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+91 8434931877

www.achieversiaspatna.co.in

achieversiaspatna@gmail.com

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- DRDO Successfully Flight Tests *Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket* to Enhance India's Precision Strike Capability
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- *Kamarajar Port* Becomes India's Second Major Port with 18-Metre Operational Draft Capacity

ISRO Successfully Conducts Integrated Main Parachute Air Drop Test (IMAT) for Gaganyaan Mission



- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully conducted the Integrated Main Parachute Air Drop Test (IMAT) for the Gaganyaan Human Spaceflight Programme at the Aerial Delivery Research and Development Establishment (ADRDE) drop zone, Sheopur, Madhya Pradesh.

What is the Integrated Main Parachute Air Drop Test (IMAT)?

- The Integrated Main Parachute Air Drop Test (IMAT) is a critical qualification test conducted to validate the main parachute system of the Gaganyaan Crew Module under realistic flight conditions. During the test, a simulated payload was dropped from an Indian Air Force IL-76 aircraft at an altitude of 2.5 km, and the complete parachute deployment sequence was evaluated to ensure safe deceleration and landing.

Objectives

- Qualify the main parachute for the Gaganyaan G1 mission.
- Validate structural integrity under maximum load conditions.
- Ensure safe deceleration of the Crew Module during re-entry.
- Enhance astronaut safety through reliable recovery systems.
- Reduce mission risks before the first uncrewed and crewed missions.

Gaganyaan Parachute Recovery System:

- The Crew Module Parachute Deceleration System (PDS) consists of 10 parachutes of four different types that deploy sequentially to ensure a safe splashdown.

Components

- Apex Cover Separation (ACS) Parachutes – Separate the Crew Module's apex cover.
- Drogue Parachutes – Stabilise and slow the Crew Module during high-speed descent.
- Pilot Parachutes – Deploy the main parachutes.
- Main Parachutes – Reduce the Crew Module's speed to enable a safe splashdown in the sea.

About Gaganyaan Mission:

- The Gaganyaan Mission is India's first indigenous human spaceflight programme, aimed at sending Indian astronauts (Gaganyatris) into Low Earth Orbit (LEO) and bringing them back safely.

Key Facts

- Implemented By: ISRO.
- Administrative Department: Department of Space.
- Approved: 2018 by the Union Cabinet.
- Launch Vehicle: Human-rated LVM3.
- Mission Objective: Demonstrate India's capability to send humans into space for about three days and ensure safe recovery.
- Mission Sequence: Uncrewed test missions (G1, G2) followed by the first crewed mission.

Related Gaganyaan Tests:

- TV-D1: Test Vehicle Abort Mission successfully demonstrated the Crew Escape System (2023).
- IADT-02: Second Integrated Air Drop Test successfully completed in April 2026 to validate the complete parachute recovery system.

- SOLVE (Sub-Orbital Launch Vehicle for Experiments): Developed to conduct multiple parachute and recovery experiments under different flight conditions.

About ADRDE:

- Aerial Delivery Research and Development Establishment (ADRDE) is a laboratory of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- Location: Agra, Uttar Pradesh.
- Parent Organisation: DRDO.

Role:

- Design and development of parachute systems.
- Aerial delivery platforms.
- Recovery systems for defence and aerospace applications.
- Aerostat and airborne systems.

About ISRO:

- Established: 1969.
- Headquarters: Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- Administrative Department: Department of Space.
- Chairman: Dr. V. Narayanan.
- Founder: Dr. Vikram Sarabhai.

Major Missions:

- Chandrayaan Programme.
- Aditya-L1.
- SpaDeX.
- Gaganyaan.
- NISAR (India-NASA Earth Observation Mission).

Exam Focus Points:

- Organisation: Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- Mission: Gaganyaan Human Spaceflight Programme.
- Test: Integrated Main Parachute Air Drop Test (IMAT).
- Test Location: Sheopur, Madhya Pradesh.
- Carrier Aircraft: Indian Air Force IL-76.
- Purpose: Qualification of the Crew Module's main parachute.
- Parachute System: 10 parachutes of four different types.
- Administrative Department: Department of Space.
- Related Organisation: ADRDE (DRDO).

DRDO Successfully Flight Tests Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket (LRGR)



- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted the flight test of the Pinaka Long Range Guided

Rocket (LRGR) at the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur, Odisha. The rocket was tested at its user-defined minimum operational range of 60 km, successfully achieving all mission objectives with high accuracy. The successful trial validates the weapon system's precision, reliability, and operational capability, marking another major milestone in India's indigenous long-range artillery programme under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative.

What is the Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket (LRGR)?

- The Pinaka LRGR is an indigenously developed precision-guided artillery rocket designed for the Pinaka Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher (MBRL) System. It is an upgraded version of the Pinaka rocket with enhanced range, navigation, and strike accuracy, capable of engaging high-value targets at extended distances.

Objectives:

• Enhance the Indian Army's long-range precision strike capability.
• Strengthen indigenous artillery systems under Atmanirbhar Bharat.
• Reduce dependence on imported rocket artillery.
• Improve battlefield firepower with accurate, guided rockets.
• Support rapid and effective engagement of enemy targets.

About the Pinaka Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher (MBRL):

- The Pinaka MBRL is an indigenous artillery rocket system developed for the Indian Army.

Key Facts

- Developed By: DRDO.

Production Agencies:

• Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL)
• Larsen & Toubro (L&T)
• Economic Explosives Limited
• Munitions India Limited
• Type: Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher (MBRL).
• Launcher Capacity: 12 rockets.
• Salvo Capability: Can fire all 12 rockets within 44 seconds.
• Mobility: High-mobility wheeled platform suitable for rapid deployment.
• Role: Area saturation, precision strikes, counter-battery fire, and destruction of enemy infrastructure.

Development of Pinaka:

- Development Began: Late 1980s.
- Developed to replace the imported BM-21 Grad rocket launcher system.
- Named after "Pinaka", the divine bow of Lord Shiva.
- Successfully inducted into the Indian Army and deployed along sensitive borders.

About DRDO:

• Established: 1958.
• Headquarters: New Delhi.
• Administrative Ministry: Ministry of Defence.
• Chairman: Dr. Samir V. Kamat.
• Role: India's premier defence research organisation responsible for developing indigenous defence technologies.

About the Integrated Test Range (ITR):

• Location: Chandipur, Odisha.
• Operated By: DRDO.
• Purpose: Testing of missiles, rockets, and strategic defence systems.

Major systems tested include:

• Agni series
• Prithvi series
• Akash
• BrahMos
• Pinaka
• Pralay

Exam Focus Points:

• Weapon System: Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket (LRGR).
• Developed By: DRDO.
• Test Location: Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur, Odisha.
• Test Date: 8 July 2026.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range Tested: 60 km. • Future Maximum Range: Up to 120 km. • Launch Platform: Pinaka Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher (MBRL). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DRDO Headquarters: New Delhi. • Significance: Indigenous precision-guided rocket system enhancing India's long-range artillery capability.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Ministry: Ministry of Defence. 	

India and Maldives Reaffirm Commitment to Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) and Free Trade Agreement (FTA)



- India and the Maldives have reaffirmed their commitment to expedite the signing of the Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) and conclude the proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA).
- The commitment was reiterated during a meeting between Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal and Maldives' Minister of Economic Development and Trade Mohamed Saeed in New Delhi.
- Both sides agreed to deepen cooperation in trade, tourism, startups, digital payments, MSMEs, and investment, while celebrating 60 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 2026.

What is a Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT)?

- A Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) is an agreement between two countries that provides legal protection and promotion for investments made by investors of one country in the other.

Objectives:

- Promote foreign direct investment (FDI).
- Protect investors against arbitrary government action.
- Ensure fair and equitable treatment of investments.

- Provide dispute resolution mechanisms.
- Increase investor confidence and economic cooperation.

What is a Free Trade Agreement (FTA)?

- A Free Trade Agreement (FTA) is an agreement between two or more countries to reduce or eliminate tariffs and non-tariff barriers on goods and services, thereby promoting bilateral trade.

Key Features:

- Reduction or elimination of customs duties.
- Easier market access.
- Promotion of trade in goods and services.
- Facilitation of investment flows.
- Strengthening economic integration.

India–Maldives Relations:

- India and the Maldives enjoy close relations based on the principles of Neighbourhood First Policy, Vision MAHASAGAR (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions), and cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

Key Facts

• Diplomatic Relations Established: 1966.
• India was among the first countries to recognise the Maldives after its independence.
• High Commission of India: Malé.
• High Commission of Maldives: New Delhi.
• Shared Maritime Boundary: Indian Ocean.
• Major Areas of Cooperation

- Trade and Investment.
- Defence and Maritime Security.

- Currency: Maldivian Rufiyaa (MVR).
- President: Mohamed Muizzu.
- Location: Indian Ocean.

Tourism.

- Digital Public Infrastructure (including UPI integration).
- Healthcare.
- Capacity Building.
- Disaster Management.
- Renewable Energy.
- Fisheries.
- Blue Economy.

Major Regional Groupings:

- SAARC.
- Commonwealth of Nations.
- Indian Ocean Rim cooperation initiatives.
- United Nations.

Recent India–Maldives Cooperation:

- Greater Malé Connectivity Project (GMCP): India's largest infrastructure project in the Maldives, funded through a Line of Credit and grant assistance.
- Unified Payments Interface (UPI): India is supporting the adoption of UPI-based digital payment systems in the Maldives.
- Operation Cactus (1988): India successfully intervened to foil a coup attempt in the Maldives, demonstrating its role as a regional security provider.
- India remains one of the Maldives' largest development and infrastructure partners.

Exam Focus Points:

- Countries: India and Maldives.
- Major Agreements: Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) and proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA).
- Indian Minister: Piyush Goyal.
- Maldivian Minister: Mohamed Saeed.
- Year of Diplomatic Relations: 1966.
- 60 Years of Relations: 2026.
- Key Areas: Trade, Investment, Tourism, Startups, Digital Payments, MSMEs.
- India's Policy: Neighbourhood First Policy.
- Regional Vision: MAHASAGAR (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions).
- Flagship Connectivity Project: Greater Malé Connectivity Project (GMCP).

About the Maldives:

- Official Name: Republic of Maldives.
- Capital: Malé.

Varanasi Airport to Get India's First Six-Lane Runway Underpass

- The Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, Varanasi, is set to become the site of India's first six-lane underpass beneath an active airport runway. Union Minister for Civil Aviation Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu announced that construction of the 450-metre-long engineering structure is underway as part of the airport's

expansion project. The underpass will allow National Highway-31 (Old NH-56) to pass beneath the extended runway, enabling uninterrupted road traffic while aircraft continue operations above. This unique infrastructure project will facilitate runway expansion and significantly enhance the airport's operational capacity.



What is the Six-Lane Runway Underpass?

- The project involves constructing a 450-metre-long, six-lane underpass beneath the extended runway of Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport. It is the first project in India where a national highway will pass directly beneath an active airport runway, ensuring seamless movement of both air and road traffic.

Airport Expansion Project:

- The underpass forms part of the comprehensive expansion of Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport.

Major Components

- Runway Extension: From 2,745 metres to approximately 4,075 metres.
- New Integrated Terminal Building.
- Expansion of Apron: Increase in aircraft parking bays.
- Improved Cargo Handling Facilities.
- Enhanced Passenger Capacity to cater to future traffic growth.

About Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport:

• Location: Babatpur, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.
• IATA Code: VNS.
• ICAO Code: VEBN.
• Operator: Airports Authority of India (AAI).
• Status: International Airport.
• Serves: Varanasi and surrounding regions of eastern Uttar Pradesh and neighbouring states.

- One of the fastest-growing airports in northern India in terms of passenger traffic.

About Airports Authority of India (AAI):

• Established: 1995.
• Headquarters: New Delhi.
• Administrative Ministry: Ministry of Civil Aviation.
• Chairman: Vipin Kumar.

About National Highways Authority of India (NHAI):

• Established: 1988.
• Administrative Ministry: Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.
• Headquarters: New Delhi.
• Chairman: Santosh Kumar Yadav

Role:

- Development, maintenance, and management of National Highways.
- Implementation of highway projects under programmes such as Bharatmala Pariyojana.

Exam Focus Points:

• Project: India's first six-lane runway underpass.
• Location: Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, Varanasi.
• State: Uttar Pradesh.
• Length of Underpass: 450 metres.
• Highway: National Highway-31 (Old NH-56).
• Airport Operator: Airports Authority of India (AAI).
• Highway Authority: National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).
• Administrative Ministry (AAI): Ministry of Civil Aviation.
• Purpose: Runway expansion with uninterrupted highway traffic.

- National Importance: First active airport runway underpass in India.

Aswath S Becomes India's 98th Chess Grandmaster



- 17-year-old Aswath S from Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu, became India's 98th Chess Grandmaster (GM) after securing his third and final Grandmaster norm at the Pune International Grandmaster Round Robin Tournament 2026. With this achievement, India moved closer to the historic milestone of producing 100 Grandmasters, reaffirming its emergence as one of the world's leading chess nations.

What is the Grandmaster (GM) Title?

- The Grandmaster (GM) title is the highest title awarded by the International Chess Federation (FIDE).

Eligibility:

- Achieve a minimum FIDE Elo rating of 2500 (at any point).
- Secure three Grandmaster norms in FIDE-approved international tournaments against strong opposition.
- Once awarded, the title is held for life.

What is a Grandmaster Norm?

- A Grandmaster norm is a performance benchmark awarded when a player achieves a Grandmaster-level performance in an internationally rated tournament meeting FIDE's prescribed standards.

About FIDE:

- | |
|---|
| • Full Name: International Chess Federation (Fédération Internationale des Échecs) |
| • Established: 1924 |
| • Headquarters: Lausanne, Switzerland |
| • President: Arkady Dvorkovich |
| • Motto: Gens Una Sumus ("We Are One Family") |
| • Role: Global governing body for chess, responsible for player ratings, titles, rules, and international competitions. |

India's Rise in Chess:

- India is among the fastest-growing chess nations in the world.
- Viswanathan Anand became India's first Grandmaster in 1988, ushering in a new era for Indian chess.

India has produced several elite players, including:

- | |
|--|
| • D. Gukesh – World Chess Champion. |
| • R. Praggnanandhaa. |
| • Arjun Erigaisi. |
| • Vidit Gujrathi. |
| • Pentala Harikrishna. |
| • With Aswath S becoming the 98th Grandmaster, India now needs only two more Grandmasters to reach the landmark of 100 Grandmasters. |

About the All India Chess Federation (AICF):

- | |
|-------------------------------------|
| • Established: 1951 |
| • Headquarters: Chennai, Tamil Nadu |
| • President: Nitin Narang[|
| • Affiliated To: FIDE |

Exam Focus Points:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Player: Aswath S 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FIDE Headquarters: Lausanne, Switzerland
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State: Tamil Nadu (Kanyakumari) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FIDE President: Arkady Dvorkovich
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement: India's 98th Chess Grandmaster 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India's First Grandmaster: Viswanathan Anand (1988)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tournament: Pune International Grandmaster Round Robin 2026 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Chess Federation: All India Chess Federation (AICF)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest Chess Title: Grandmaster (GM) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awarding Body: FIDE (International Chess Federation) 	

IMF Projects India to Remain the World's Fastest-Growing Major Economy



- The International Monetary Fund (IMF), in its July 2026 World Economic Outlook (WEO) Update, projected that India will remain the world's fastest-growing major economy despite global economic uncertainties.
- The IMF forecast India's GDP growth at 6.4% for FY 2026–27, while revising the growth projection for FY 2027–28 upward to 6.7%. The report highlighted that strong domestic demand, robust private consumption, and the services sector continue to drive India's economic growth even amid geopolitical tensions and global trade disruptions.

Global Economic Outlook

According to the IMF:

- Global GDP Growth (2026): 3.0%.
- Global GDP Growth (2027): 3.4%.

Major risks to global growth include:

- Geopolitical conflicts.
- Trade fragmentation.
- Energy price volatility.

- Inflationary pressures.
- Financial market uncertainty.

About the International Monetary Fund (IMF):

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is an international financial institution established to promote global monetary cooperation and financial stability.
- Established: 27 December 1945.
- Headquarters: Washington, D.C., United States.
- Managing Director: Kristalina Georgieva.
- Total Member Countries: 191.
- Parent Agreement: Bretton Woods Agreement (1944).

Major IMF Publications:

- World Economic Outlook (WEO) – Published twice a year (April and July/October updates).
- Global Financial Stability Report (GFSR).
- Fiscal Monitor.
- Regional Economic Outlook Reports.
- Article IV Consultation Reports.

India and the IMF:

- India became a founding member of the IMF on: 27 December 1945.
- India is among the IMF's largest emerging economy members.
- Since the 2000s, India has not borrowed from the IMF and has instead contributed to IMF resources and global financial governance.

India's Economic Strengths Highlighted by IMF:

- Strong domestic consumption.
- Rapid expansion of the services sector.
- Increasing infrastructure investment.
- Stable macroeconomic fundamentals.
- Growing digital economy and manufacturing sector.
- Rising foreign direct investment (FDI).
- Ongoing structural reforms supporting long-term growth.

Exam Focus Points:

- Organisation: International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- Report: July 2026 World Economic Outlook (WEO) Update.

- India's GDP Growth Forecast (FY 2026–27): 6.4%.
- India's GDP Growth Forecast (FY 2027–28): 6.7%.
- India's Status: World's fastest-growing major economy.
- Global GDP Growth Forecast (2026): 3.0%.
- IMF Headquarters: Washington, D.C., USA.
- Managing Director: Kristalina Georgieva.
- India Joined IMF: 27 December 1945.
- Major IMF Publications: World Economic Outlook (WEO), Global Financial Stability Report (GFSR), Fiscal Monitor.

Uttar Pradesh Launches Chief Minister's Cashless Medical Scheme for Teachers and Non-Teaching Staff



What is the Chief Minister's Cashless Medical Scheme?

- The Government of Uttar Pradesh launched the Chief Minister's Cashless Medical Scheme for Teachers to provide cashless medical treatment of up to ₹5 lakh per year to teachers, non-teaching staff, and their eligible family members.
- The scheme was launched by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in Varanasi and will benefit around 15 lakh personnel associated with basic and secondary education across the state.
- Besides regular teachers, the scheme also covers Shiksha Mitras, instructors, cooks (Mid-Day Meal workers), and eligible staff of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs).

- The Chief Minister's Cashless Medical Scheme is a state-funded health insurance initiative that enables eligible teachers and education staff to receive cashless treatment up to ₹5 lakh annually at empanelled hospitals. The scheme aims to provide financial protection against medical expenses and improve healthcare access for education sector employees.

Additional Welfare Initiative:

- Along with the launch of the health scheme, the Basic Education Department signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the State Bank of India (SBI) to provide Group Term Life Insurance for permanent teachers.

Insurance Benefits:

- Life Insurance Cover: ₹10 lakh.
- Strengthens social and financial security for teachers.

- Covers around 4.5 lakh permanent teachers in the state.

About Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV):

- Launched: 2004.
- Ministry: Ministry of Education.
- Implemented Under: Samagra Shiksha.
- Objective: Provide residential schooling for girls from disadvantaged communities, especially in educationally backward blocks.

Target Groups:

- Scheduled Castes (SCs).
- Scheduled Tribes (STs).
- Other Backward Classes (OBCs).
- Minority communities.
- Below Poverty Line (BPL) families.

About Samagra Shiksha:

- Launched: 2018.
- Ministry: Ministry of Education.
- Type: Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

- Coverage: School education from Pre-primary to Class XII.

Objectives:

- Improve quality of school education.
- Promote inclusive and equitable education.
- Strengthen digital learning and teacher training.
- Improve school infrastructure.

Exam Focus Points:

- Scheme: Chief Minister's Cashless Medical Scheme for Teachers.
- State: Uttar Pradesh.
- Launched By: Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.
- Health Coverage: ₹5 lakh per family per year.
- Beneficiaries: Approximately 15 lakh teachers and non-teaching staff.
- Additional Beneficiaries: Shiksha Mitras, instructors, cooks, and KGBV staff.
- Insurance Partner: State Bank of India (SBI).
- Additional Benefit: ₹10 lakh Group Term Life Insurance for permanent teachers.
- Related Scheme: Samagra Shiksha.
- Related Institution: Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV).

Ahmedabad Scholar Ranchhodlalji Goswami Receives Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar for Preserving Haveli Sangeet



- Acharya Shri Ranchhodlalji Goswami, the 16th Acharya of the historic Goswami Haveli in Kalupur, Ahmedabad, has been selected for the Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar (2024–

25) by the Sangeet Natak Akademi, under the Ministry of Culture, for his outstanding contribution to the preservation and promotion of Haveli Sangeet, a centuries-old devotional music tradition associated with the Pushtimarg sect. The honour recognises his efforts in reviving and popularising one of India's important intangible cultural traditions.

What is Haveli Sangeet?

- Haveli Sangeet is a traditional form of Hindustani devotional classical music performed in Krishna temples (Havelis) of the

Pushtimarg (Vallabh Sampradaya) tradition. It originated in the Braj region (Mathura–Govardhan) and later flourished in Rajasthan and Gujarat, particularly at the Shrinathji Temple, Nathdwara, and Vaishnav havelis.

Award Components:

- ₹25,000 cash prize
- Tamrapatra (citation plaque)
- Angavastram (ceremonial shawl).

About Ranchhodlalji Goswami:

- Awardee: Acharya Shri Ranchhodlalji Goswami.
- Position: 16th Acharya, Goswami Haveli, Kalupur, Ahmedabad.
- State: Gujarat.
- Award: Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar (2024–25).
- Recognised For: Preservation and promotion of Haveli Sangeet.
- Instrumental in documenting, teaching and reviving traditional compositions of the Pushtimarg musical heritage.

About Sangeet Natak Akademi:

- Established: 1953.
- Headquarters: New Delhi.
- Administrative Ministry: Ministry of Culture.
- Nature: India's National Academy for Music, Dance and Drama.

About Pushtimarg:

- Founder: Vallabhacharya (1479–1531).
- Philosophy: Shuddhadvaita (Pure Non-dualism).
- Principal Deity: Lord Krishna (especially Shrinathji).
- Major Centre: Nathdwara, Rajasthan.
- The tradition places great emphasis on music, devotional singing, and temple rituals as forms of worship.

About the Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar:

- The Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar is a prestigious national award instituted by the Sangeet Natak Akademi to encourage young practitioners of India's performing arts.

Key Facts

- Instituted: 2006.
- Awarding Body: Sangeet Natak Akademi.
- Administrative Ministry: Ministry of Culture.
- Eligibility: Outstanding artists below 40 years of age.

Fields Covered:

- Music
- Dance
- Theatre
- Traditional and Folk Arts
- Puppetry

Exam Focus Points:

- Award: Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar (2024–25).
- Awardee: Acharya Shri Ranchhodlalji Goswami.
- Recognised For: Haveli Sangeet.
- State: Gujarat.
- Awarding Body: Sangeet Natak Akademi.
- Administrative Ministry: Ministry of Culture.
- Award Instituted: 2006.
- Eligibility: Artists below 40 years of age.
- Musical Tradition: Haveli Sangeet (Pushtimarg devotional music).
- Associated Classical Style: Dhrupad.

Four Narmada Basin States Sign Historic Agreement to Resolve Outstanding Dues



- The four beneficiary states of the Narmada River Project—Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan—signed a landmark agreement to resolve decades-old outstanding financial dues related to the Sardar Sarovar Project (SSP). The agreement was signed in the presence of Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah, bringing closure to long-pending disputes concerning land compensation, rehabilitation of displaced families, and cost-sharing among the participating states. The pact is expected to strengthen cooperative federalism and ensure smoother implementation of inter-state river projects.

About the Sardar Sarovar Project (SSP):

- The Sardar Sarovar Project is one of India's largest multipurpose river valley projects built on the Narmada River.

Objectives:

- Provide irrigation to drought-prone regions.
- Supply drinking water to villages and urban areas.
- Generate hydroelectric power.
- Control floods.
- Promote regional development.

About the Narmada River:

- Length: Approximately 1,312 km.
- Source: Amarkantak Plateau, Madhya Pradesh.

- Mouth: Arabian Sea near Bharuch, Gujarat.
- Flows Through:
- Madhya Pradesh
- Maharashtra (along part of the boundary)
- Gujarat.

Major Tributaries:

- Tawa
- Hiran
- Banjar
- Shakkar
- Dudhi.

- Known as the largest west-flowing river of peninsular India.

About the Narmada Water Disputes Tribunal (NWDT):

- Constituted: 1969.
- Constituted Under: Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956.
- Award Given: 1979.
- Purpose: Adjudicate disputes over the sharing of Narmada waters among Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan.

The Tribunal determined:

- Water-sharing formula.
- Dam height.
- Rehabilitation and resettlement norms.
- Cost-sharing arrangements.

About the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956:

- Enacted under Article 262 of the Constitution.

- Enables the Union Government to establish tribunals to resolve disputes over inter-state river waters.
- Parliament may bar the jurisdiction of courts in such disputes.

Exam Focus Points:

- Agreement: Settlement of outstanding dues related to the Narmada Project.
- States Involved: Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan.
- River: Narmada.

- Project: Sardar Sarovar Project (SSP).
- Tribunal: Narmada Water Disputes Tribunal (NWDT).
- NWDT Constituted: 1969.
- NWDT Award: 1979.
- Legal Basis: Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956.
- River Origin: Amarkantak Plateau, Madhya Pradesh.
- River Mouth: Arabian Sea, Gujarat.

Kamarajar Port Becomes India's Second Major Port with 18-Metre Draft Capability



shipping costs and improving cargo-handling efficiency.

About Kamarajar Port:

• Kamarajar Port Limited (KPL), located at Ennore, Chennai (Tamil Nadu), has become India's second major port, after Visakhapatnam Port, to achieve an operational draft of 18 metres following the successful completion of its Capital Dredging Phase VI Project. This enhancement enables the port to accommodate fully laden Capesize vessels carrying cargo of up to 1,70,000 Deadweight Tonnage (DWT), significantly boosting India's maritime logistics and international trade competitiveness.

- Former Name: Ennore Port.
- Commissioned: 2001.
- Location: Ennore, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
- Ownership: Government of India.
- Type: Major Port.
- Special Distinction: India's first corporatised major port, incorporated as a company under the Companies Act.
- Administrative Ministry: Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- Originally developed as a satellite port to decongest Chennai Port and handle thermal coal imports.

What is Draft in a Port?

- Draft (or Draught) refers to the vertical distance between the waterline and the bottom (keel) of a ship. It determines the minimum water depth required for a vessel to navigate safely.
- A deeper operational draft allows ports to receive larger and heavier vessels, reducing

What are Capesize Vessels?

- Among the largest bulk cargo ships in the world.
- Too large to transit the Panama Canal and Suez Canal (traditional routes), often sailing around the Cape of Good Hope or Cape Horn.

Mainly transport:

- Iron ore

- Coal
- Bauxite
- Grain
- Typical Capacity: Around 1,50,000–2,00,000 DWT.

About Major Ports in India:

- Administrative Ministry: Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- Governed under the Major Port Authorities Act, 2021, which replaced the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963.
- India has 13 Major Ports under the Central Government.
- Major ports handle a substantial share of India's international maritime trade.

About the Major Port Authorities Act, 2021:

- Enforced: 2021.
- Replaced: Major Port Trusts Act, 1963.
- Objective:
- Enhance autonomy of major ports.
- Improve efficiency and competitiveness.
- Enable ports to fix tariffs and undertake infrastructure development.
- Encourage public-private partnerships and modern port governance.

Maritime India Vision 2030:

- Launched By: Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.

- Objective: Develop world-class port infrastructure and transform India into a leading maritime nation.

Key Focus Areas:

- Port modernisation.
- Mechanisation and digitisation.
- Coastal shipping.
- Shipbuilding and ship repair.
- Maritime logistics.
- Green and sustainable ports.

Exam Focus Points:

- Port: Kamarajar Port Limited (KPL).
- Location: Ennore, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
- Achievement: India's second major port with an 18-metre operational draft.
- First Port with 18-m Draft: Visakhapatnam Port.
- Project: Capital Dredging Phase VI.
- Maximum Vessel Capacity: 1,70,000 DWT (Capesize vessels).
- Former Name: Ennore Port.
- Administrative Ministry: Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- Governing Law: Major Port Authorities Act, 2021.
- Related Initiative: Maritime India Vision 2030.

Lets Revise

- ❖ Which ISRO test successfully qualified the main parachute system for the first uncrewed Gaganyaan (G1) mission under maximum expected load conditions? **Integrated Main Parachute Air Drop Test (IMAT).**
- ❖ Which indigenous precision-guided rocket system was successfully flight-tested by DRDO at the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur, in July 2026? **Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket (LRGR).**
- ❖ Which two economic agreements did India and the Maldives reaffirm their commitment to expedite during the meeting between Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and Maldivian Minister Mohamed Saeed in July 2026? **The Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) and the proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA).**
- ❖ Which airport is set to become the first in India to have a six-lane underpass beneath an active runway? **Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh).**
- ❖ Who became India's 98th Chess Grandmaster after securing the final GM norm at the Pune International Grandmaster Round Robin Tournament 2026? **Aswath S.**
- ❖ According to the IMF's July 2026 World Economic Outlook Update, what is India's projected GDP growth rate for FY 2026–27? **6.4%.**
- ❖ Which state launched the Chief Minister's Cashless Medical Scheme providing cashless health coverage of up to ₹5 lakh for teachers and non-teaching staff? **Uttar Pradesh.**
- ❖ Which traditional devotional music form earned Acharya Shri Ranchhodlalji Goswami the Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar (2024–25)? **Haveli Sangeet.**
- ❖ Which four states signed an agreement to resolve the long-pending outstanding dues related to the Narmada (Sardar Sarovar) Project in July 2026? **Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan.**
- ❖ Which major port became the second in India, after Visakhapatnam Port, to achieve an operational draft of 18 metres? **Kamarajar Port Limited (Ennore), Tamil Nadu.**



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IMPORTANCE OF CURRENT AFFAIRS IN UPSC EXAMINATIONS

Current Affairs hold a crucial place in the preparation for the UPSC Civil Services Examination. A comprehensive understanding of recent national and international developments helps aspirants strengthen their General Studies foundation and develop a well-rounded perspective on important issues. Topics such as government policies, schemes, economy, international relations, science and technology, environment, defence, social justice, governance, reports, indices, appointments, awards, and major global events are highly relevant for both the Prelims and Mains examinations. Regular study of current affairs not only enhances factual knowledge but also improves analytical ability, critical thinking, answer-writing skills, and decision-making aptitude. Since UPSC questions often connect contemporary developments with static subjects, consistent preparation of current affairs enables aspirants to understand issues in depth and present balanced, informed, and relevant answers. It also plays an important role in Essay writing, Ethics, and the Personality Test, giving candidates a strong edge throughout the examination process.

CONTACT US



+91 8434931877



achievers_ias_patna



PATLIPUTRA GOLAMBAR



ACHIEVERS IAS ACADEMY (UPSC/BPSC)



achieversiaspatna@gmail.com



Achievers IAS Academy



www.achieversiaspatna.co.in



Achievers IAS Academy, PATNA