the distance from the source of the wave.



- Tsunami waves may travel as fast as jet planes over deep waters, only slowing down when reaching shallow waters.
- Tsunami Prone Areas: India is vulnerable to various natural and human-made disasters due to its unique geo-climatic and socio-economic conditions.
- Of the 7,516 km long coastline, close to 5,700 km is prone to cyclones and tsunamis.

NDMA Guidelines for Tsunami Mitigation

- The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) released the National Disaster Management Guidelines: Management of Tsunamis in 2010. These guidelines shift India's approach from reactive relief to a proactive framework focusing on prevention, preparedness, and mitigation.

The primary mitigation strategies outlined by the NDMA include:

- **Structural Mitigation (Engineered Solutions)**
- Tsunami-Resistant Design: The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) is mandated to develop and update construction standards for tsunami-resistant structures.
  - Infrastructure Protection: Implementing "Build Back Better" (BBB) principles for critical facilities like hospitals, schools, and coastal roads.
  - Physical Barriers: Constructing seawalls, breakwaters, and submerged dykes to reduce the impact of incoming waves.
  - Elevated Structures: Building multipurpose cyclone-cum-tsunami shelters and elevated platforms in backwaters for human and livestock evacuation.
- **Non-Structural & Nature-Based Mitigation**
  - Bio-Shields: Promoting the plantation of mangroves, casuarinas, and shelterbelts along coastlines to absorb wave energy.
  - Coastal Zoning: Enforcing Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) notifications to limit new development in high-risk areas.
  - Sand Dune Management: Developing and stabilizing sand dunes with vegetation to act as natural coastal buffers.
- **Early Warning & Dissemination**
  - ITEWS: Utilizing the Indian Tsunami Early Warning System (ITEWS), operated by INCOIS in Hyderabad.
  - Sensor Network: Deployment of Bottom Pressure Recorders (BPRs), tide gauges, and surface buoys in the Bay of Bengal, Arabian Sea, and Indian Ocean.
  - Warning Dissemination: Establishing a fail-safe communication chain from the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) to the district level (DEOCs) using satellite-based systems, SMS, and radio.
- **Capacity Building & Community Preparedness**
  - Risk Mapping: Creating high-resolution GIS-based inundation maps to identify vulnerable zones.
  - Mock Drills: Conducting regular community exercises and training for local "Aapda Mitra" volunteers and civil defense.
  - "Tsunami Ready" Indicators: Encouraging communities to fulfill UNESCO-IOC indicators, such as having a designated risk reduction plan and mapped evacuation routes.

Key Institutional Roles

- INCOIS: National Tsunami Warning Centre.
- IMD: Monitoring seismic activity and secondary hazards like flooding.
- NDRF/SDRF: Specialized disaster response forces for search and rescue.
- Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA): Issuing official warning bulletins and alerts.

Mukteswar Nrutya Utsav 2026

Why in News

- The three-day Mukteshwar Nrutya Utsav 2026, a grand celebration of Odissi dance, was inaugurated this evening by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi at the historic Mukteshwar Temple premises in Bhubaneswar.

Key points

- It is an annual festival dedicated mainly to Odissi dance.
- Organised by the Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi with support from the Department of Odia Language, Literature and Culture.
- The festival is performed against the backdrop of the 10th-century Mukteswar Temple, famous for its architecture and heritage value.

About Odissi Dance

- The dance has its origin in the temples.
- The carvings found at the Udayagiri Monastery denote that Odissi was patronised as early as the 2nd Century BCE and the trend continued unabated until about the 16th Century AD.
- After surviving the tumultuous years from 16th century AD till independence, Odissi underwent a renaissance of sorts which helped it become the global phenomenon it is today.
- The classical music and dance form of Odisha was prefixed with "Odissi" by noted Odia poet Kabichandra Kalicharan Pattanayak, who was the centre of the cultural revival of Odisha post-independence, to retain its distinct identity.
- **Dance Techniques**
  - Odissi dance form can be broken down to the movement of the head, bust and torso and the accompanying gestures and expressions.
  - The techniques of movement are built around the two basic postures of the Chowk and the Tribhanga. The chowk is a position imitating a square - a very masculine stance with the weight of the body equally balanced. The tribhanga is a very feminine stance where the body is deflected at the neck, torso and the knees.
- Odissi dance deals largely with the love theme of Radha and Krishna.

Padma Shri Awardees 2026 from Odisha

Why in News

- Four personalities from Odisha were selected for the Padma Shri 2026 for their outstanding contributions in literature, education, and arts, bringing national recognition to Odisha's cultural and linguistic heritage.

Key Points

- **Mahendra Kumar Mishra** – Literature & Education
  - Renowned linguist, folklorist, and scholar known for contributions to Odia language, literature, and indigenous knowledge.
- **Charan Hembram** – Literature & Education
  - Santali author, composer, and cultural activist working for tribal literature and heritage.
- **Guru Simanchal Patro** – Art
  - Eminent Prahallada Nataka (folk theatre) exponent who helped preserve Odisha's traditional performing art.
- **Sarat Kumar Patra** – Art
  - Master weaver recognised for promoting traditional handloom and textile art.

Abhijit Majumdar

Why in News

- **Renowned Odia music director and singer Abhijit Majumdar died on 25 January 2026** in Bhubaneswar.

Key Points

- He was one of the most influential modern music composers in the Odia film industry (Ollywood).

- He started his career as a music arranger and later became a leading composer known for blending modern, folk, and classical Odia music styles.

Sunabeda Wildlife Sanctuary

Why in News

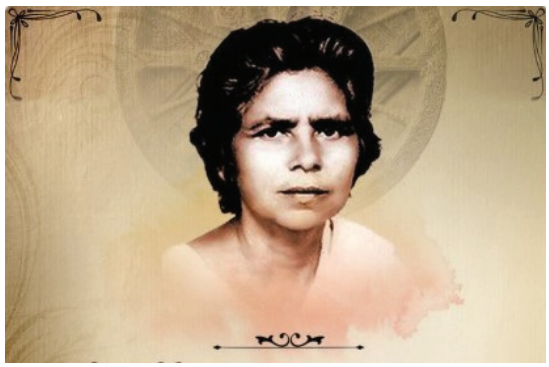
- The Sunabeda Wildlife Sanctuary in Odisha was officially declared "Maoist-free" in January 2026.
- Recent camera trap data indicates that the leopard population is thriving (estimated more than 70).
- Sunabeda Wildlife Sanctuary is a major biodiversity hotspot and a proposed tiger reserve located in the western part of Odisha.
- Established: 1983, Nuapada, Odisha
- It is part of the Deccan Peninsula biogeographic region and acts as an important ecological corridor in Central India.

Boundary: Adjoins Sitanadi and Udanti Wildlife Sanctuaries of Chhattisgarh.

Parvati Giri

Why in the News?

- The Prime Minister paid tribute to Parvati Giri on the occasion of her birth centenary.



Person Life :

- Parvati Giri (1926–1995) was a renowned freedom fighter and social reformer from Odisha.
- She left formal education at a young age and joined Congress organizational work by 1938.

Legacy

- **Freedom movement**
  - Actively participated in the Individual Satyagraha (1940).
  - Took part in the Quit India Movement (1942) at the age of just 16.
  - Arrested for calling for a boycott of British institutions and imprisoned for nearly two years.
  - Earned the title "Banhi Kanya" for her courage and mass mobilization efforts.
- **"Mother Teresa of Western Odisha"**: A nickname earned for her extensive post-independence humanitarian work, including establishing orphanages like the Kasturba Gandhi Matruniketan.
- **"Banhi Kanya" (Daughter of Fire)**: A title given to her for her fiery patriotism and bold protests against British rule, such as challenging the Sub-Divisional Officer (SDO) in Bargarh.
- **Social Reform:** She dedicated her life to healthcare, leprosy eradication, and the welfare of marginalized communities after the freedom struggle.

Godabarish Mishra Adarsha Vidyalaya Scheme

Why in the News?

- Odisha CM Majhi Launches Flagship Godabarish Mishra Adarsha Vidyalaya Scheme With 118 School Foundations.

Symbolic Significance

- **The launch took place at Banpur, the birthplace of Pandit Godabarish Mishra.**
- CM Majhi stated that the initiative is a milestone toward the vision of "Vikshit Odisha, Vikshit Bharat" by 2036, aiming to bridge the educational gap between rural and urban areas

Key points

- **Vision & Scale:** Named after the eminent social reformer and educationist Pandit Godabarish

Mishra, the scheme aims to establish one model primary school in every gram panchayat across Odisha.

- **Phase 1 Roadmap:** In the first phase, 2,200 schools will be developed over the next four years with a total estimated expenditure of ₹12,000 crore.
- **Infrastructure & Curriculum:**
  - Each school will be built on at least two acres of land and accommodate a minimum of 100 students.
  - Facilities include digital classrooms, STEM-based learning labs, sports infrastructure, and separate toilets for boys and girls.
  - The curriculum is aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, focusing on foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN).
- **Accessibility:** The government will provide free transportation for students living in remote and underserved areas to ensure no child is left behind.
- **Heritage Schools:** As part of the broader initiative, the government plans to restore and develop 45 heritage schools that are over 100 years old to preserve their historical significance.

Pandit Godabarish Mishra

- Born: 26 October 1886, in Srinibaspur Sasan, near Banapur, Khordha district, Odisha.
- **Roles**:
  - Poet and Odia language writer.
  - Social reformer and activist, inspired by Gopabandhu Das and involved with the Non-Cooperation Movement in the early 1920s.
  - Politician – he served in the Odisha Legislative Assembly for many years.
  - Promoted education and cultural nationalism in Odisha.

6th National Chilika Bird Festival

Why in the News?

- The 6th National Chilika Bird Festival 2026 is a national-level birding and eco-tourism festival celebrating the spectacular annual winter arrival of migratory birds at Chilika Lake — Asia's largest brackish water lagoon and a Ramsar wetland of international importance.

Significances

- **Biodiversity hotspot:** Chilika lies in the **Central Asian Flyway**, attracting hundreds of thousands of migratory birds each winter.
- **Conservation success**: Mangalajodi is celebrated as an example of community-led bird conservation and sustainable livelihoods.
- **Global engagement:** The event included experts and delegates from several countries, strengthening international ties in eco-tourism and conservation.

Odisha Open (The 16th International Grandmasters Chess Festival 2025-26

Why in the News?

- ODISHA OPEN (The 16th International Grandmasters Chess Festival 2025-26) is a prestigious FIDE-rated international chess festival held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India, from January 16 to January 24, 2026.

Key points

- **Venue:** SOA Campus-2, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- **Organizers:** E-Sports Association of Odisha (ESPAO) in collaboration with the All Odisha Chess Association (AOCA).
- **Total Prize Fund:** A total prize fund of ₹45 Lakhs across all categories.

Odisha's saltwater crocodile population rises to 1,858

Why in the News?

- Odisha's saltwater (estuarine) crocodile numbers have risen to 1,858 in the latest census conducted in January 2026. This marks an increase of 32 crocodiles compared with the previous count (1,826 in 2025).

Key points

- The count covered areas including Bhitarkanika National Park & Wildlife Sanctuary, Gahirmatha Wildlife Sanctuary, the Mahanadi delta, and Devi river mouth.
- The highest concentration of crocodiles was found in the Kanika Wildlife Range, followed by Rajnagar, Mahakalpada, and Gahirmatha Ranges.
- **Odisha remains the only Indian state where all three native crocodilian species** — saltwater crocodile, mugger, and gharial — are found in the wild, though gharial conservation has lagged behind the others.

Bhitarkanika National Park

- It is located in the Kendrapara district of Odisha.
- The national park is surrounded by the Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary. Gahirmatha Beach and Marine Sanctuary lie to the east, and separates a swamp region covered with a canopy of mangroves from the Bay of Bengal.
- It is India's second largest mangrove ecosystem after the Sunderbans.
- It is also designated as a Ramsar site.
- The Gahirmatha Beach is the largest colony of the Olive Ridley Sea Turtles.

Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary

- It is the world's largest nesting beach for Olive Ridley Turtles.
- It extends from Dhamra River mouth in the north to Brahmani river mouth in the south.
- It is very famous for its nesting beach for olive ridley sea turtles.

Anu Garg

Why in the News?

- Anu Garg becomes Odisha's first woman Chief Secretary.

Key points:

- **Historic appointment:** Senior Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer Anu Garg has been appointed as the Chief Secretary of Odisha, making her the first woman to ever hold this top bureaucratic post in the state.
- **Administrative experience:** Garg is a 1991-batch IAS officer of the Odisha cadre with over three decades of experience in both state and central government roles.
- She was also the **first woman Development Commissioner of Odisha**.



6th National Chilika Bird Festival

Why in the News?

- The 6th edition was held from 6–8 January 2026, with activities in Bhubaneswar and at Chilika itself

Key points

- Asia's largest brackish water lagoon and an internationally recognized Ramsar wetland.
- The National Chilika Bird Festival is an annual celebration of birdlife, biodiversity, community conservation, and sustainable tourism centered around Chilika Lake.
- **Focus**
  - Conservation Awareness – Promoting protection of bird habitats and wetland ecosystems.
  - Sustainable, Responsible Tourism – Demonstrating how tourism can work alongside nature stewardship.
  - Community Participation – Local fishing and boatman communities play a key role, especially spotlighted through events such as the Chilika Boat Race.

– Scientific Exchange – Releases of publications on bird conservation, guides, flamingo life studies, and multimedia focused on Chilika's biodiversity

Bargarh Dhanu Yatra

Why in the News?

- Odisha CM Mohan Majhi at Bargarh Dhanu Yatra: Rs 1,362 Cr Projects Announced in King Kansa's Court.
- The CM announced 123 development projects.

Key projects include:

- A dedicated Rang Mahal stage for Dhanu Yatra — ₹12.80 crore.
- Beautification of Bargarh Canal with a box conduit — ₹30.17 crore.
- In-stream storage project on the Jira River — ₹114.87 crore.

Keonjhar to be the third Steel City

Why in the News?

- Keonjhar to be the third 'Steel City' of Odisha after Rourkela & Kalinganagar: CM Majhi

Key points:

- A mega steel plant is being planned in the Patna area of Keonjhar, through a joint venture between JSW Steel and South Korea's POSCO.
- This greenfield integrated plant is planned with a capacity of around 6 million tonnes per year and significant investment (≈ ₹35,000 crore), with approvals for land and project clearances underway.
- The project is expected to generate thousands of direct and indirect jobs in and around the district.

Madhu Babu Memorial Museum

Why in the News?

- Madhu Babu Memorial Museum to Be Established at Shailabala Women's College in Cuttack.

Key points

- **Purpose**:The museum is being created to honour and preserve the life, ideals, and contributions of Utkal Gourav Madhusudan Das, popularly known as Madhu Babu — a prominent leader and reformer in Odisha's history.
- **Historical significance:** The museum will be developed at a historically important spot within the college where Madhusudan Das's conference hall and residential office once stood, making the site especially relevant to his legacy.

Akshaya Acharya

Why in the News?

- **Former Odisha Congress MLA Akshaya Acharya passes away at 78.**



Key points

- **Political Career:**
  - Served as a Member of the Odisha Legislative Assembly (MLA) from Nilgiri Assembly constituency.
  - Elected twice on an Indian National Congress ticket, with terms in the early 1980s and mid-1990s.

Professor Dinabandhu Sahoo

Why in the News?

- Professor Dinabandhu Sahoo Conferred Nature Care Award 2025.



Key points

- The award recognized Professor Sahoo's work in promoting environmental conservation, sustainability, and innovative nature-based approaches to contemporary ecological challenges.
  - He actively promotes environmental awareness through the "**Grow a Tree for Life"** campaign across universities and colleges nationwide.
- In honor of his scientific impact, two plant species — **Prunus dinabandhuana (a cherry blossom) and Caulokaempferia dinabandhuensis (a ginger species)** — have been named after him.
- **Professional Roles:** He serves as the Head of the Department of Botany and Chairperson of the Research Council at the University of Delhi and was formerly Director of the Institute of Bioresources and Sustainable Development (IBSD).

Kuni Chhatriya

- Eminent Ghuduka folk singer Kuni Chhatriya of Tusura in Balangir district passed away prematurely on Wednesday night while undergoing treatment.

Key points

- She was widely acclaimed for her lifelong contribution to the preservation and popularisation of Odisha's traditional Ghuduka folk music.

Ghuduka Folk Music

- Ghuduka is a traditional folk music and performance form of western Odisha, especially prevalent in Balangir, Kalahandi, Nuapada and Bargarh districts.
- **Instrument:**The Ghuduka is a two-headed percussion instrument, similar to a small drum, played while singing.
- **Themes:**
  - Folk legends, mythological stories
  - Social messages and moral teachings
  - Local history and everyday rural life

Matsya–Prani Samavesh, Odisha–2026

- The Odisha government has taken a major step towards strengthening the fisheries and animal husbandry sectors with the inauguration of 'Matsya–Prani Samavesh, Odisha–2026'.

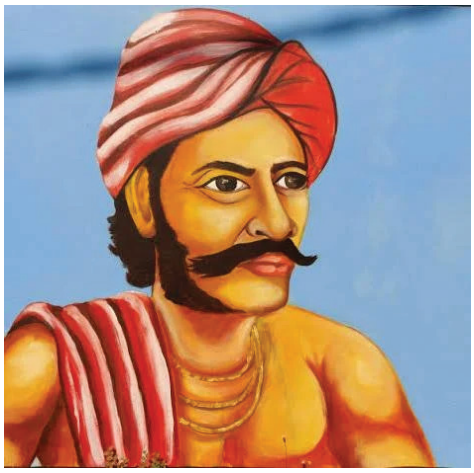
Key points

- The Samavesh focuses on promoting sustainable fisheries, dairy, poultry, goatery, and animal health practices, while encouraging value addition and entrepreneurship.
- **Objectives**
  - Enhancing farmers' income through modern technologies and best practices
  - Promoting fish and animal-based enterprises and startups
  - Strengthening market linkages, cold chain, and value addition
  - Creating awareness about government schemes, subsidies, and welfare programmes
  - Encouraging climate-resilient and sustainable practices in fisheries and animal husbandry

Veer Surendra Sai

Why in News

- The President of India paid tribute to Veer Surendra Sai on birth anniversary.



Key points

- Born in the village of Rajpur-Khinda near Sambalpur town (Odisha) in the Chauhan royal family.
- Prominent freedom fighter and tribal leader from Odisha
- **Contributions**
  - He began fighting against British dominance at age 18 in 1827.
  - Organised a guerrilla-style rebellion involving tribal communities such as Binjhal, Gond etc.
  - After the death of the ruler of Sambalpur, the British applied Doctrine of Lapse and annexed Sambalpur in 1849, denying Surendra Sai his legitimate claim.
  - During the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, Sai returned to Sambalpur and relaunched the rebellion against the British.
    - » Many tribal Zamindars (Landlords) and Gauntias (local leaders) rallied to his cause.

2026 Mid-Winter Waterfowl Survey

Why in News

- Chilika hosts 11.32 lakh birds this winter, 5,000 more than last year.

Key points

- Top bird species and hotspots
  - The Northern Pintail was the most numerous species this winter, followed by Eurasian Wigeon and Gadwall ducks.
  - Nalabana Wildlife Sanctuary, a core bird refuge inside Chilika, saw an increase in both bird count and species — from 3.43 lakh birds of 92 species in 2025 to about 3.97 lakh birds of 106 species in 2026.

Kalahandi Utsav 2026

Key points

- Kalahandi Utsav – Ghumura is an annual cultural celebration showcasing folk arts, traditions, music, dance, local crafts, and community pride of Kalahandi and surrounding regions. It's known for its vibrant performances and cultural heritage focus.
- The 2026 edition is the 28th annual festival, with events starting from late December 2025 at village and block levels and culminating in a grand celebration in January 2026 in Bhawanipatna.
- On the concluding day, Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi inaugurated and laid foundation stones for 3,600+ development projects worth around ₹891 crore in sectors like irrigation, agriculture, and infrastructure — reinforcing that the festival also doubles as a platform for development announcements.

Sanvi

Key points

- Sanvi Pani, from Balasore (Baleshwar), Odisha, won the Junior Miss India title in the Junior Miss India competition.

Sisir Saras 2026

Key points

- Sisir Saras 2026 — is a major annual handloom, handicrafts and rural enterprise fair held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India.
- It's designed to support rural artisans, Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and producers by giving them

direct access to markets, promoting traditional crafts and boosting local livelihoods.

- Organized by the Odisha Rural Development and Marketing Society (ORMAS) under the state's Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water Department to promote rural self-reliance and "Vocal for Local."
- It aims to bridge gaps between rural producers and urban markets, giving artisans and SHGs fair pricing and visibility.

Lok Bhavan Garden

Why in News

- The **Lok Bhavan Garden** in **Bhubaneswar, Odisha** — part of the official residence of the Governor — has been **opened to the public** for a limited period from **January 10 to January 20, 2026**.

Key Attractions

- **Atal Van**: A newly developed park within the Lok Bhavan premises named in honour of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, featuring lush green areas, water bodies, and fountains.
- **T-55 Battle Tank Display**: A T-55 battle tank — historically significant and a major draw for visitors — is on display in the garden.

Talcher

Why in News

- Talcher and Angul have been identified as the most polluted cities in India, raising serious health and environmental concerns. Notably, four cities from Odisha feature among the six most polluted cities in the country where air quality remains in the 'very poor' category.

Key points

- The region's strong industrial profile — especially coal mining, thermal power plants, and related activities — contributes heavily to particulate and toxic emissions.
- Winter conditions like temperature inversion and stagnant air trap pollutants near the ground, worsening AQI. (Discussed in local community reports as a supporting factor.)

Chilika Boat Race

Why in News

- Odisha Launches First-Ever Traditional Chilika Boat Race at Barkul.

Key points

- Chilika Boat Race is a traditional boat racing event held in Chilika Lake, Odisha, showcasing the region's rich maritime and cultural heritage.



About Chilka Lake

- Chilika is Asia's largest and world's second largest lagoon.
- The large Nalabana Island (Forest of Reeds) covering about 16 sq km in the lagoon area was declared a bird sanctuary in 1987.
- In 1981, Chilika Lake was designated the first Indian wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.
- Major attraction at Chilika is Irrawaddy dolphins which are often spotted off Satapada Island.
- Kalijai Temple - Located on an island in the Chilika Lake.
- Chilika lake hosts birds migrating from thousands of miles away from the Caspian Sea, Lake Baikal, Aral Sea, remote parts of Russia, Kirghiz steppes of Mongolia, Central and South East Asia, Ladakh and the Himalayas.

– The birds find the vast mud-field and abundant fish stock here suitable to congregate.

Ban on Gutkha, Pan Masala and Tobacco Products in Odisha

Why in News

- The Odisha government imposed a complete ban on gutkha, pan masala, and all tobacco or nicotine-containing products.

Key Provisions

- Decision taken by the State Health and Family Welfare Department.
- Ban applies to:Manufacturing, Processing, Packaging, Storage, Transportation, Distribution, Sale
- Covers both packaged and unpackaged products.

Background

- Odisha earlier banned tobacco sales in 2013.
- The new notification removes loopholes and ensures stricter and uniform enforcement.

Hockey India League:

Why in the News?

- Odisha-based Kalinga Lancers beat Ranchi Royals to be crowned champions

Key points

- Kalinga Lancers edged past Ranchi Royals 3–2 in a gripping final to lift the men's Hockey India League (HIL) title in front of a partisan home crowd at the Kalinga Hockey Stadium in Bhubaneswar on Monday.

Nari Adalat

Why in the News?

- Nari Adalat in Odisha is a women-centric grievance redressal and dispute resolution initiative started by the Odisha Government to ensure faster and accessible justice for women, especially at the grassroots (village/panchayat) level.

Key Points

- The programme started across 10 panchayats in 10 districts.
- These were mainly introduced as a pilot initiative, with plans to expand later

International Buddhist Conference

Why in the News?

- The International Buddhist Conference was held at Udayagiri Buddhist site in Jajpur district, Odisha, as part of a major global religious and cultural event.

Key Points

- Organized at the famous Ratnagiri–Udayagiri–Lalitgiri complex, popularly known as Odisha's "Diamond Triangle" of Buddhist heritage.
- **Background**
  - The region is believed to be associated with the ancient Pushpagiri University, an important Buddhist learning centre.
  - It is also traditionally linked with the birthplace or early life of Guru Padmasambhava, who spread Buddhism across Tibet and other parts of Asia.

Dr. Nrusingha Charan Sarang

Why in the News?

- Nrusingha Sarangi Conferred With Vyasa Kabi Fakir Mohan Odia Bhasha Samman.



Key points

- The award, recognising his outstanding contributions to the Odia language and literature through sustained academic research and notable literary works, was presented by Odisha's Culture MinisterSuryabanshi Suraj during a special programme at the Odisha Research Centre.
- The event coincided with the birth anniversary of legendary Odia writer Vyasa Kabi Fakir Mohan Senapati, widely regarded as the father of modern Odia literature.

3 Buddhist Sites Of Odisha Included In UNESCO's Tentative World Heritage List

Why in the News?

- The Buddhist sites of Ratnagiri, Udayagiri and Lalitgiri in Odisha's Jajpur district have been included in UNESCO's tentative India list for consideration of 'World Heritage Site' status.
- There are at present **69 Indian sites in UNESCO's Tentative List.**

Key Points

- **Three sites** - Lalitgiri (the red hill), Ratnagiri (hill of precious gems), Udayagiri (the hill of the rising sun) are known as the diamond triangle of Odisha representing a rich heritage of architecture and sculpture of the post Mauryan era Indian art which touched a new zenith of excellence.
  - **Xuanzang (Hieun T'sang)** the Chinese pilgrim,who visited Orissa during 639 A.D. left a vivid graphic account about the flourishing state of Buddhism.
  - The discovery of a huge number of sculptures, images, antiquity, fragments, stone tablets, potteries, coins, stone and terracotta tablets, and many huge stupas cemented the fact that these **three places described by Xuanzang are the ruins of a university complex called Pushpagiri University which shared an equal status with Nalanda and Vikramshila universities.**

Buddhist Site of Lalitgiri (Cuttack district)

- Lalitgiri is believed to be the most sacred among the three sites as **it unearthed a massive stupa where a relic of Buddha was discovered inside a stone casket.**
- During excavation structural remains of a large brick built apsidal chaitya griha with a circular stupa in the center was found. The discovery of such edifice is first of its kind in the Buddhist context in Orissa.
- Majority of the sculptures unearthed from excavation are the figures of Buddha in different postures belonging to **Mahayanistic phase of Buddhism.**
- Inscribed potsherds belonging to different time spans i.e. post Mauryan period to 8th-9th century A.D. have been found which suggest that the Lalitgiri was under occupation by the both **Hinayana and Mahayana sects**.
- In subsequent periods the site came under the control of **Vajrayana faith of Buddhism patronized by the ruling Bhaumakaras (9th-10th cent A.D).**
- It is evident **how Hinduism made an entry into Buddhism through Vajrayana**. All Buddhist gods and goddesses have replicas of various Hindu gods. Some of them like Aparajita Tara, Padmapani, Hariti, Vajrapani, Manjusri are close to common Hindu gods.
- Lalitgiri is one of the earliest Buddhist sites of Orissa shows the **cultural continuity right from the post Mauryan period to 13th century A.D without any break.**

Buddhist Site of Udayagiri (Jajpur district)

- Udayagiri known as Madhavapura Mahavihara was a prominent centre of Buddhism between the 7th and 12th centuries.
- The excavation had partially revealed a double storied monastic complex datable to 8th century A.D. and important antiquities images of Buddha, Tara, Manjusri, Avalokitesvara, Jatamukuta Lokesvara and terracotta sealings.

Buddhist Site of Ratnagiri (Jajpur district)

- Excavation of this site brought to light the remains of a magnificent Buddhist establishment consisting of a stupa, monastic complex, shrines, votive stupas, myriad of sculptures, architectural fragments and other antiquities.
- Many giant Buddha heads are found here which resemble the Buddha heads found in Barbadur in Indonesia and Anuradhapura in Sri lanka.

UNESCO's World Heritage List in Odisha

- **Sun Temple, Konark (1984)**
  - 13th-century temple extolling the Sun God Surya in unique architectural style and elaborate stone carvings.

House listing exercise in Odisha

Why in the News?

- Odisha to begin month-long house listing from April 16 ahead of 2027 census.

Key points

- The first phase of the state-wide census will begin in Odisha on April 16, during which census officials will visit households and ask as many as **33 questions.**
  - This phase will focus on the enumeration of houses and household assets, with officials going door to door to collect detailed information.
- **"The census operations** will be conducted in two phases. The second phase involving a door-to-door population census, which includes collection of individual demographic and socio-economic details, will begin in February 2027. Caste census will also be conducted in this phase,"
- **For self-enumeratio**n or land record verification related to housing, residents can use the Bhulekh Odisha Portal or the Revenue and Disaster Management Department for updates.

Census 2027

- After 2011, Census was due in 2020-2021, but was delayed due to Covid pandemic.
- **Notification**: Conduct of Population Census-2027 will be published in the official gazette, **as per Section 3 of the Census Act, 1948.**
- The Census will be conducted in two phases:
  - **Phase I –** House listing: Details of all buildings, permanent or temporary, are noted with their type, amenities, and assets.
  - **Phase II –** Population enumeration: Detailed information on each individual residing in the country, Indian national or otherwise noted along with their caste.
- Reference Dates (specific point of time for which the data on population is collected) for Census-2027
  - For the Union Territory of Ladakh, Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand: October 1, 2026.
  - Rest of India: March 1, 2027.
- Census will include caste enumeration, marking the first official collection of caste data since the 1931 exercise.
- Digital census: This will be the country's first digital census.

Census in India

- **Constitutional mandate:** Article 246 of the Constitution (7th schedule Union List entry 69).
- **Legal provisions:** India's census is conducted under the provisions of the Census Act, 1948 and the Census Rules, 1990.
- **Head:** Census organization headed by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner.
- **The Census will be 16th decennial Census of India since 1872** when the first systematic Census was conducted throughout the country.
  - This will be the 8th successive exercise conducted after Independence.
  - The first synchronous census in India was conducted in 1881 under the leadership of **W.C. Plowden,** and it became regular exercise.

CGUSAT-1

Why in the News?

- Odisha's first indigenous satellite, CGUSAT-1, has successfully launched into orbit. The nanosatellite was launched aboard the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) PSLV-C62 rocket from

the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh, on January 12, 2026

Key points

- It is created by a team of 11 faculty and 20 students from **C. V. Raman Global University (CVRGU)** in Bhubaneswar.
- **Objective**
  - **Disaster Management:** The primary objective of CGUSAT-1 is to serve as a crucial communication platform during natural disasters like cyclones and floods, when conventional communication networks often fail.
  - **Emergency Communication:** Operating in a low Earth orbit (around 500 km), it will use UHF and VHF bands to relay voice and data, with its strongest signal footprint over Bhubaneswar to assist with regional relief operations.
  - **Academic Milestone**: The project is a significant achievement for an academic institution, demonstrating the growing role of universities in India's space ecosystem and providing students with valuable hands-on experience in space systems engineering and ground station operations
- **Mission Operations**
  - The university will manage the full mission operations from its own ground station on campus. The project took approximately one year to develop after the team received specialised training in Hyderabad and exposure to satellite technology in Israel. The launch and all subsequent operations are conducted under the regulatory framework and approval of ISRO and the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe).

Union Budget 2026-27-Odisha

Key announcements

- **Record Allocation for Railways**
  - Odisha has received a significant boost in the Union Railway Budget with an allocation of **Rs 10,928 crore.**
  - The proposed **East-West Freight Corridor will pass through Odisha**.
  - Artificial Intelligence (AI) based thermal cameras will be installed along railway tracks to prevent elephant accidents.
  - 59 railway stations in Odisha are being redeveloped under the Amrit Station Scheme, with work completed at six stations so far.
  - Odisha has achieved 100 percent electrification of railway tracks and now operates six pairs each of Vande Bharat and Amrit Bharat Express trains.
- **Rare Earth & Critical Minerals Corridor**
  - To complement the REPM scheme, the Union Budget 2026–27 announced Dedicated Rare Earth Corridors in Odisha, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu.
  - These corridors will focus on mining, processing, research, and manufacturing, leveraging the mineral-rich base of these states.
- **Development of National Waterway-5**
  - The government will operationalise 20 new national waterways over the next five years, beginning with National Waterway-5 in Odisha.
  - This corridor will connect mineral hubs such as Talcher and Angul with industrial clusters like Kalinganagar and ports at Paradeep and Dhamra. The project aims to improve logistics efficiency, reduce carbon emissions, and support industrial expansion across the region.

Black Swan Summit

Why in the News?

- The President of India Smt Droupadi Murmu graced the Black Swan Summit, India, organised by the Government of Odisha in collaboration with Global Finance and Technology Network, at Bhubaneswar, Odisha, (February 6, 2026).

Key Facts

- The Black Swan Summit India 2026 was held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- It was co-organised by the Government of Odisha and the Global Finance & Technology Network (GFTN).
- The summit mainly focused on the impact of **Artificial Intelligence (AI), FinTech, InsurTech, and digital public infrastructure on jobs, finance, and economic growth.**

Key Points

- **Black Swan Meaning**: The term refers to **rare, high-impact disruptive events**.
  - The summit uses this concept to explore how disruptive technologies can reshape industries and societies
- The Black Swan Summit is a global conference platform that brings together leaders from government, industry, academia, investors, and startups to discuss how emerging technologies and disruptive innovation can shape future economies and societies
- **Objectives**
  - Promote innovation and digital finance
  - Create jobs and skill development
  - Strengthen financial inclusion
  - Build global capability centres

Filariasis Prevention

Why in the News?

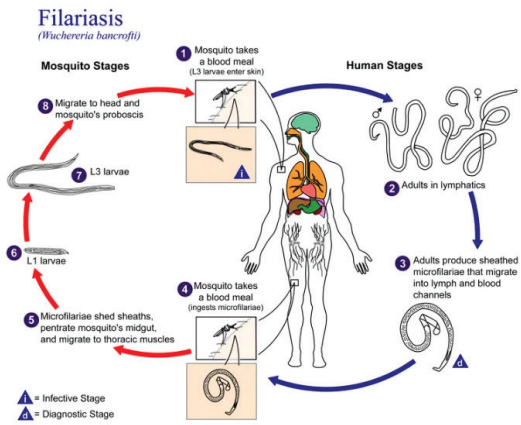
- Odisha's Mass Drug Administration Program (MDA) Starts Feb 10.

Key points

- The National Deworming Day (NDD) program will run concurrently with the MDA program from February 10 to 19 in the districts of Balangir, Bargarh, Dhenkanal, Jajpur, and Ganjam.
- The program will be implemented in seven designated Implementation Units (IUs) across these five districts.
- Participants will receive three types of medication: DEC, Albendazole, and Ivermectin tablets. However, children under the age of 2, pregnant women, and individuals who are seriously ill are prohibited from taking these medications.

Lymphatic Filariasis

- Commonly known as elephantiasis, it is a neglected tropical disease.
- **Cause:** Infection with filarial parasites (nematodes) (Wuchereria bancrofti (90% of cases), Brugia malayi (most remaining cases), Brugia timori).
  - These worms affect the lymphatic system, leading to pain, disability, and social stigma.
- **Transmission**: Mosquitoes transmit mature larvae to humans through bites.
- **Symptoms:** Lymphedema (Swelling due to lymphatic dysfunction), elephantiasis (swelling of body parts (e.g., legs, arms, breasts, genitals)).
- **Preventive Measures and Treatment:** Chemotherapy with safe medicine combinations.



Global Initiatives to Eradicate Lymphatic Filariasis

- The Global Programme to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis (GPELF) was established by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2000.
- WHO's road map 2021–2030: Sets global targets and milestones to prevent, control, eliminate or eradicate 20 diseases.
- Global Programme to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis (GPELF): WHO established this to stop the transmission of infection by mass drug administration (MDA) of anthelmintics and to alleviate the suffering of people affected by the disease through morbidity management and disability prevention (MMDP).

'Ama Sathi'

Why in the News?

- Odisha CM Launches 'Ama Sathi' WhatsApp Bot, Opens 57 Sub-Registration Offices

Key points

- It is a single WhatsApp-based digital platform that allows citizens to access government services easily through their mobile phones.
  - Citizens can now access revenue and disaster management services directly through WhatsApp by contacting 9437292000.
  - The service will be available 24×7, offering more than 170 essential government services without the need for intermediaries.
- The chatbot provides access to 100+ citizen services (and expanding further).
- Services available include:
  - Applying for certificates (birth, income, residence, etc.)
  - Accessing land and revenue information
  - Tracking applications and grievances
  - Getting information related to agriculture, education and other government schemes

Mukhyamantri Kanya Bibaha Yojana

Why in the News?

- CM Majhi Launches 'Mukhyamantri Kanya Bibaha Yojana', 201 Couples Married at Maa Taratarini Temple

Key points

- It aims to provide **social and financial support for daughters' marriages**, especially for poor and marginalised families.
  - Each bride receives about **₹51,000–₹60,000 assistance.**
- **Implemented by the Women & Child Development Department.**
- **Objectives**
  - Reduce the financial burden of marriage on economically weaker families.
  - Discourage social evils such as dowry and child marriage.
  - Encourage widow remarriage and strengthen women's dignity and social security
- **Eligibility Criteria**
  - Age: Bride: 18–35 years and Groom: 21–35 years
  - Both must be permanent residents of Odisha.
  - Primarily targets BPL and economically weaker sections.

Odisha Parab 2026

Why in the News?

- The Odisha government concluded Odisha Parab 2026, a three-day cultural and tourism event, showcasing deepened cultural ties, diaspora engagement and tourism & business collaborations between Odisha and the Northeast.

Key Facts

- Dates: 30 January – 1 February 2026
- Venue: Guwahati (Assam)
- Organised by: Odisha Tourism Department with FICCI and other state departments.

Cultural Promotion

- Odissi dance
- Gotipua dance
- Paika Akhada martial tradition
- Sambalpuri and tribal dances (Dhemsa, Ghumura, Chhau)

Significances

- Promotes Odisha's **soft power and cultural diplomacy.**

Agni-3 missile

Why in the News?

- India successfully conducted a test launch of the Agni-3 intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) from the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur, Odisha.

Agni-3:

- It has a range of **3,500 km** and has the capability of carrying warheads weighing as much as 1.5 tonnes.
- Due to its high range of circular error probable (CEP), Agni-3 missile is known as **the world's most accurate strategic ballistic missile of its range class.**
- The accuracy of the nuclear warhead also provides an opportunity of deploying a larger number of nuclear forces using less fusion material.
- The low weight of the payload has increased the target range of the missile to 3,500 kilometres.

Agni series

- The Agni series of missiles constitute the backbone of India's nuclear weapons delivery which also includes the Prithvi short range ballistic missiles and fighter aircraft.
- India has also completed its nuclear triad and operationalised its second strike capability, with nuclear ballistic missile submarine INS Arihant undertaking deterrence patrols.
- Recently, India also successfully test fired the new generation advanced version of Agni missile series, Agni Prime.

– **Also known as Agni-P, the nuclear-capable new-gen advanced variant has a maximum range of 2,000 kilometres.**

Operation Green Clean

Why in the News?

- Operation Green Clean in Koraput: Cannabis Worth Rs 4.5 Crore Destroyed.

Key Points

- **Operation Green Clean** is an anti-narcotics drive in Odisha targeting illegal cannabis (ganja) cultivation.
- **Purpose of Operation Green Clean**
  - To eliminate illegal ganja cultivation in Odisha's tribal and forest regions.
  - To break the supply chain of narcotics linked to inter-state drug trafficking

36th Senior National Canoe Sprint Championship

Why in the News?

- Odisha paddlers shone brightly at the 36th Senior National Canoe Sprint Championship in Bhopal, clinching an impressive haul of 11 medals: one gold, one silver, and nine bronze.

Key Points

- Odisha's success underscores the effectiveness of initiatives like "Padia to Podium," which nurture grassroots athletes. The triumphant team was celebrated for their dedication, boosting hopes for future international achievements in canoe sprint.

Sangram Keshari Mohapatra

Why in the News?

- Sangram Keshari Mohapatra formally assumed charge as the Chairman (in-charge) of the Western Odisha Development Council (WODC).

Key Points

- Mohapatra took charge as WODC Chairman after his appointment as Revenue Commissioner of Northern Odisha. He also continues to hold responsibilities as the Revenue Commissioner of Southern Odisha.



Sushila Tiriya

Why in the News?

- Senior Odisha Congress Leader, Former MP Sushila Tiriya Passes Away at 70.



Key Points

- In 1994, Tiriya was elected to the 10th Lok Sabha from the Mayurbhanj constituency and secured re-election in 1996 for the 11th Lok Sabha.

Subhadra Shakti Mela

Why in the News?

- Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi attended the Subhadra Shakti Mela in Subarnapur on February

1, 2026, announcing a series of development projects worth Rs 633 crore for the district.

Key points

The Chief Minister announced Rs 633 crore worth of new projects for Subarnapur. These include:

- Construction of a river-based reservoir at Marudagochha with an investment of Rs 557 crore.
- An open-air theatre at Sanskruti Bhavan costing Rs 11.23 crore.
- Renovation of Gandhi Stadium with Rs 25.28 crore.
- Improvement of Block Chhak Junction Road with Rs 4.23 crore.

About Subhadra Shakti Mela

- It is an exhibition-cum-fair organised to showcase products made by women Self Help Groups under the Subhadra Yojana / Mission Shakti framework.
- It provides women entrepreneurs a platform to market, sell, and promote their products.

About Subhadra Yojana

- It is a cash assistance scheme for women in Odisha.
- Launched on **17 September 2024**.
- The scheme aims to strengthen women's financial independence and promote digital financial inclusion.
- **Eligible women receive ₹10,000 per year.**
  - The money is given in two instalments of ₹5,000 each:
    - On Raksha Bandhan
    - On International Women's Day (8 March)
- **Age:** 21 to 60 years

Odisha Renewable Energy Investor Conclave 2026

Why in the News?

- The Odisha government has received Rs 67,000 crore investment intents during the third edition of the Odisha Renewable Energy Investor Conclave 2026, being held in Bhubaneswar on February 12-13.

Key points

- These commitments target approximately 6.8 GW of renewable energy capacity, bolstering Odisha's role in India's push toward 500 GW of non-fossil fuel energy by 2030.
- **Several Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) were signed during the conclave, including:**
  - With NHPC for a 1,000 MW pumped storage project
  - With Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) for solar + storage + hybrid projects
  - With NEEPCO for an 800 MW pumped storage project
  - With ABC Cleantech & Axis Energy Ventures for ~5,000 MW of clean energy across solar, wind, agro-voltaics, BESS, and green hydrogen.
  - Collaboration with Vasudha as a knowledge partner on floating solar and agri-PV.
- **Strategic Focus Areas Showcased:**
  - **Floating Solar** PV: 5,000 MW projects pipeline
  - **Pumped Storage Projects (PSP):** 18,000 MW across 36 sites
  - **Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS):** 500 MWh supported by viability gap funding
  - **Emerging segments:** Wind energy, small hydro, agrivoltaics, distributed renewables and waste-to-energy.
- **Significances**
  - **Renewable Energy Hub**: Positions Odisha as an emerging renewable energy destination in eastern India.
  - **Energy Transition:** Supports India's commitment to achieving 500 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030.
  - **Industrial Growth**: Boosts green industrial corridors, especially in coastal and mineral-rich belts.
  - **Employment Generation**: Expected to create large-scale direct and indirect jobs.

– **Grid Modernisation**: Encourages integration of storage and smart grid infrastructure.

Bhubaneswar–Cuttack–Puri–Paradip Economic Corridor

Why in the News?

- Odisha CM Mohan Charan Majhi inaugurated the Bhubaneswar–Cuttack–Puri–Paradip Economic Corridor to boost economic integration and growth in key urban and coastal areas.

Key Points

- In the **Union Budget 2026–27, the Central government has proposed the development of City Economic Regions (CERs),** and the BCPPER region has been included in this initiative. For the development of each CER, the Central government has earmarked a financial allocation of ₹5,000 crore.
- NITI Aayog CEO B.V.R. Subrahmanyam, while appreciating the initiative of the State government, said 70-80% of GDP comes from urban areas. By 2047, the goal is to bring more than half of the population under urbanisation.
- "After Mumbai, Surat, Visakhapatnam, and Varanasi, this is NITI Aayog's fifth such plan.
- The BCPPER initiative is expected to promote coordinated urban development, enhance infrastructure connectivity, and attract investment across sectors such as industry, logistics, technology and tourism. The state government believes the corridor will play a key role in driving sustainable economic growth and employment generation in the coming decades..
- This corridor is central to Odisha's **Vision 2047**

Key facts

- The region currently contributes around 19 % of Odisha's economy, with an estimated economic size of about USD 22.4 billion (2025).
- The state government has set ambitious targets to expand the region's combined economic output to USD **500 billion by 2047.**

Ganjam Blackbuck Census

Why in the News?

- Odisha's Ganjam retains its reputation as a haven for blackbuck, as numbers increase in the latest census.

Key points

- The blackbuck (Antelope cervicapra) population in Ganjam district, the only habitat of the most elegant member of the antelope family in Odisha, **has increased by 498 over a year and 2,412 in the last five years, according to the latest census of the species.**
- The number of blackbuck came to 9,287 in the census conducted by wildlife organisations and the state forest department across the district on January 29, 2026. The count results were officially declared on February 3.
- Their number was estimated at 8,789 in 2025, 7,273 in 2023, 7,358 in 2021 and 6,875 in 2020.
- While the highest number of the animals was sighted in Ghumusar South division (5,972), the lowest number of 459 was counted in Ghumusar North division. As many as 2,856 blackbuck were found in the Berhampur forest division,

About Blackbuck

- The blackbuck is a Schedule-1 animal under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 (amended in 1992) and is considered as 'vulnerable' according to the Red Data Book of the International Union for Conservation of Nature.
- It is included under Appendix 111 of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES).

Kuntala Kumar Sabat

Why in the News?

- Kuntala Kumari Sabat's birth anniversary is observed every year on 8 February in Odisha to remember her life and contributions as a pioneering Odia poet, physician and freedom-fighter.

- She was a prominent Odia poet, social reformer, nationalist and one of the early women physicians from Odisha.

Contribution:

- **Odia Literature**
  - Her poetry reflected nationalism, patriotism, feminism, social reform and humanism.
  - She wrote during a period when women's voices in literature were rare.
  - **Important Works:**
    - Anjali
    - Archana
    - Ahwan\
    - Sphulinga



- **Freedom Struggle**
  - She participated in nationalist activities and used literature as a tool for political awakening.
  - Her writings encouraged people, especially women, to join the freedom struggle.

Bhanjbir Sunaram Soren Statue

Why in the News?

- The President unveiled the statue of Bhanjbir Sunaram Soren and interacted with students at Government Girls' Higher Secondary School, Mahuldiha, Rairangpur.



About Bhanjbir Sunaram Soren

- He belonged to the **Santali tribal community.**
- **Political Advocacy:** Soren opposed the merger of the princely state of Mayurbhanj into Odisha without proper tribal consultation, leading civil disobedience actions and being arrested in the process during the **Gunduria uprising in early 1949.**
- **Political Career**
  - First Tribal MLA: In 1952, he was elected to the Odisha Legislative Assembly from Bahalda as a candidate of the Utkal Adivasi Congress and became a cabinet minister in the Odisha government under Chief Minister Nabakrushna Choudhury. He held portfolios including Tribal & Rural Welfare, Transport, Commerce and Labour until 1957.
  - **Legislative Service:** He was elected multiple times to the Odisha Legislative Assembly (in 1952, 1961, 1967, and 1977) and served in various party formations including Indian National Congress, Orissa Jana Congress, and Janata Party across his long career
- **Contribution**:
  - He played an important role in the **Praja Mandal movement** in Mayurbhanj.
  - He founded the **Mayurbhanj Adivasi Mahasabha in 1946** to advocate for tribal rights and political awareness, drawing inspiration from broader tribal movements in eastern India.
  - **Fought against:**

» Feudal oppression by princely state authorities, Exploitative land revenue systems and British colonial policies

– Mobilized tribal communities to demand:

» Land rights, Social justice and Democratic governance.

Odisha proposes changes to English spelling of six districts

Why in the News?

- The Odisha government has proposed changes to the English spellings of 25 prominent places, including six district names, to ensure accurate pronunciation in line with their original Odia names.

Key points

- Spellings of Deogarh, Khordha, Balasore, Kendrapara, Keonjhar and Nayagarh districts are likely to be changed to Debagarh, Khoradha, Baleshwar, Kendrapada, Kendujhar and Nayagada.
- In a notification issued by Revenue and Disaster Management department, Odisha government proposed to effect changes in the names of certain places with a view to "restoring their original Odia names and ensuring correct reflection of the State's linguistic, historical, and cultural heritage in official records."

Turtle Trails

Why in the News?

- The Union Budget's proposal to develop 'turtle trails' along key nesting sites in the coastal areas of **Odisha, Karnataka and Kerala** has triggered sharp scepticism and concern among conservationists and researchers, who argue that mass nesting sites should be kept free from anthropogenic pressure.

Key Points

- Mass nesting or arribada of endangered Olive Ridley sea turtles is a rare phenomenon, which is recorded only along India and Costa Rica and some handful of beaches in the world.
  – Odisha is home to the world's largest mass nesting ground for Olive Ridley turtles.
- Odisha has two mass nesting grounds — Gahirmatha in Kendrapara district and Rushikulya mouth in Ganjam district. No outsider is allowed to visit Gahirmatha as it comes in the proximity of Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur, India's missile testing centre.

About Olive Ridley Turtle

- They are the smallest and most abundant of all sea turtles found in the world.
- It gets its name from the olive green colouration of its carapace (shell).
- It is best known for its unique mass nesting, called Arribada, where thousands of females come together on the same beach to lay eggs.
- **Distribution of Olive Ridley Turtle**
  – They are mainly found in the warm waters of the Pacific, Atlantic, and Indian oceans.
  – Odisha's Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary is known as the world's largest rookery (a colony of breeding animals) of sea turtles.
- **Features of Olive Ridley Turtle**
  – They are omnivorous, meaning they feed on both plants and animals.
  – They are solitary, preferring the open ocean.
  – These turtles spend their entire lives in the ocean, and migrate thousands of kilometers between feeding and mating grounds in the course of a year.
- **Conservation Status of Olive Ridley Turtle**
  – IUCN Red List: Vulnerable
  – Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule 1
  – CITES: Appendix I.

Dolphins in Puri Beach

Why in the News?

- A day after thousands of live sea snails were found scattered along the Puri beach, several dolphins were spotted swimming off the coastline.

Reasons

- **Tidal & Weather Changes:** Strong currents, high tides, or offshore disturbances can push marine organisms like sea snails toward the shore.
- **Food Chain Movement:** Dolphins often follow schools of fish. If smaller marine organisms move closer to shore due to environmental factors, predatory fish—and subsequently dolphins—may follow.
- **Seasonal Marine Activity:** The Odisha coast, especially near Puri and the Chilika region, is known for sightings of Irrawaddy dolphins and occasionally other dolphin species.

Dolphin Species in India

- **Ganges River Dolphin**
  - Scientific name: Platanista gangetica
  - National Aquatic Animal of India (Declared in 2009)
  - Found in: Ganga, Brahmaputra, Meghna river systems
  - Blind; uses echolocation
  - Indicator of healthy freshwater ecosystem
- **Indus River Dolphi**n
  - Found mainly in Pakistan; small population in Punjab (India)
- **Irrawaddy Dolphin**
  - Found in Chilika Lake (Odisha), coastal waters
  - Also in Sundarbans and Andaman & Nicobar Islands
  - Prefers brackish water

IUCN status

- Ganges River Dolphin: **Endangered**
- Indus River Dolphin: **Endangered**
- Irrawaddy Dolphin: **Endangered**

Legal protection

- Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 – Schedule I protection
- CITES Appendix I
- CMS (Convention on Migratory Species)

Key features

- Dolphins are mammals, not fish.
- Breathe through a blowhole.
- Give birth to live young.
- Warm-blooded.
- Use echolocation.
- Cannot survive in heavily polluted water.

Government Initiatives

- **Project Dolphin:** Announced on Independence Day 2020.
- **National Dolphin Research Centre in Patna, Bihar**
- **Dolphin Census**: Conducted periodically in Ganga and Brahmaputra

Sacred Pankodhar Ekadashi Ritual

Why in the News?

- Thousands Gather at Lokanath Temple in Puri for Sacred Pankodhar Ekadashi Ritual

Key points

- One of the most spiritually significant aspects of Pankodhar Ekadashi is the rare unveiling of the Shiva Lingam. For most of the year, the lingam remains submerged in water inside the sanctum. On this occasion, temple priests drain the accumulated water as part of the Pankodhar Neeti, observed three days prior to Maha Shivaratri.
- Although a prominent Shaiva shrine, the Lokanath Temple shares deep cultural ties with the Jagannath tradition. Lord Lokanath is regarded as the guardian deity of Lord Jagannath and is believed to safeguard the divine treasures associated with the Jagannath Temple.

About the Loknath Temple

- It is believed to be older than the Jagannath Temple
- Associated with the Shaiva tradition in Odisha.
- **Architecture**
  - Built in **Kalinga style** of temple architecture
  - Includes **Deula** (sanctum) and **Jagamohana**

Shri Jagannath Darshan Yojana

Why in the News?

- CM Majhi Lays Foundation Stone for Nabarangpur Medical College, Launches Shri Jagannath Darshan Yojana.

Key Points

- It aimed at enabling economically weaker, elderly, and disadvantaged devotees to have free darshan of Lord Jagannath at Shri Jagannath Temple.
- **Objective:** Ensure inclusive access to religious pilgrimage for those unable to afford travel.
- **Beneficiaries:**
  - Senior citizens
  - Poor and economically weaker devotees
  - Marginalised sections of society
- **Cost:** Entirely **state-funded**.

Kanhu Charan Lenka

Why in the News?

- Former Union Minister Kanhu Charan Lenka Passes Away.



Key points

- **Political career:**
  - **Odisha Legislative Assembly (MLA):** He was elected from the Choudwar constituency multiple times (in 1971, 1974, 1980 and 1995) and served as a member of the Odisha Assembly.
  - **Rajya Sabha (Parliamentary Member):** Lenka served as a Member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha representing Odisha from 1988 to 1994.
  - In the **Union government led by Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao**, Lenka held key ministerial roles as **Minister of State (MoS) for Railways** and later **MoS for Agriculture**.

Odisha Governor Address highlights

Odisha Governor Dr. Hari Babu Kambhampati delivered a comprehensive address to the Odisha Legislative Assembly on the opening day of the Budget Session, unveiling ambitious long-term goals outlined in the state's Vision Document for 2036 and 2047.

- **The state's per capita income from the current ₹1.8 lakh to ₹32 lakh by 2047**.
  - This sharp increase is expected to elevate living standards significantly, extend life expectancy beyond 80 years, and eradicate anaemia and malnutrition while reducing multidimensional poverty to below 5%.
- Economically, the Vision sets Odisha on course to achieve a **$500 billion economy by 2036** — coinciding with the centenary of Odisha's formation as a separate province — and expand to a **$1.5 trillion economy by 2047.**
- The state's contribution to India's national GDP is targeted to rise from around **3% to 5%,** supported by an average annual growth rate of 7% to 9.5%.
  - Key drivers include enhanced investment attraction, with 343 large industrial projects already approved, and a strong push in renewable energy, aiming for **10 GW capacity by 2030.**
- Women's empowerment received special mention, with schemes like **Lakhpati Didi, self-help groups, and Subhadra Shakti Melas driving economic independence**

Rare Buddhist relic brought out of museum for public display in Odisha's Lalitgiri

Why in the News?

- A rare Buddhist relic dating back to the 3rd century BC was brought out of the museum and

put on public display at Lalitgiri in Jajpur district to allow monks, scholars and devotees from across the country to get an opportunity to have a glimpse of it.

Key Points

- "The observance reaffirmed Lalitgiri's importance on the global Buddhist map and further positioned Odisha as a custodian of ancient Buddhist civilisation, heritage, and living traditions,"

Important Buddhist site in Odisha

- **Buddhist Site of Lalitagiri**
  - Archaeological Findings: Discovery of an inscribed terracotta sealing reading "Sri Chandraditya Vihara Samagra Arya Bhikshu Sanghasa" (9th–10th century CE).
    - » A massive stupa of Theravada phase containing relic caskets of khondalite stone, with inner steatite, silver, and gold caskets.
    - » Images from Mahayana and Vajrayana pantheon such as Vajrapani, Manjusri, Tara, Jambhala, Hariti, and Aparajita.
- **Buddhist Site of Udayagiri, Jajpur**
  - Architectural Importance: Discovery of a massive Chaityagriha showing architectural evolution from circular to apsidal to rectangular.
    - » Sculptures of Avalokiteswara (colossal), Tara, Manjusri, Bhrikuti, Hariti, Chunda, Maitreya, Vairochana, Vasudhara, and others.
    - » Inscriptions with Buddhist Dharanis on terracotta plaques and stone tablets.
- **Buddhist Site of Ratnagiri, Jajpur**
  - Patronage: It received major patronage from the Bhaumakara dynasty (8th–10th century CE).
  - Copperplate inscription records residence of Queen Karpurashri, indicating female patronage.

Odisha to Restore Over 3000 Heritage and Monument Sites

Why in the News?

- Odisha government announces restoration of more than 3000 heritage and monument sites to preserve cultural legacy and boost tourism.

Key Points

- The initiative focuses on reviving ancient Kalinga architecture and strengthening Odisha's cultural identity. Authorities plan to establish a **Centre for Heritage Studies (CHS)** to document and conserve historic monuments. The centre will conduct scientific research, ensuring accurate records of architectural features and historical significance.
- **IIT Madras experts** will join the project through a memorandum of understanding.
- Key monuments such as **Mukteswar Temple, Konark Sun Temple, and Lingaraj Temple** will receive special attention.
  - Mukteswar Temple, built in the 10th century, represents the elegance of Kalinga architecture.
  - Konark Sun Temple, recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, stands as a global symbol of intricate craftsmanship.
  - Lingaraj Temple remains a major religious and historical landmark in Bhubaneswar.

Govt Tables Reservation Ordinance for State Universities

Why in the News?

- The Odisha State Government Universities (Reservation in Teacher Cadre) Ordinance, 2025 was introduced in the Odisha Legislative Assembly.

Key Points

- As per the provisions of the ordinance, each university will be treated as a single unit while implementing reservation in the direct

recruitment of teachers to the posts of Professor, Associate Professor and Assistant Professor.
  - The move is aimed at bringing the state's universities on a par with the reservation norms followed at the national level.
- Reservation for Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBC) and Persons with Disabilities (PwD) will be applied uniformly in all government universities.
  - **However, the reservation policy will not be applicable in Centres of Excellence, Research Centres or any nationally reputed educational institutions.**

Ancient Medieval Durga Shrine in Temple City an Archaeological Marvel

Why in the News?

- The ruins of a medieval Devi temple were discovered buried beneath the **Sukasari temple**, located on the left side of the iconic Lingaraj temple in Bhubaneswar.



Key points

- The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is currently conducting excavations at the site, revealing what is believed to be an ancient Durga temple in the rare **Khakhara style**, where the goddess is worshipped instead of Lord Shiva, diverging from the typical Shaivite dominance in the region.

About Khakhara style

- The Khakhara style of architecture is a distinct sub-style of the Kalinga school of temple architecture.
  - The term Khakhara refers to the semi-cylindrical or wagon-vault shaped roof, resembling a barrel or inverted boat.
- Khakhara temples are **traditionally associated with Shakti (Goddess) worship**.
- Flourished mainly during the **8th–10th century CE**
- Associated with the **Shailodbhava and early Somavamsi period**

Odisha's saltwater crocodile population rises to 1,858

Why in the News?

- Odisha's estuarine crocodile population has increased by 32, reaching 1,858, after the State Forest and Environment Department introduced a pilot drone-based survey this year.'

Key notes

- **Distribution:** Bhitarkanika National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary, Gahirmatha Wildlife Sanctuary, the Mahanadi deltaic area, and the Devi river mouth area.
  - Out of the total crocodiles counted, a maximum of 1,424 (76.64%) were spotted in Kanika Wildlife Range, which includes forest blocks and rivers starting from Khola to Bhitarkanika-Pathasala confluence.
  - As many as 292 (15.72%) crocodiles were recorded in Rajnagar wildlife range. In Mahanadi delta of Mahakalpada Range 99 (5.33 %) crocodiles were recorded, and in Gahirmatha wildlife range a total of 43 (2.31%) crocodiles were counted.

About salt water crocodiles

- It is the largest and heaviest of all living reptiles in the world.
- It is an opportunistic hypercarnivorous apex predator.

- Habitat: It inhabits saltwater habitats and brackish wetlands, rivers and mangroves.
- **Distribution**: It is found in India's east coast, Southeast Asia and the Sundaic region and northern Australia and Micronesia.
  - In India, these are distributed in Odisha and West Bengal and the coastal areas of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
  - Odisha has India's largest population of saltwater crocodiles in its natural habitat.
- **Conservation Status**: It is categorized as 'Least Concern' under the IUCN Red List.

Anandpur Barrage Project & Radiographer Rules 2026

Why in the News?

- Odisha Cabinet Approves Rs 359.77 Cr Irrigation Push for Anandpur Barrage Project & Radiographer Rules 2026.

Anandpur Barrage Project

- The initiative focuses on irrigation infrastructure along the **Salandi Left Main Canal** by constructing underground **pipeline distribution systems** in three packages under the broader barrage project.
- The larger Integrated Anandpur Barrage Project aims to eventually irrigate **60,000 hectares** across **Keonjhar and Balasore.**

Radiographer Rules 2026

- The new rules will **streamline recruitment**, **promotion**, and **service conditions** for radiographers working in ESIC (Employees' State Insurance Corporation) hospitals and dispensaries across the state.

Manyata Singh

Why in the News?

- Manyata Singh won a silver medal in the junior women's 10m air rifle event at the Asian Rifle/Pistol Championship (Asia Shooting Championship) 2026 held in New Delhi.



Key Points

- **Shambhavi Kshirsagar** won **gold** and set a new Asian junior finals record.
- **Manyata Singh** secured **silver** with a strong score in the junior women's 10m air rifle final.
- **Aneesha Sharma** took **bronze**, completing the Indian 1-2-3 finish

FIH Hockey Pro League

Why in the News?

- Odisha is hosting a leg of the FIH Men's Hockey Pro League 2025–26 at the Birsa Munda International Hockey Stadium in Rourkela, Odisha, India.

Key Points

- Matches took place from 10 to 15 February 2026, with India, Belgium and Argentina competing in this round-robin series of international fixtures.

Odisha is introducing QR-coded land pattas

Why in the News?

- The Odisha government will embed QR codes on land ownership documents such as pattas and Records of Rights (RoRs).

Key Points

- Revenue Minister Suresh Pujari shared that the move is designed to ensure transparency and eliminate cheating in the buying and selling of plots.

Guru Damodar Badatya

Why in the News?

- Renowned folk play director, actor and singer Guru Damodar Badatya — fondly known as "Dama Master" — passed away in Odisha at the age of 85 after a prolonged illness.



Key Points

- He was from Kalarapadar village in Ganjam district and was widely respected for his long and distinguished contribution to Odia folk theatre and culture.
- Guru Badatya was especially celebrated for directing over 50 exclusive Ramayan plays and contributing to more than 7,000 operas and bhajans throughout his career.

Dr. Raseswari Panigrahi

Why in the News?

- Ex-Sambalpur MLA Dr. Raseswari Panigrahi Passes Away at 79.



Key Points

- She was elected to the Odisha Legislative Assembly from the Sambalpur constituency in 2014 on a Biju Janata Dal (BJD).

Textile park in Kenojar

Why in the News?

- A new textile park is being developed in Keonjhar (Keonjhar), Odisha (India) as part of recent government initiatives to boost industry and jobs in the district.

Key Points

- Foundation Laid: In mid-February 2026, Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi inaugurated the foundation stone for a ₹100 crore textile park.
- Hindalco Industries (Aditya Birla Group) will set up an apparel manufacturing unit on about 7 acre within the park.

Gita Patnaik

Why in the News?

- Geeta Patnaik, a celebrated veteran Odia singer, has passed away at the age of 73 after suffering a brain stroke.



Key Points

- She showed a natural inclination towards **classical and Odia music** from an early age and later trained professionally.

Modern Skywalk in Bhubenswar

Why in the News?

- The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has approved construction of a 500-metre elevated skywalk on National Highway-16 between Palasuni and Rasulgarh in Bhubaneswar.

Key Points

- It will be the first such infrastructure project of its kind in Bhubaneswar city — a covered, elevated walkway designed to help pedestrians safely cross the very busy NH-16 traffic corridor.

Prafulla Kar, Statue

Why in the News?

- A statue of Prafulla Kar was unveiled recently in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, on his birth anniversary.

Key Points

- The statue was unveiled at Rabindra Mandap by Suryabanshi Suraj, the Minister for Odia Language, Literature and Culture.
- The ceremony included floral tributes and recognition of Kar's massive contribution to Odia music.



- **Awards & Honours**
  - Padma Shri (2015) – Government of India
  - Odisha Sahitya Akademi Award
  - Odisha Living Legend Award

Odisha Aims for 100% Rural Piped Water Coverage

Why in the News?

- The Government of Odisha has set an ambitious target to provide piped drinking water supply to every rural village in the state by March 2027 under a mission-mode programme, aiming for universal access to safe drinking water across rural Odisha.

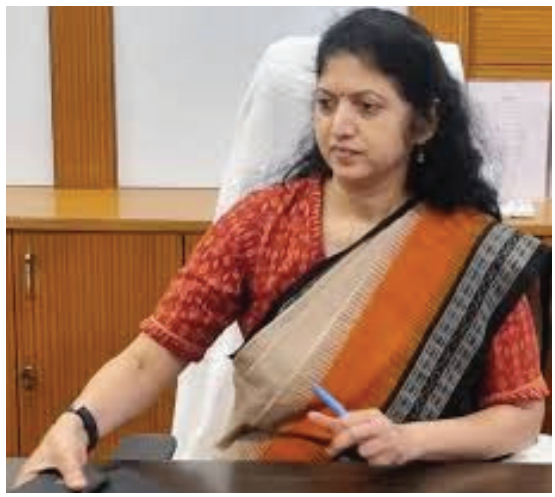
Current Status & Coverage

- Odisha has a total of 46,531 villages, with 21,721 already having piped water supply.
- **Major Investment Backing**: A total funding of ₹54,000 crore has been allocated for this rural piped water programme.
  - Approximately ₹32,128 crore is supported under the Jal Jeevan Mission (a central government initiative).
  - The remaining ₹21,109 crore will come from the Odisha state budget.

Usha Padhy

Why in the News?

- Usha Padhee — now Additional Chief Secretary in Odisha — assumed additional charge as Chairperson of the Odisha Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO).



Key Points

- Usha Padhee is a senior Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer who has held key positions in Housing & Urban Development (H&UD) as Principal Secretary.

Toshali Mela Bhubaneswar 2026

Why in the News?

- Toshali Swadeshi Mela 2026 (also known as the 20th edition of Toshali Mela) Location: Janata Maidan, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India.

Key points

- This annual crafts and cultural fair organized by the Handlooms, Textiles & Handicrafts Department, Government of Odisha, is a major showcase of Indian handlooms, handicrafts, art, culture, traditional foods, and cultural performances.

Sanath Kumar N.

Why in the News?

- Sanath Kumar N., a 2012-batch Indian Forest Service (IFS) officer, has been appointed as the new Director of Nandankanan Zoological Park by the Odisha Government.



Key points

- First zoo in the world to breed White tigers and Melanistic tigers.
- First zoo in India where endangered Gharials were bred in captivity.
- One of the earliest Indian zoos to join the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA).
- **Natural Setting:** Unlike many urban zoos, Nandankanan is built inside a forest, with animals living in more natural-feeling environments.

Shree Jagannath Interpretation Centre in Puri

Why in the News?

- The Shree Jagannath Interpretation Centre is a proposed world-class cultural and heritage facility planned in Puri to showcase the rich philosophy, traditions, history, rituals and art of the Jagannath culture centered around the Shree Jagannatha Temple Puri (the famous 12th-century temple).

Key Points

- The Government of Odisha announced the creation of the centre in the **Odisha State Budget 2026-27,** aiming to preserve and promote Jagannath culture and make the heritage accessible to a wider audience.
- **A substantial budget allocation of around ₹1,000 crore** has been proposed for this project, indicating a large-scale, modern facility with world-class displays and infrastructure.

"E Mati Katha Kahe" and "Buxi Jagabandhu"

Why in the News?

- Odisha Governor releases two books by former Andhra Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan.

Key Points

- **E Mati Katha Kahe**
  - Author: Kalindi Charan Panigrahi
  - Genre: Social–realist novel
  - Theme:
    - » Life of rural Odisha
    - » Bond between man and soil (mati)

  - » Impact of poverty, feudalism, and social change
  - Significance: One of the earliest realistic novels in Odia literature
- **Buxi Jagabandhu**
  - Author: Pratibha Ray
  - Genre: Historical novel
  - Based on: Life of Buxi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar
  - Theme:
    - » Paika Rebellion of 1817
    - » Resistance against British colonial rule
    - » Peasant uprising and regional nationalism
  - Significance:
    - » Revives Odisha's freedom struggle heritage

Centre Approves Rs 797 Crore Hydrogen Jetty at Paradip Port

Why in the News?

- The Government of India (Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways) has approved a ₹797.17 crore project to develop a dedicated green hydrogen jetty at Paradip Port in Odisha.

Key Points

- It will include infrastructure to handle green hydrogen, green ammonia and other liquid cargo, boosting the port's capacity to act as a green energy logistics hub.
- The project will be executed by the Paradip Port Authority on a build-operate-transfer (BOT) basis.

Padma Shri Utsav Charan Das

Why in the News?

- Utsav Charan Das — an eminent exponent of Ghoda Nacha (the traditional horse dance folk art of Odisha) and recipient of the Padma Shri — has passed away at the age of 80.

Key Points

- He was awarded the Padma Shri in 2020 for his outstanding service to traditional performing arts and cultural preservation.
- Das's contributions to folk culture spanned over six decades, during which he worked tirelessly to preserve and popularise **Ghoda Nacha** both within Odisha and on national and international stages.



About Ghoda Nacha (Folk Dance)

- **Performers**: Usually men from rural and tribal communities
- **Distinctive Element:** Dancers wear a dummy horse (ghoda) around their waist, creating the illusion of riding a horse
- **Music**: Performed to the beats of traditional instruments like dhol, mandar, nagara, and folk songs

Odisha Rolls Out PM Rahat Scheme

Why in the News?

- The Prime Minister's Road Accident Victims' Hospitalisation & Assured Treatment (PM RAHAT) Scheme is a central government health safeguard program designed to provide timely, cashless treatment for people injured in road accidents.

Key Points

- Under the PM Rahat scheme, every road accident victim admitted to a hospital within 24 hours of the incident will receive free medical treatment for up to 7 days or a maximum of Rs 1.5 lakh, whichever comes first. The initiative prioritises immediate care, with all expenses covered by the Motor Vehicle Accident Fund

PMFME Scheme

Why in the News?

- PMFME Scheme Extension Unlocks Rs 10 Lakh Subsidies and More in Odisha.

Key Points

- **Credit-linked Subsidy**
  - Entrepreneurs can receive up to ₹10 lakh as a credit-linked subsidy (35% of project cost) to set up new units or modernise existing ones.
- **Technical and Regulatory Support**
  - Assistance for obtaining FSSAI licence, Udyam registration, GST enrolment, and other necessary certifications.
- **Formalisation & Growth Support**
  - Helps unorganised food processing units enter the organised sector.
  - Focus on branding, packaging, quality improvement, and market linkages.
  - Encourages participation by rural women's self-help groups (SHGs), small farmers, and local food entrepreneurs.

Vikash Manthan 1.0

Why in the News?

- Vikash Manthan 1.0 Sets Roadmap for Viksit Odisha 2036 Aligned with Viksit Bharat 2047.

Key Points

- **Organised by the Planning & Convergence Department, Government of Odisha,** in collaboration with **the Odisha Centre of Integrated Development (OCID)**, the two-day conclave aims to chart Odisha's transformation roadmap for Viksit Odisha 2036, aligned with the national vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.
- **Objectives**
  - **Inclusive and sustainable economic growth**, with emphasis on manufacturing, MSMEs, services, and the green economy
  - **Human capital development,** covering education, healthcare, nutrition, and skill ecosystems
  - **Infrastructure and connectivity,** including urbanisation, transport, ports, energy, and digital infrastructure
  - **Good governance and institutional reforms**, focusing on data-driven planning, convergence, and outcome budgeting
  - **Climate resilience and environmental sustainability,** crucial for a coastal and disaster-prone state like Odisha

HPV Immunisation Program

Why in the News?

- CM Majhi Flags Off Statewide HPV Immunisation Program

Key points

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a nationwide HPV vaccination campaign from Ajmer, Rajasthan, aiming to eliminate Human Papillomavirus infections and protect girls from cervical cancer.

Key Highlights of the HPV Immunisation Programme in Odisha

- **Launch by**: CM Mohan Charan Majhi
- **Objective:** Prevent cervical cancer, which is mainly caused by infection from the Human Papillomavirus (HPV).
- **Target Group:** Adolescent girls (generally 9–14 years old).

HPV Immunisation Program

- The national programme uses Gardasil-4, a quadrivalent single-dose Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, to prevent cervical cancer.
- A Gardasil-4 provides 93–100% effectiveness against the targeted HPV types.
- A quadrivalent vaccine works by stimulating an immune response against four different antigens, such as four different viruses or other microorganisms.
- **About Human Papillomavirus (HPV)**
  - HPV is the name of a group of 200 known viruses.
  - It is a common sexually transmitted infection.
  - They do not cause concerns in most people, but persistent HPV infection with high-risk HPV types is the cause of cervical cancer.
    - » In 90% of people the body controls the infection by itself.
- **Cervical Cancer**
  - It is the fourth most common cancer in women globally.
    - » In India specifically, it is the second most common cancer among women.
  - India accounts for 25% of global cervical cancer deaths and it ranks fourth globally in cervical cancer-related morbidity.
  - It disproportionately affects younger women, 20% of children who lose their mother to cancer do so due to cervical cancer.

The first National Lok Adalat of 2026 in Odisha

Why in the News?

- The first National Lok Adalat of the year will be organised on March 14, 2026, at all judicial courts in Khordha district, including Bhubaneswar, Khordha, Banpur, Chilika, Tangi, Jatani and Begunia.

About Lok Adalat

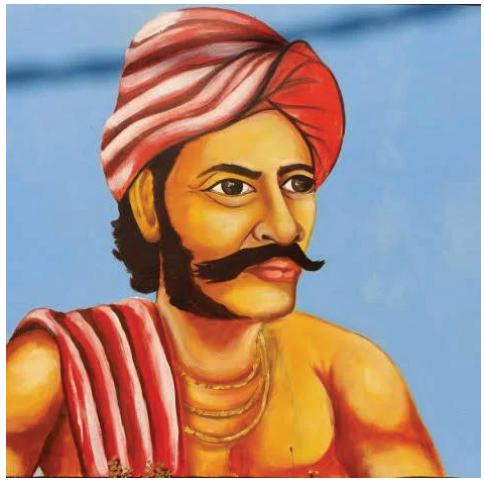
- Lok Adalat, or People's Court, is a forum designed for settling disputes either pending in court or at the pre-litigation stage through compromise or amicable settlement.
  - The Supreme Court emphasises that Lok Adalat is an ancient Indian system of adjudication that still holds relevance today, rooted in Gandhian principles. It forms a part of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) system, which seeks to relieve the burdened Indian courts.
- **Objective:** Its purpose is to provide quick, inexpensive justice without the lengthy and expensive procedures common in regular courts.
  - In Lok Adalat, there are no victors or losers, making it a harmonious approach to dispute resolution.
- **Historical Development:** The first Lok Adalat camp in independent India was held in Gujarat in 1982, where its success in settling disputes led to its spread nationwide.
- **Legal Framework**: Initially functioning as a voluntary institution without legal authority, the

Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 provided statutory status to Lok Adalats.
  - This Act gave the institution the authority to pass awards with the same effect as a court decree.
- **Organising Agencies:** Lok Adalats can be organised by NALSA, State Legal Services Authority, District Legal Services Authority, Supreme Court Legal Services Committee, High Court Legal Services Committee, or Taluk Legal Services Committee at intervals and places they deem necessary.
- **Composition:** A Lok Adalat typically includes a judicial officer (chairman), a lawyer, and a social worker.
- **Jurisdiction:**
  - Lok Adalat has jurisdiction over disputes including pending court cases and pre-litigation matters that fall under the jurisdiction of courts.
  - It deals with various cases such as matrimonial disputes, compoundable criminal offences, labour disputes, bank recovery, housing, and consumer grievances.
    - » Lok Adalat does not have jurisdiction over non-compoundable offences, such as serious criminal cases, as these cannot be settled through compromise..
- **Powers:** The Lok Adalat shall have the same powers as are vested in a Civil Court under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 while trying a suit in respect of the following matters.
  - The summoning and enforcing the attendance of any witness.
  - The discovery and production of any document.
  - Receiving evidence on affidavits.
  - Requisitioning public records or documents from courts or offices.
- **Proceedings of Lok Adalat:**
  - Self-Determined Procedure: Lok Adalat can specify its own procedures for settling disputes, making the process flexible and informal compared to formal courts. Judicial Proceedings:
  - All Lok Adalat proceedings are deemed judicial proceedings under the Indian Penal Code, 1860 (Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita, 2023) and have the status of a Civil Court under the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 (Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023).
- **Binding Nature of Awards:**
  - Decree of Civil Court: Awards made by Lok Adalat have the status of a decree of a civil court and are final and binding on the parties.
  - **Non-Appealable:** Awards cannot be appealed in any court, ensuring the quick resolution of disputes without the delays caused by lengthy appeals.

Veer Surendra Sai

Why in the News?

- Odisha Pays Homage to Revolutionary Hero Veer Surendra Sai on His Death Anniversary.



About Veer Surendra Sai

- Born in the village of Rajpur-Khinda near Sambalpur town (Odisha) in the Chauhan royal family.
- Prominent freedom fighter and tribal leader from Odisha
- **Contributions**
  - He began fighting against British dominance at age 18 in 1827.

- Organised a guerrilla-style rebellion involving tribal communities such as Binjhal, Gond etc.
- After the death of the ruler of Sambalpur, the British applied the Doctrine of Lapse and annexed Sambalpur in 1849, denying Surendra Sai his legitimate claim.
- During the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, Sai returned to Sambalpur and relaunched the rebellion against the British.
  - » Many tribal Zamindars (Landlords) and Gauntias (local leaders) rallied to his cause.
- Veer Surendra Sai (1809–1884) was a legendary tribal leader and freedom fighter from Sambalpur.
- He played a key role in resisting British rule during and after the Indian Rebellion of 1857.
- For his long struggle against colonial rule, he spent many years imprisoned by the British.

Vikas Manthan 1.0

Why in the News?

- In a powerful show of intent, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi graced the two-day state-level conference "Vikash Manthan 1.0: Governance in Action" at the Lok Seva Bhawan Convention Centre and declared that Odisha has scripted a remarkable turnaround in just 20 months.

Key Highlights of 20 Months

- Economic growth rate touches 7.9% — higher than the national average
- Rs 20 lakh crore capital investment attracted
- 109 major projects grounded/inaugurated worth Rs 2.40 lakh crore, creating 1.76 lakh direct jobs
- State budget to cross Rs 3 lakh crore for the first time
- Infrastructure outlay at Rs 72,100 crore (6.5% of GSDP)
- Debt-GSDP ratio lowest among major states at 13.6% — well below FRBM limit

Sectoral Achievements

- Women empowerment through the Subhadra Yojana has made over one crore women economically independent, with nearly 17 lakh becoming Lakhpati Didis.
- Farmers received record support: 92.63 lakh metric tonnes of paddy procured in 2024-25 at ₹3,100 per quintal, releasing ₹28,715 crore directly into their accounts.
- In education, 45,000 new Shishu Batikas opened and over 20,000 teacher posts filled. The first phase of the Godabarish Adarsh Primary School scheme will set up 2,200 model schools at a cost of ₹12,000 crore.
- Health allocation for 2026-27 proposed at ₹23,182 crore. Under Ayushman Bharat–Gopabandhu Jana Arogya Yojana, 1.03 crore families (3.47 crore individuals) are now covered.
- The government has set a target to provide piped drinking water to every village by March 2027.

Vision 2047

- The Bhubaneswar–Cuttack–Puri–Paradeep Economic Region (BCPPER) has been earmarked to become a $500 billion economy by 2047.

Odisha Emerges Champion in National Search & Rescue Skills Competition

Why in the News?

- Odisha has emerged as the champion in the National Advanced Search & Rescue Skills Competition, highlighting the state's growing strength in disaster management and emergency response.
- The victory was achieved by the Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force (ODRAF) team.

Key Points

- The victory marks a remarkable journey for Odisha's disaster response capabilities. After the devastating Super Cyclone of 1999, the state lacked a dedicated disaster response force and relied heavily on support from Andhra Pradesh. Recognising the urgent need for preparedness, Odisha established ODRAF in 2001.

- Since then, ODRAF has evolved into one of India's premier disaster response units.

Note: Andhra Pradesh finished as runner-up in the prestigious event.

Odisha Wins Technology Sabha Excellence Award for Ama Sathi Unified WhatsApp BOT

Why in the News?

- The Odisha Government has been conferred the prestigious Technology Sabha Excellence Award for its pioneering **Ama Sathi Unified WhatsApp BOT**, a flagship digital initiative recognised by Express Computer, part of the Indian Express Group.

About Ama Sathi Unified WhatsApp BOT

- A single WhatsApp-based platform for accessing government services.
- Launched in collaboration with Meta, Ama Sathi serves as a unified platform on WhatsApp, allowing citizens to access a wide array of government services
- Citizens can interact with government departments through the WhatsApp number 9437292000.

The Doyen of Odisha Journalism: N. R. Swami (1909–1981)

Why in the News?

- A book on the life and journalistic journey of N. R. Swami was recently released in Odisha, highlighting his contribution to journalism in the state.

Key points

- The book titled "The Doyen of Odisha Journalism: N. R. Swami (1909–1981)" chronicles the life and professional journey of the veteran journalist.
- It was written by N. Jagannath Das.

About N. R. Swami

- N. R. Swami was a prominent journalist who worked with major publications such as Press Trust of India, The Hindu, and The Statesman.

High-security backup / disaster-recovery

Why in the News?

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has established a high-security backup / disaster-recovery data centre in Bhubaneswar, Odisha to protect India's critical financial infrastructure.

Purpose

- Acts as a disaster-recovery / backup centre for RBI's main data centre in Navi Mumbai
- Ensures continuity of banking and financial systems if the primary system fails.

Why was Bhubaneswar chosen?

- Far from India's western and northern borders (lower security risks)
- Located in lower seismic risk zone
- Less exposure to concentrated digital infrastructure threats

New amphipod species found along Odisha coast

Why in the News?

- Researchers from the Department of Marine Sciences at Berhampur University have identified a new species of amphipod, a small shrimp-like crustacean, along the Odisha coast.

Key Points

- According to researchers, amphipods of this species typically inhabit rocky environments and moist areas that alternate between land and water.
  - They feed on algae and decomposed organic matter, while small fish, crabs, birds and other marine organisms prey on them.
- The species is called **Stenothoe lowryi,** a tiny shrimp-like crustacean belonging to the amphipod group.
- It was recorded in Indian waters for the first time by researchers from Berhampur University.

Why is this discovery important?

- Earlier, this species was known only from Malaysia — so its presence in Odisha expands its known global distribution.

Odisha Crocodile Census and Bird Census

Why in the News?

- Odisha Crocodile Population Rises 3.54% to 2193; Bird Census Records 24.9 Lakh

Crocodile Census

- The crocodile population in Odisha has increased by 3.54% compared to last year, reaching 2,193. In Satkosia and Tikarpada, the census identified 65 adult crocodiles and 22 hatchlings, reflecting successful conservation efforts in these scenic habitats.

Bird Census Findings

- The census also documented 24,90,986 birds across Odisha during 2025–26. While no rare species were found in Chilika Lake, two new bird species were identified there. Additionally, five new species were spotted in the Hirakud reservoir, adding to Odisha's avian diversity.

Odisha to Launch MSME E-Parks in All 30 Districts

Why in the News?

- The Odisha government has rolled out multiple initiatives to strengthen MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises), including interest reimbursement on loans up to Rs 5 crore under the Chief Minister's Scheme for Reimbursement of Interest (CM-SRIM).

Key points

- **Reimbursement**
  - The government fully reimburses interest on capital loans up to Rs 25 lakh.
  - For loans between Rs 25 lakh and Rs 1 crore, 75% of the interest is covered, while loans from Rs 1 crore to Rs 3 crore receive 50% reimbursement.
  - Loans between Rs 3 crore and Rs 5 crore are eligible for 25% reimbursement.
- Both the Centre and the state provide up to Rs 30 crore assistance for MSME cluster development, ensuring infrastructure and financial support for small businesses.

Balabhadra Organic Farming Mission

Why in the News?

- Odisha Launches Balabhadra Organic Farming Mission Covering 90,670 hectares.

Key points

- The Odisha government has launched the Balabhadra Organic Farming Mission from the 2025-26 financial year to promote sustainable agriculture across the state.
- **The mission will run for five years until 2029-30**.
- It aims to bring **90,670 hectares of farmland under organic cultivation across 11 districts.**
- Under the mission's "Amrut Anna" component, chemical-free aromatic rice and pulses will be supplied to the Jagannath Temple Administration for use in Mahaprasad and other rituals.
- Currently, Odisha has 16,870 hectares under organic farming, including 270 hectares dedicated to Amrut Anna crops.
- The mission will expand awareness programs, skill development, and training for farmers on bio-input production and usage.
- Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) incentives will also be provided to encourage the adoption of organic practices.

Subhadra Shakti Leadership Summit,

Why in the News?

- The first-ever Subhadra Shakti Leadership Summit, organised by the Department of Mission Shakti in **Konark,** successfully concluded after six days, marking a significant step toward strengthening women's leadership in Odisha.

Key points

- Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida attended the closing ceremony as the chief guest and

addressed the participants, emphasising the vital role of women in building a developed Odisha.

- Notably, this is the first time in the history of Mission Shakti that the President and Secretary of 338 block-level federations, **totalling 676 members, participated in the summit,** which began on March 7.
- The summit aimed to equip women with essential leadership skills, emotional intelligence, capacity building, and knowledge about start-up opportunities, all of which would contribute to a progressive future for Odisha

Digital Bharat Nidhi for Mobile Connectivity

Why in the News?

- Rs 2,229 Crore Disbursed Under Digital Bharat Nidhi for Mobile Connectivity in Odisha Rural Areas: Scindia Tells Rajya Sabha.

Key points

  - » **Planned Towers**: A total of 5,182 mobile towers are planned in Odisha to cover 7,157 villages, including 4,470 towers in 13 Fifth Schedule districts.
  - » Subsidy: Funds amounting to ₹2,229.35 crore have been disbursed from the DBN to telecom operators to strengthen mobile connectivity in rural and remote parts of Odisha.
- This includes ₹1,859.95 crore allocated for districts under the Fifth Schedule.
- The project will provide mobile connectivity to villages previously without network access, bridging the digital divide.
  - » **Socio-Economic Benefits:** Improved connectivity will facilitate education, e-governance, healthcare, and economic activities in remote regions.
  - » **Implementation:** Towers are being constructed under 12 DBN-funded projects, monitored to ensure timely completion and quality.
  - » **Strategic Importance**: Enhancing digital infrastructure in Odisha supports inclusive growth and rural development, strengthening the state's integration with national digital networks.

About Digital Bharat Nidhi:

- It would replace the erstwhile Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF), which is a pool of funds generated by a 5 per cent Universal Service Levy charged upon all the telecom fund operators on their Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR).
- This money would be used to fund the expansion of telecom networks in remote and rural areas.

Working of the Digital Bharat Nidhi

- As per the Telecom Act, contributions made by telecom companies towards the Digital Bharat Nidhi will first be credited to the Consolidated Fund of India (CFI).
- All revenues that the government receives, including loans raised and all money received in repayment of loans, are credited to the CFI. The government also incurs its expenditures from this fund.
- The Central government will deposit the collected funds to the DBN from time to time.

The funds under DBN is used for

- Funds collected under the DBN will be used to support universal service through promoting access to and delivery of telecommunication services in underserved rural, remote and urban areas; fund research and development of telecommunication services, technologies, and products; support pilot projects, consultancy assistance and advisory support for improving connectivity; and for the introduction of telecommunication services, technologies, and products.
- The DBN shall fund schemes and projects for providing targeted access to telecommunication services for underserved groups of society such as women, persons with disabilities and economically and socially weaker sections, as per the draft rules.

Administration: The Centre will appoint an "administrator" who will select "DBN implementers" through "bidding" or invitation of applications from eligible persons.

- This so-called administrator will determine the modalities of providing funding to DBN implementers on a case-by-case basis, including but not limited to full funding, partial funding, co-funding, market risk mitigation, and risk capital.

Go Homestay Portal

Why in the News?

The Government of Odisha has launched the Go Homestay Portal to promote homestay tourism across the state and provide digital support to local hosts.

Key Points:

- About: The Go Homestay Portal is an online platform that enables homestay owners to register their properties, obtain approvals, and connect directly with tourists.
  - It provides a user-friendly system for listing homestays and improving visibility in the tourism market.
- Objective: The initiative aims to promote community-based tourism, support local entrepreneurs, and create sustainable livelihood opportunities in rural and semi-urban areas.
- Registration: Homestay owners can register through the portal to get approvals from the tourism department, ensuring standardisation, safety, and quality of services provided to visitors.
  - The portal is expected to enhance the reach of Odisha's homestay offerings by making them discoverable to tourists nationwide, thereby increasing tourism inflows and supporting the state's overall tourism ecosystem.
- Rural Development: The portal is part of the state government's broader efforts to promote rural development by transforming local homes into guest accommodations, preserving cultural heritage, and expanding tourism beyond traditional urban centres.
- Significance: The Go Homestay Portal is expected to strengthen community participation in the tourism economy, diversify tourism products, and contribute to the socio-economic development of rural Odisha.

2nd edition of the Indian Bison Fest

Why in the News?

The 2nd edition of the Indian Bison Fest was organised at Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary in Odisha.

Key Points:

- **Festival:** The Indian Bison Fest was held in March 2026 at Zeropoint inside Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary and was organised by the Hirakud Wildlife Division to highlight conservation efforts for the Indian bison (gaur).
- **Eco-Tourism Initiatives**: The second edition introduced activities such as guided gaur safari, night camping, trekking and stargazing, offering participants an immersive wildlife experience.
- **Gaur Conservation**: The sanctuary has emerged as an important habitat for the Indian bison (gaur), the largest living wild bovine species.
  - A recent census recorded about 848 gaurs in the Debrigarh–Hirakud landscape, indicating a growing population and successful conservation efforts.
  - IUCN Red List: Vulnerable
  - Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Listed under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 (highest level of protection)
  - CITES: Appendix I
- **Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary:**
  - Located in Bargarh district of Odisha, near the Hirakud Dam on the Mahanadi River.
  - Covers about 346 sq km and hosts rich biodiversity including over 40 mammal species and more than 200 bird species.
- **Significance:** The festival promotes wildlife conservation awareness, community participation and eco-tourism, while strengthening Debrigarh's role as a major conservation landscape for the Indian bison in eastern India.

Inauguration of Cooperative Sector Projects in Odisha

Why in the News?

- Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah inaugurated and laid the foundation stones for multiple cooperative sector and development projects worth over ₹3,770 crore in Odisha during an event held in Bhubaneswar.

Key Points:

- **Initiatives:** Projects of the National Dairy Development Board, Odisha State Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation, and the Odisha government were inaugurated or had foundation stones laid during the event.
  - A total of 173 projects of the Odisha government were inaugurated, including 61 completed projects worth ₹1,230 crore and 112 new projects worth ₹2,116 crore.
- **Cooperative Sector Development:** The Union government and the Odisha government plan to build a strong cooperative network in every village, particularly in the dairy sector, inspired by the cooperative model of Amul.
  - A new cooperative policy for Odisha is planned to strengthen dairy, fisheries, and other cooperative activities, aiming to boost rural income and women's participation in economic activities.
- **Revival of Sugar Mills**: The restart of the Badamba Sugar Mill has been completed by Indian Potash Limited, and the government aims to revive other closed sugar mills across the country through cooperative efforts.
- **Sulphuric Acid Plant–III:** The third stream of a sulphuric acid plant was inaugurated at Paradip at the facility of Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited.
- **Forensic Infrastructure**: The foundation stone for a campus of National Forensic Sciences University was laid in Odisha.
  - Under the new criminal laws, Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) visits have been made mandatory for serious crimes punishable with more than seven years of imprisonment, strengthening scientific investigation.
- **Cyber Infrastructure:** Specialized cybercrime and economic offences branches have been launched in 20 districts of Odisha to enhance digital and financial crime investigation capabilities.
- **Conviction Rate:** Odisha has recorded a conviction rate of more than 87% in FIRs registered under the new criminal laws.
- **Significance:** The initiatives aim to strengthen cooperative institutions, forensic infrastructure, agricultural processing, and industrial capacity in Odisha, contributing to rural development, improved law enforcement, and greater self-reliance in fertilizer production.

Heat preparedness guidelines for all higher education institutions

Why in the News?

- The Government of Odisha has issued heat preparedness guidelines (Standard Operating Procedure – SOP) for all higher education institutions

Key Points:

- Rescheduled Academic Timings: Institutions are advised to conduct classes during cooler hours, ensuring academic continuity without exposing students to peak noon-time heat.
- Infrastructure Readiness:Provision of safe drinking water and 'Panna' (traditional cooling drinks) in campuses.
  - Installation of fans and proper ventilation in classrooms and examination halls.
  - Mandatory availability of First Aid Kits and ORS (Oral Rehydration Salts) in all departments and hostels.
- Examination Management: Special care to be taken during examinations, including ensuring cool waiting areas for parents and transport arrangements if necessary.
- Health Awareness: Educational sessions on recognizing symptoms of heatstroke (Hyperthermia) and dehydration.

- Why the Guidelines?: Odisha is one of the states frequently affected by severe heatwaves. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), eastern and central India have witnessed a rise in:
  - Heatwave days
  - Early onset of summer
  - Prolonged high night-time temperatures
- Notified Disaster: Heatwaves are classified as notified disasters in India, and Odisha has previously experienced significant heat-related mortality.

Odisha Tops Fiscal Health Index (FHI) 2026

Why in the News?

- Odisha has once again secured the 1st rank in the Fiscal Health Index 2026 released by NITI Aayog, reflecting strong fiscal discipline and financial management.

Key points

- Odisha retained the top position with a score around 73, improving over previous years.
- Strong performance due to:
  - **Fiscal Prudence:** Maintaining a fiscal deficit of 1.73% of GSDP, well within the 3% FRBM limit.
  - **Debt Sustainability**: A significant reduction in the debt-to-GSDP ratio from 23.46% (2019-20) to 14.39% (2023-24).
  - **Revenue Mobilisation:** High share of own-tax revenue (exceeding 60%) and strong non-tax revenue from mining-linked premiums.
  - **Quality of Expenditure:** High capital outlay (around 4–5% of GSDP) focused on infrastructure, health, and education.
  - **Debt Index**: Maintaining low interest burdens and manageable liabilities.
- **Top 10 States in Fiscal Health Index 2026**
  - Odisha
  - Goa
  - Jharkhand
  - Gujarat
  - Maharashtra
  - Chhattisgarh
  - Telangana
  - Uttar Pradesh
  - Karnataka
  - Madhya Pradesh
- **Bottom Rankers (Aspirational Category):**
  - Punjab (#18), Andhra Pradesh (#17), and West Bengal (#16) remained at the bottom due to high non-developmental spending and unsustainable fiscal patterns.
- **New Inclusion**: For the first time, 10 North-Eastern and Himalayan states were ranked separately. Arunachal Pradesh topped this category, followed by Uttarakhand and Tripura.

Gajapati rulers inscription in Guntur Temple

Why in the News?

- A 15th-century inscription linked to the Gajapati rulers of Odisha has recently been discovered at the Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple, and it is considered an important medieval historical finding.

Key points

- **Odisha Rulers**: The inscriptions are associated with the Gajapati dynasty of Odisha.
  - The Gajapati rulers were powerful kings who controlled large parts of eastern and southern India during the medieval period
- **The Rulers:** The inscriptions are attributed to the reign of Gajapati Kapilendra Deva (the founder of the Gajapati dynasty) and his son Purushottama Deva.
- **Linguistic and cultural synthesis:** The inscriptions are written in Medieval Odia and Telugu scripts, showing cultural interaction between Odisha and Andhra regions.
- **Dating:** The inscriptions are dated to the **Saka era (mid-to-late 15th century, roughly 1460–1480 CE).**

- **Content:** One inscription records the grant of land and villages to the Malleswara Swamy Temple for its daily rituals and maintenance.
  - The second inscription details a remission of taxes for the local weaving community (Kaikala) and merchants, a common administrative practice to ensure loyalty in newly conquered territories. .
- **Cultural Exchange:**Use of multiple scripts (Telugu and Odia) shows linguistic and cultural interaction.
- **Historical significance**
  - Confirms the territorial expansion and influence of the Gajapati Empire beyond Odisha.
  - Shows religious patronage, temple economy, and administrative networks of medieval eastern India.
  - Highlights shared heritage between Odisha and Andhra Pradesh, important for epigraphic and regional history studies

Kendrapara district has been selected as 'Smart Village'

Why in the News?

- In a remarkable step, the coastal village of Kushunupur in Kendrapara district has been selected as 'Smart Village' under the initiative of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), evoking joy and excitement among the local residents.

Key points

- **Implementing agency:** The project has been launched by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) under the Ministry of Science & Technology.
- **Mission-mode initiative**: Multiple CSIR research institutions are collaborating to introduce scientific innovations and practical technology solutions in rural life.
- **Vision & Objective:** The project aims to bring modern technologies and scientific solutions to rural life, improving quality of life and supporting sustainable, resilient village development.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Planned interventions include climate-resilient buildings, community toilets, and comprehensive village planning through CSIR-CBRI support.
- **Mission Mode Approach:** Multiple CSIR research institutions collaborate to implement practical, scalable solutions across various sectors.
  - CSIR-Central Building Research Institute (CBRI), Roorkee
  - CSIR-Institute of Minerals and Materials Technology (IMMT), Bhubaneswar
  - CSIR-Central Electronics Engineering Research Institute (CEERI)
  - CSIR-National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science and Technology (NIIST)
  - CSIR-Structural Engineering Research Centre (SERC)
  - CSIR-Central Leather Research Institute (CLRI)
- **Rural Empowerment:** The project is expected to enhance self-reliance, sustainable agriculture practices, and quality of life, potentially serving as a model for other rural areas in the state and across India.

Shambhavi (Sambhavi) Puraskar 2026

Why in the News?

- Shambhavi (Sambhavi) Puraskar 2026 is a prestigious social-impact award given in Odisha to recognise grassroots changemakers working for community development.

Key points

- The award is instituted by the Bansidhar & Ila Panda Foundation (BIPF).
- The 2026 edition (13th edition) honoured organisations and individuals for transformative grassroots work in Odisha.
- **Main Award Winners (2026)**
  - **Sathee Parivar (Angul)**: Recognised for preventing snakebite fatalities through awareness, volunteer training and rapid-response teams.

– **Balangir Gramodyog Samiti (BGS):** Honoured for empowering marginalised farmers and promoting sustainable agriculture.



- **About the Award**
  – Instituted in 2013, the Shambhavi Puraskar celebrates individuals and organisations creating transformational social impact at the grassroots level in Odisha.

Ratna Shree Award

Why in the News?

- **Dr. Smruti Ranjan Nayak** has been conferred with the prestigious Ratna Shree Award in February 2026 for his outstanding contributions to society, innovation, and modern management thought.



Key Highlights

- The award recognises his role as an innovator, thought leader, and pioneer in modern management philosophies such as GITA GRID.
- He is widely known as the author of influential books like **"Battlefield to Board Room" and "CRM – Creating Revenue Mechanism.**

The 5th Sukubina Srashta Smruti Award (2026)

Why in the News?

- The 5th Sukubina Srashta Smruti Award (2026) was conferred on eminent Odia writer Pushpanjali Nayak.



Key points

- The award is instituted in memory of Sudhir Kumar Bijayendra Narayan, a patron of literature, art and culture.
- It is presented annually on his birth anniversary to honour distinguished contributions to Odia literature.
  – Recipient: Pushpanjali Nayak (for her notable contribution to Odia fiction)
  – Prize: ₹50,000 cash

Girijakumar Baliarsingh

Why in the News?

- Girijakumar Baliarsingh has been selected for the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award 2025 in the Odia language (poetry category).



Key points

- He received the award for his Odia poetry collection **"Padapurana."**
- The work was appreciated for its literary depth, lyrical quality and creative expression.

About Girijakumar Baliarsingh

- Born in 1954 in Khordha district, Odisha.
- Earlier honoured with the Odisha Sahitya Akademi Award (2006) for his contribution to Odia literature

The Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) Humanitarian Award

Why in the News?

- The Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) Humanitarian Award is an international honour given by the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT).

Key points

- KISS to recognise outstanding contributions towards humanitarian work, social development, education, tribal empowerment, and global peace.
- The KISS Humanitarian Award 2025 was conferred on **Nita Ambani**, Founder & Chairperson of the Reliance Foundation

GRAMODAYA Campaign

Why in the News?

- In a proactive move to channel the energy of young people in remote and Left Wing Extremism (LWE)-impacted regions toward positive avenues, the Odisha government has rolled out a targeted component of the **GRAMODAYA** campaign focused on sports development.

Key points

- The Department of Sports and Youth Services has allocated approximately Rs 2.42 crore to supply standardised sports kits to 485 carefully identified villages spread across 10 districts: Bargarh, Balangir, Boudh, Kandhamal, Kalahandi, Koraput, Malkangiri, Nabarangpur, Nuapada, and Rayagada.
- Each village will receive a sports kit valued at Rs 50,000, equipping local youth with essential gear for popular outdoor games such as cricket, football, volleyball, and badminton, alongside indoor options like chess and carrom.

Sudarsan Pattnaik

Why in the News?

- Sudarsan Pattnaik Appointed Brand Ambassador for Census 2027.



Key Points

- Celebrated sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik has been appointed as the Brand Ambassador for the National Census 2027.
- The census is expected to mark a historic moment in India's political and social framework. It will provide crucial insights into women's empowerment, regional balance, social justice, and democratic representation. Based on the 2027 census, new boundaries for Lok Sabha and Assembly constituencies may be drawn, potentially reshaping representation and governance.

Odisha Rajya Sabha Election Results 2026'

Why in the News?

- In a significant political development, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) emerged victorious in three out of four Rajya Sabha seats from Odisha in the biennial elections, marking the state's first

contested Upper House polls after a gap of 12 years.

The winners are:

- Manmohan Samal (BJP state president)
- Sujeet Kumar (sitting BJP Rajya Sabha member)
- Dilip Ray (BJP-backed independent candidate and former Union minister)
- Santrupt Mishra (Biju Janata Dal nominee)

About Rajya sabha

- Article 80 of the Constitution fixes the maximum strength of the Rajya Sabha at 250, including 12 members nominated by the President for expertise in fields like literature, science, art, and social service.
  - At present, the House has 245 members (233 representing States and Union Territories (Delhi, Puducherry, and Jammu & Kashmir) and 12 nominated members).
- **Allocation of Seats**: Seats are allocated to States/ UTs based on population as per the **4th schedule.**
- **Eligibility**: Article 84 of the Constitution lays down the qualifications for membership of Parliament.
  - To be eligible for the Rajya Sabha, a person must be a citizen of India, take an oath or affirmation before a person authorized by the Election Commission as per the Third Schedule, be at least 30 years of age, and possess any additional qualifications prescribed by Parliament through law.
- **Tenure:** The Rajya Sabha is a permanent House and is not subject to dissolution; one-third of its members retire every two years, and each serves a six-year term.
- **Election process**
  - Election Mechanism: Members are elected by Indirect Election by the elected members of Legislative Assemblies of States and UTs respectively, in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote.
  - **Electoral College:** Only the Elected Members of Legislative Assemblies (MLAs) of the States and UTs.
  - **Domicile Requirement**:
    - » Pre-2003: A candidate had to be a resident of the state from which they were contesting from.
    - » Post-2003: A candidate can be an elector from any parliamentary constituency in India. (Removed by the Representation of the People (Amendment) Act, 2003).
  - "**Open Ballot" System**: Voting is not secret for MLAs belonging to political parties.
- **Anti-Defection**: The Supreme Court has ruled that voting against the party whip in a Rajya Sabha election does not attract disqualification under the 10th Schedule (Anti-Defection Law). The party can take disciplinary action (suspension/ expulsion), but the MLA retains their assembly seat.
- **NOTA:** The Supreme Court scrapped the 'None of the Above' (NOTA) option for Rajya Sabha elections in 2018 (Shailesh Manubhai Parmar vs. Union of India).

Diamond Deposits in Odisha

Why in the News?

- Diamond Deposits Found in Odisha's Nuapada, Minister Confirms Precious Stone Discoveries

Key points

- The Odisha government has confirmed the discovery of diamond-bearing stones in the Kalamidadar / Kalmidadar area of Nuapada district.
- Other mineral discoveries in Odisha
- Ruby traces in parts of Kalahandi district.
- Gold-bearing stones and other minerals (copper, graphite, nickel) in districts such as Deogarh, Mayurbhanj, and Keonjhar

Minerals in Odisha

- About 95 per cent of total reserves of iron ore is located in the States of Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Goa, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

  - **In Odisha, iron ore occurs in a series of hill ranges in Sundergarh, Mayurbhanj and Jhar.**
- Odisha is the leading producer of Manganese. Major mines in Odisha are located in the central part of the iron ore belt of India, particularly in Bonai, Kendujhar, Sundergarh, Gangpur, Koraput, Kalahandi and Bolangir.
- **Odisha happens to be the largest producer of Bauxite**. Kalahandi and Sambalpur are the leading producers. The other two areas which have been increasing their production are Bolangir and Koraput.

24th National Para Athletics Championship

Why in the News?

- The 24th National Para Athletics Championship 2025–26 was held at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, from March 17-21, 2026.

Key points

- Rajasthan athlete **Khushboo Gill** won **gold in Women's Shot Put (F20)** with a **national-record throw (11.58 m)**.
- **Top performer**
  - Haryana topped with 95 medals,
  - Tamil Nadu finished 2nd,
  - Gujarat finished 3rd
- **Odisha Performance**
  - Total Medals: 5 Gold + total 17 medals
  - Odisha finished around 5th position in the championship medal standings.

Dharmendra Behera

Why in the News?

- Odia cultural artist Dharmendra Behera has reportedly passed away.

Key Points

- He was a well-known **Bharat Leela (folk theatre) artist** from Ganjam district, Odisha.
- He was popular for playing the "Dwarapal" (gatekeeper) role in Bharat Leela performances and had also worked as an artist on Prarthana TV channel.

First National Indoor Athletics Championship

Why in the News?

- Odisha hosted India's first-ever National Indoor Athletics Championships at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, marking a significant milestone in the development of indoor athletics infrastructure in the country.

Key Points:

  - » **Event:** The two-day inaugural edition (24–25 March 2026) of the National Indoor Athletics Championships featured competitions for both senior and U20 categories, including track and field events.
  - » **Organiser:** The event was organised under the aegis of the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) with support from the Odisha Sports Department.
  - » **About Athletics Federation of India (AFI):**
  - – Current President: Bahadur Singh Sagoo
  - – Established in 1946
  - – Affiliated with World Athletics, the Asian Athletics Association (AAA), and the Indian Olympic Association.

Major Highlights / Performances

- Gurvindervir won the men's 60 m sprint in a dramatic final with multiple false starts.
- C. Reegan (Tamil Nadu) cleared 5.30 m in pole vault, winning gold and achieving Commonwealth Games qualification mark.
- Baranica Elangovan set a new national indoor record (4.22 m) in women's pole vault.

Odisha clears Rs 4,510 crore investment proposals

Why in the News?

- The Government of Odisha has approved 23 industrial investment proposals worth about ₹4,510.65 crore.

Key Points

- The projects will be implemented across 11 districts to promote balanced regional development:
  - Balasore, Bolangir, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Kalahandi, Keonjhar, Khordha, Koraput, Puri, Sambalpur, Sundargarh.
- **Major investment highlights**
  - Largest proposal: Wood-based manufacturing facility in Koraput (~₹870 crore).
  - Sulphuric acid plant: In Jagatsinghpur (~₹425 crore).
  - Pharma manufacturing unit: In Cuttack (~₹236 crore).
  - Garment & technical textile units: In Khordha, generating large employment.
  - Agro-processing and logistics projects: In Kalahandi and Sambalpur.

Odisha's renewable energy

Why in the News?

- Odisha is actively partnering with international entities, including Germany, to achieve its goal of becoming a green energy hub by 2036, with a target of 10 GW of renewable energy capacity.

Key Points

- **Focus sectors** :Solar, Wind, Green Hydrogen, Storage
- **Key partner** : Germany
- **Renewable Energy Capacity Target:** Odisha aims to develop around 10 GW (gigawatts) of renewable energy capacity by 2036.
- **Green Energy Hub Vision:**The state wants to position itself as a national and global centre for clean energy production, especially to support industries like steel, aluminium, and chemicals.
- **Industrial Decarbonisation**: Focus on replacing fossil fuels with renewable sources and green hydrogen in heavy industries.

Panchu Dola Yatra

Why in the News?

- The Panchu Dola Yatra festival was recently celebrated with great fervour around Chilika Lake in Odisha, drawing large numbers of devotees and showcasing age-old religious and cultural traditions.

Key Points:

- **Historic Festival**: Panchu Dola Yatra is a traditional Odia festival observed after the spring festival of Dola Purnima/Holi, particularly in regions around Chilika Lake such as Parikuda and Maluda.
  - The festival occurs five days after Dola Purnima (the Full Moon festival associated with Holi), typically falling in early March each year.
- **Significance:** It involves grand processions of deities in ornate palanquins called Bimana, representing gods and goddesses moved from surrounding villages to a central festival ground for reverence and worship.
  - In Chilika, devotees carry the deities through the shallow waters of the lake, symbolising a sacred convergence of divine presence amidst nature, and reinforcing the spiritual unity of the community.
- **Participation:** Thousands of devotees and spectators gather along the lake banks to watch the colourful water procession, offering devotional music, chants, and rituals.
  - The festival is marked by Sankirtan (devotional singing), folk dance performances such as Ghoda Nacha, and dramatic firework displays, creating a vibrant blend of faith and local tradition.
- **Tradition and Heritage:** Panchu Dola Yatra has deep roots in Odisha's cultural and religious heritage, with origins tracing back several centuries as a celebration of divine assembly and community solidarity.

Odisha Crime Rate Up 7.36% in 2025

Why in the News?

- The Odisha government's white paper on crime, tabled in the Assembly on Wednesday, has painted a worrying picture of rising criminal activity across the state in 2025.

Key Points

- Cognizable offences jumped 7.36 per cent from the previous year to touch 2,29,881 cases.
- In cybercrime, 1,569 of the 2,803 cases (56 per cent) were economic offences.
- Rape cases saw a marginal decline of 1.96 per cent — 2,994 cases compared to 3,054 in 2024. Yet the numbers remain alarming: one rape every three hours and an average of 8.20 women and children victimised daily. Police filed charge sheets in 64.46 per cent of rape cases and only 46 per cent of murder cases.
- Other key figures include 4,361 dowry cases, 145 dowry deaths and 164 cases of women trafficking. On the positive side, dacoity cases dipped 0.84 per cent to 353, snatching cases fell 1.96 per cent to 6,282, and cheating cases dropped 4.02 per cent to 6,053.

Mushroom Conclave 2026

Why in the News?

- The Mushroom Conclave 2026, organised by the Agricultural Promotion and Investment Corporation of Odisha Limited (APICOL) under the Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment (DA&FE), was held in Bhubaneswar to promote mushroom cultivation as a sustainable livelihood and agri-entrepreneurship opportunity

Key Points

- Odisha contributes about **11 % of India's total mushroom output**, making it one of the leading states in this sector.
- The event reinforced the state government's vision of building a robust, market-driven mushroom ecosystem that can significantly enhance rural incomes and contribute to the goal of a developed Odisha by 2036.
- **Key Initiative**
  - **Mukhyamantri Krishi Udyog Yojana (MKUY),** development of market linkages, and robust logistic support to boost the sector.
  - The government also launched a new website of APICOL and distributed "Go-Ahead" letters to selected mushroom producers for setting up production and spawn units.

100-Day TB Mukt Bharat Abhiyan 2.0

Why in the News?

- Odisha's Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi today presided over the state-level observance of World TB Day 2026 at Lok Seva Bhavan and formally launched the 100-day campaign under *TB Mukt Bharat Abhiyan 2.0*.

Key Points

- **World TB Day**: Observed on 24 March every year.
- **Theme 2026:** (Check latest official theme if required — themes change annually).
- **India's Target:** TB elimination 5 years ahead of global SDG target (2030).
- Odisha is focusing on door-to-door screening, digital tracking of patients, and nutritional schemes.

Key facts about TB

- Tuberculosis (TB) is caused by the bacterium Mycobacterium tuberculosis.
- **Type:** Bacterium (rod-shaped, also called **bacillus**)
- **Staining: Acid-fast** (does not lose stain with acid wash — important diagnostic feature)
- **Nature: Aerobic** (thrives in oxygen-rich organs like lungs)
- **Transmission:** Spread through **airborne droplets** when an infected person coughs or sneezes
- **Disease mainly affects: Lungs (Pulmonary TB)** but can also affect bones, lymph nodes, brain, etc.