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Top Stories of The Day

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- *Centre Amends Drugs Rules to Strengthen Regulation of High Alcohol-Content Medicines*
- *Jharkhand Introduces Draft AI Policy 2026–2031 for AI-Based Governance and Innovation*
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- *AISHE Report 2023–24 Shows Female Higher Education Enrolment Leads for Seventh Year*
- *Sourav Ganguly Inducted into ICC Hall of Fame for Cricket Excellence*
- *Uttar Pradesh Expands Nishulk Boring Yojana to Improve Farmers' Irrigation Facilities*

India and New Zealand Sign Five MoUs to Deepen Strategic Partnership



- India and New Zealand have signed five Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) covering defence, animal husbandry and dairy, tourism, sports, and disaster management following delegation-level talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon in Auckland.
- The agreements aim to strengthen bilateral cooperation in strategic, economic, and people-to-people sectors while enhancing collaboration in the Indo-Pacific region.
- The visit marks the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to New Zealand in nearly 40 years.

Five MoUs Signed:

Defence Cooperation:

- Memorandum of Arrangement between the Ministry of Defence (India) and the New Zealand Defence Force.

- Focus on maritime cooperation, defence exchanges, and Indo-Pacific security.
- Animal Husbandry and Dairy: Cooperation in livestock management, dairy research, innovation, and exchange of best practices.
- Tourism Cooperation: Promotion of tourism, visitor exchanges, and collaboration between tourism stakeholders.
- Joint Action Plan on Sports: Cooperation in sports development, athlete exchanges, coaching, and sports administration.

- Disaster Management: Collaboration in disaster preparedness, emergency response, risk reduction, and resilience building.

India–New Zealand Relations:

- Diplomatic Relations: Established in 1952.
- Strategic Partnership: Relations elevated to a Strategic Partnership during the Prime Ministerial visit.
- First Indian PM Visit: First visit by an Indian Prime Minister to New Zealand in about 40 years.

Both countries cooperate in:

- Indo-Pacific security
- Trade and investment
- Agriculture and dairy
- Education
- Science & Technology
- Sports
- Climate and disaster resilience.
- Defence Cooperation

About New Zealand:

- Capital: Wellington.
- Largest City: Auckland.
- Currency: New Zealand Dollar (NZD).
- Parliament: Unicameral Parliament (House of Representatives).
- Neighbouring Water Bodies: Tasman Sea and South Pacific Ocean.

Other Recent Bilateral Developments:

- Free Trade Agreement (FTA): Signed in April 2026 to boost bilateral trade.
- International Solar Alliance (ISA): New Zealand has ratified the ISA Framework Agreement.

- Customs Cooperation Arrangement: Signed to facilitate trade and improve customs cooperation.

Exam Focus Points:

- Countries: India and New Zealand.
- Venue: Auckland, New Zealand.
- Leaders: Narendra Modi and Christopher Luxon.
- MoUs Signed: Five.

- Key Sectors: Defence, animal husbandry & dairy, tourism, sports, and disaster management.
- Defence Focus: Maritime cooperation and Indo-Pacific security.
- Diplomatic Relations: 1952.
- First Indian PM Visit in: Nearly 40 years.
- Capital of New Zealand: Wellington.
- Currency: New Zealand Dollar (NZD).

Centre Amends Drugs Rules, 1945 to Strengthen Regulation of High Alcohol-Containing Drug Formulations



- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) has amended the Drugs Rules, 1945 to strengthen regulation of medicinal formulations containing high levels of ethyl alcohol.
- Under the amendment, medicinal formulations containing more than 12% v/v ethyl alcohol in pack sizes exceeding 30 mL will no longer be exempt under Schedule K of the Drugs Rules, 1945.
- These products will now require licensing under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and have been brought under Schedule H1, making them prescription-only medicines with stricter monitoring and record-keeping requirements. The move aims to curb misuse of such formulations while ensuring their availability for genuine therapeutic use.

Key Amendments:

Withdrawal of Schedule K Exemption:

- Medicinal formulations containing more than 12% v/v ethyl alcohol in packs exceeding 30 mL will no longer enjoy licensing exemption under Schedule K.

Inclusion under Schedule H1:

- These formulations will now be classified as Schedule H1 drugs.
- Sale only on the prescription of a Registered Medical Practitioner (RMP).
- Pharmacies must maintain a separate sales register and preserve records.

Licensing Requirement:

- Manufacturers and sellers must obtain licences under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940.

Objective:

- Prevent misuse of high alcohol-containing medicinal formulations as intoxicants.
- Ensure safe and regulated therapeutic use.

Why was the Amendment Needed?

- Certain medicinal preparations such as tincture of cardamom, tincture of ginger, and other aromatic tinctures contain 80–90% v/v ethyl alcohol.

- These products were earlier exempt under Schedule K, making them vulnerable to misuse.
- Several State Governments reported misuse and diversion of such products for intoxication.

Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940:

- Principal legislation regulating the import, manufacture, distribution, and sale of drugs and cosmetics in India.
- Ensures the safety, efficacy, and quality of medicines.
- Empowers the Central Government to frame the Drugs Rules, 1945.

Drugs Rules, 1945:

- Framed under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940.

Prescribe rules relating to:

- | |
|--|
| • Licensing |
| • Manufacture |
| • Storage |
| • Distribution |
| • Sale |
| • Labelling |
| • Prescription requirements for drugs. |

About Schedule K:

- Lists specified drugs and medicinal preparations exempt from certain licensing provisions under defined conditions.
- The latest amendment removes this exemption for specified high alcohol-containing formulations.

Jharkhand Unveils Draft AI Policy 2026–2031 to Promote AI-Driven Governance

- The Government of Jharkhand has unveiled the Draft Jharkhand AI Policy 2026–2031, proposing an investment of ₹1,150 crore over the next five years to integrate Artificial

About Schedule H1:

- Introduced to regulate medicines with a high risk of misuse.

Key features:

- Sale only on prescription.
- Mandatory maintenance of sales records by pharmacies.
- Helps prevent misuse and promotes rational use of medicines.

Exam Focus Points:

- | |
|---|
| • Ministry: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW). |
| • Law: Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940. |
| • Rules Amended: Drugs Rules, 1945. |
| • Alcohol Threshold: More than 12% v/v ethyl alcohol. |
| • Pack Size Covered: More than 30 mL. |
| • Schedule Affected: Schedule K (licensing exemption withdrawn). |
| • New Classification: Schedule H1. |
| • Prescription Requirement: Mandatory prescription by a Registered Medical Practitioner (RMP). |
| • Objective: Prevent misuse of high alcohol-containing medicinal formulations while ensuring therapeutic use. |

Intelligence (AI) into governance and public service delivery.

- The policy aims to build AI infrastructure, strengthen digital capabilities, promote innovation, and accelerate AI adoption across government departments.

- Key focus sectors include healthcare, agriculture, mining, education, disaster management, environmental management, and public administration.



- The policy was presented during the National Stakeholders Consultation 2026 in New Delhi.

Key Features of the Draft AI Policy 2026–2031:

- Investment: Proposed investment of ₹1,150 crore over five years.

Objectives:

- Build AI-ready digital infrastructure.
- Improve efficiency, transparency, and citizen-centric governance.
- Promote AI innovation, research, startups, and skill development.
- Develop an ethical and responsible AI ecosystem.

Priority Sectors:

Healthcare
Agriculture
Mining
Education
Disaster Management
Environmental Management
Urban Governance
Public Service Delivery

Flagship Digital Initiative:

- Chief Minister's Data Intelligence Platform (CM-DIP) to enable data-driven governance and AI-powered decision-making across departments.

Vision and Targets:

- Position Jharkhand as a leading AI-enabled state.
- Attract significant investments in AI and emerging technologies.
- Develop AI innovation hubs and Centres of Excellence.
- Promote AI adoption in MSMEs, startups, and academia.
- Create employment opportunities in AI and digital technologies.

About the IndiaAI Mission:

- Launched by: Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

Objective:

Build indigenous AI capabilities.
Develop AI compute infrastructure.
Promote AI startups and innovation.
Enhance AI skills and datasets.
Encourage responsible and ethical AI adoption.
Supports India's vision of becoming a global AI leader.

Digital India Programme:

- Launched: 1 July 2015.
- Ministry: Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

Vision:

- Digital infrastructure as a core utility.
- Governance and services on demand.
- Digital empowerment of citizens.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Governance

AI applications include:

- Predictive analytics for policymaking.

- Smart healthcare and disease surveillance.
- Precision agriculture.
- Disaster prediction and response.
- Traffic and urban management.
- Digital public service delivery.
- Fraud detection and grievance redressal.

Exam Focus Points:

- State: Jharkhand.
- Policy: Draft Jharkhand AI Policy 2026–2031.
- Investment: ₹1,150 crore.
- Duration: Five years (2026–2031).

- Objective: AI-driven governance and digital transformation.
- Flagship Platform: Chief Minister's Data Intelligence Platform (CM-DIP).
- Priority Sectors: Healthcare, agriculture, mining, education, disaster management, environment, and governance.
- Related National Initiative: IndiaAI Mission.
- Related Flagship Programme: Digital India.
- Nodal Ministry (IndiaAI & Digital India): Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

Delhi Makes 'Pink Saheli Card' Mandatory for Free Bus Travel for Women



Purpose:

- Replace paper pink tickets.
- Ensure transparency and reduce fraud.
- Digitize beneficiary verification.
- Improve efficiency in public transport service delivery.

- The Delhi Government has made the Pink Saheli Smart Card mandatory for women to avail free travel in Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) and Cluster buses.
- The new system will come into effect from 1 August 2026, replacing the existing paper-based pink ticket system introduced in 2019.
- Women commuters will have to carry and tap the NCMC-enabled Pink Saheli Card while boarding buses to avail the free travel benefit.
- The initiative aims to digitize the scheme, improve transparency, prevent misuse, and streamline beneficiary verification.

Technology Used:

- NCMC-enabled (National Common Mobility Card) smart card.
- Passengers must tap the card on the Electronic Ticketing Machine (ETM) while boarding.

About the National Common Mobility Card (NCMC):

- Popularly known as "One Nation, One Card."
- Launched by the Government of India to enable seamless digital payments across public transport and retail.
- Developed under the guidance of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) and NPCI.
- Based on the RuPay payment system.

Can be used for:

- Metro rail
- Buses
- Parking
- Toll payments
- Retail purchases
- ATM withdrawals (where applicable).

About Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC):

- Established: 1971.
- Chairman: Niharika Rai,
- Managing Director: Jitender Yadav
- Administrative Control: Government of the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi.
- Operates one of India's largest urban bus transport systems.

Exam Focus Points:

- State/UT: Delhi.
- Scheme: Pink Saheli Smart Card.
- Mandatory From: 1 August 2026.

- Beneficiaries: Women and girls aged 12 years and above who are Delhi residents.
- Transport Covered: DTC and Cluster buses.
- Technology: National Common Mobility Card (NCMC).
- Purpose: Replace paper pink tickets with a digital smart card.
- Objective: Transparent, efficient, and fraud-resistant free bus travel for women.
- Related Initiative: One Nation, One Card (NCMC).
- Nodal Ministry for NCMC: Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).

Federal Bank Receives First International Investment-Grade Issuer Rating from S&P Global Ratings



- Federal Bank has received its first-ever International Investment-Grade Issuer Credit Rating from S&P Global Ratings, becoming one of the Indian private sector banks to secure an international investment-grade rating.
- S&P assigned the bank a 'BBB-' Long-Term Issuer Credit Rating and an 'A-3' Short-Term Issuer Credit Rating, with a Stable Outlook.
- The rating reflects the bank's strong financial profile, sound asset quality, prudent risk management, and adequate capitalization.
- The investment-grade rating is expected to enhance Federal Bank's global credibility, strengthen investor confidence, and improve access to international capital markets.

Rating Details:

- Rating Agency: S&P Global Ratings.
- Long-Term Rating: BBB- (Investment Grade).
- Short-Term Rating: A-3.
- Outlook: Stable.

About Investment-Grade Rating:

- Investment-grade ratings indicate a relatively low risk of default.
- Under S&P Global Ratings, BBB- is the lowest investment-grade long-term rating.
- Ratings of BB+ and below are considered speculative (non-investment grade or junk status).
- Credit ratings help investors assess the repayment capacity of banks, companies, and governments.

About S&P Global Ratings:

- One of the world's leading credit rating agencies.
- Headquarters: New York, United States.
- Provides independent assessments of the creditworthiness of governments, financial institutions, and corporations.

- The three major global credit rating agencies are:

S&P Global Ratings:

- Moody's Ratings
- Fitch Ratings

About Federal Bank:

- Established: 1931.
- Headquarters: Aluva, Kerala.
- MD & CEO: KVS Manian
- Type: Private Sector Scheduled Commercial Bank.
- Provides retail, corporate, SME, NRI, and digital banking services across India.

Exam Focus Points:

- Bank: Federal Bank.
- Rating Agency: S&P Global Ratings.
- Long-Term Rating: BBB-.
- Short-Term Rating: A-3.
- Outlook: Stable.
- Significance: First international investment-grade issuer rating for Federal Bank.
- Minimum Investment Grade (S&P): BBB-.
- Below Investment Grade: BB+ and below.
- Headquarters of Federal Bank: Aluva, Kerala.
- Established: 1931.

India and Kyrgyzstan Launch 'Manas and Mahabharata' Civilizational Studies Centre



translation of the Kyrgyz epic "Manas" was also released.

About the International Centre for Civilizational Studies:

- India and Kyrgyzstan have jointly inaugurated the International Centre for Civilizational Studies "Manas and Mahabharata" in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, to strengthen academic, cultural, and civilizational cooperation between the two countries.
- The Centre has been established through a collaboration between the Centre for Studies of International Relations (CSIR), New Delhi, and the Manas National Academy, Kyrgyzstan.
- The initiative aims to promote comparative research on the Indian epic Mahabharata and the Kyrgyz national epic Manas, while deepening people-to-people ties and cultural diplomacy. During the inauguration, the first Hindi

- Location: Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.
- Collaborating Institutions: Centre for Studies of International Relations (CSIR), New Delhi, and Manas National Academy, Kyrgyzstan.
- Focus Areas:
 - Comparative study of the Mahabharata and Manas epics.
 - Civilizational history and cultural heritage.
 - Intercultural dialogue and humanitarian diplomacy.
- Academic collaboration and researcher training.

About the Epic "Manas":

- National epic of Kyrgyzstan and one of the world's longest oral epics.

- Narrates the life and heroic deeds of Manas, the legendary founder and unifier of the Kyrgyz people.
- Recognized by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
- Traditionally preserved through oral recitation by Manaschis (traditional epic narrators).

About the Mahabharata:

- One of the two great Sanskrit epics of India, the other being the Ramayana.
- Traditionally attributed to Maharishi Ved Vyasa.
- Contains over 100,000 verses, making it one of the world's longest epic poems.
- Includes the Bhagavad Gita, a key philosophical and spiritual text of Hinduism.

About Kyrgyzstan:

- Capital: Bishkek.
- Currency: Kyrgyzstani Som (KGS).
- President: Sadyr Japarov.
- Region: Central Asia.
- Borders: Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and China.

- India–Kyrgyzstan Relations: Both countries are members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and cooperate in areas such as culture, education, defence, and connectivity.

Exam Focus Points:

- Countries Involved: India and Kyrgyzstan.
- Centre Launched: International Centre for Civilizational Studies "Manas and Mahabharata".
- Location: Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.
- Indian Partner: Centre for Studies of International Relations (CSIR), New Delhi.
- Kyrgyz Partner: Manas National Academy.
- Major Objective: Promote comparative civilizational studies and strengthen cultural diplomacy.
- Additional Achievement: First Hindi translation of the Kyrgyz epic Manas released.
- UNESCO Link: Manas Epic is inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

DoT's Samriddh Gram Wins WSIS Prize 2026 for Rural Digital Transformation



- The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has won the prestigious World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Prize 2026 under Action Line C6 – Enabling Environment for its flagship initiative "Samriddh Gram: Integrated

Phygital Service Delivery Model Enabled by BharatNet."

- The award was presented during the WSIS Forum 2026 held in Geneva, Switzerland, recognizing India's innovative use of digital public infrastructure to transform rural service delivery.
- The initiative leverages BharatNet to establish Samriddhi Kendras as one-stop digital service centres in villages, providing integrated access to healthcare, education, agriculture, financial inclusion, e-governance, skilling, and e-commerce services. The recognition highlights India's leadership in inclusive digital governance and rural digital transformation.

Technology Used:

- BharatNet high-speed broadband network.
- Integrated Phygital (Physical + Digital) service delivery model.
- Village-level Samridh Kendras as digital service hubs.
- FTTH (Fiber-to-the-Home) connectivity and Public Wi-Fi.

Purpose:

- Bridge the rural digital divide.
- Deliver citizen-centric digital services at the village level.
- Promote digital inclusion and financial inclusion.
- Improve access to healthcare, education, agriculture, and government services.
- Generate livelihood opportunities through digital infrastructure.

About Samridh Gram Initiative:

- Launched by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Ministry of Communications.
- Built on the BharatNet broadband backbone.
- Implements a phygital model by combining digital platforms with physical service centres.

Provides services such as:

- Telemedicine
- Digital education
- Smart agriculture
- E-Governance
- Digital banking & financial inclusion
- Skill development
- E-commerce
- Public Wi-Fi and broadband access.

About BharatNet:

- Flagship broadband connectivity project of the Government of India.

- Implemented by Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL) (now merged with BSNL).
- One of the world's largest rural broadband connectivity projects.
- Aims to provide high-speed broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats across India.
- Supports Digital India, e-Governance, telemedicine, online education, and rural entrepreneurship.

About WSIS Prizes:

- Organised by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) under the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) process.
- Recognizes innovative ICT-based projects contributing to sustainable development and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- The WSIS Forum 2026 was held in Geneva, Switzerland.
- The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is a specialized agency of the United Nations for information and communication technologies.

About International Telecommunication Union (ITU):

- Established: 1865.
- Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland.
- Secretary-general: Doreen Bogdan-Martin
- Status: Specialized agency of the United Nations (since 1947).
- Responsible for global standards in telecommunications and ICT.

Exam Focus Points:

- Ministry: Ministry of Communications.
- Implementing Department: Department of Telecommunications (DoT).
- Initiative: Samridh Gram – Integrated Phygital Service Delivery Model.
- Award: WSIS Prize 2026.

- Award Category: Action Line C6 – Enabling Environment.
- Organising Body: International Telecommunication Union (ITU).
- Venue: Geneva, Switzerland.
- Technology Backbone: BharatNet.
- Village Service Centres: Samridhi Kendras.

- Objective: Rural digital transformation through integrated digital public services.
- ITU Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland.
- ITU Established: 1865.

AISHE 2023–24: Female Enrolment in Higher Education Surpasses Male Enrolment for Seventh Consecutive Year



- The Ministry of Education has released the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2023–24, highlighting significant progress in India's higher education sector.
- The report shows that female enrolment has exceeded male enrolment for the seventh consecutive year, with the Female Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) reaching 31.2%, compared to 28.9% for males.
- Overall enrolment in higher education has reached a record 4.50 crore students, while female enrolment has increased to 2.24 crore, registering a 42.2% growth since 2014–15.
- The findings reflect improving gender parity and greater access to higher education across the country.

About AISHE (All India Survey on Higher Education):

- Launched in 2010–11 by the Ministry of Education.
- Conducted annually by the Department of Higher Education.
- Collects data from all higher education institutions in India.

Provides statistics on:

- Student enrolment
- Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)
- Faculty
- Infrastructure
- Research
- Financial indicators
- Gender and social category-wise participation.

About Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER):

- GER is the percentage of students enrolled in higher education (18–23 years age group) compared to the total population in the same age group.
- A higher GER indicates greater access to higher education.
- The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to increase GER in higher education to 50% by 2035.

About National Education Policy (NEP) 2020:

- Approved in 2020, replacing the National Policy on Education, 1986.

Aims to transform India's education system through:

- Universal access to quality education.
- Multidisciplinary higher education.
- Increased GER to 50% by 2035.

- Promotion of research through the National Research Foundation (NRF).
- Greater use of technology and digital learning.

Exam Focus Points:

- Survey: All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2023–24.
- Released By: Ministry of Education.
- Conducted By: Department of Higher Education.
- Total Enrolment: 4.50 crore.
- Female Enrolment: 2.24 crore.
- Female GER: 31.2%.

- Male GER: 28.9%.
- Overall GER: 30.0%.
- Female Enrolment Growth (since 2014–15): 42.2%.
- Total Enrolment Growth (since 2014–15): 31.5%.
- NEP 2020 GER Target: 50% by 2035.
- Launch of AISHE: 2010–11.
- Major Achievement: Female enrolment has remained higher than male enrolment for the seventh consecutive year.

Sourav Ganguly Inducted into ICC Hall of Fame



- Recognises legendary cricketers for their outstanding achievements and lasting impact on the game.
- New inductees are announced periodically by the ICC.
- The Hall of Fame includes both men's and women's cricketers from across the world.

About Sourav Ganguly:

- Former Indian cricket captain Sourav Ganguly has been inducted into the prestigious ICC Hall of Fame, becoming the 12th Indian cricketer to receive this honour.
- The recognition celebrates Ganguly's outstanding contribution to international cricket, particularly his transformative leadership of the Indian cricket team during the early 2000s.
- Widely regarded as one of India's most successful captains, Ganguly played a key role in rebuilding Indian cricket after the match-fixing crisis, nurturing young talent, and making India a strong overseas competitor.

- Full Name: Sourav Chandidas Ganguly.
- Nickname: Dada; Prince of Kolkata.
- Born: 8 July 1972, Kolkata, West Bengal.
- Batting Style: Left-handed batter.
- Role: Former Captain of the Indian Men's Cricket Team.
- Former Position: President, Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) (2019–2022).
- Current Role: Chairman, ICC Men's Cricket Committee.

About ICC Hall of Fame:

- Launched in 2009 by the International Cricket Council (ICC) as part of its centenary celebrations.

Major Achievements of Sourav Ganguly:

- Made his Test debut at Lord's in 1996 with a century.
- Led India to the 2003 ICC Cricket World Cup Final.
- Played a key role in building a fearless and competitive Indian team.

- Scored over 18,000 international runs across all formats.
- One of India's most successful ODI captains.

About the International Cricket Council (ICC):

- Established: 1909 (as the Imperial Cricket Conference).
- Headquarters: Dubai, United Arab Emirates.
- Chairman: Jay Shah.
- Role: Global governing body for the sport of cricket.

- Achievement: 12th Indian cricketer inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame.
- Organising Body: International Cricket Council (ICC).
- ICC Hall of Fame Launched: 2009.
- ICC Headquarters: Dubai, UAE.
- Current ICC Chairman: Jay Shah.
- Former BCCI President: Sourav Ganguly (2019–2022).
- Current ICC Men's Cricket Committee Chairman: Sourav Ganguly.
- World Cup Achievement: Led India to the 2003 ICC Cricket World Cup Final.

Exam Focus Points:

- Person in News: Sourav Ganguly.
- Award/Honour: ICC Hall of Fame.

Uttar Pradesh Expands Nishulk Boring Yojana to Strengthen Irrigation for Small and Marginal Farmers



- The Government of Uttar Pradesh has continued the implementation of the Nishulk Boring Yojana (Free Boring Scheme) to provide free borewell drilling facilities to eligible farmers, aiming to improve irrigation coverage and enhance agricultural productivity.
- The scheme primarily benefits small and marginal farmers by reducing the cost of installing private tube wells and ensuring access to reliable irrigation facilities. It is implemented through the Minor Irrigation Department of Uttar Pradesh and supports the state's efforts to improve water availability for agriculture.

Benefits:

- Provides free boring (drilling) for private tube wells to eligible farmers.
- Financial assistance is also available for pump sets and HDPE pipes under prescribed norms.
- Improves irrigation facilities in rain-fed and water-scarce areas.
- Reduces dependence on monsoon rainfall.
- Enhances crop productivity and farmers' income.

Objectives:

- Expand irrigation coverage for small and marginal farmers.
- Promote sustainable agricultural production.
- Reduce irrigation costs for farmers.
- Strengthen groundwater-based irrigation where feasible.
- Support rural livelihoods and agricultural development.

Eligibility:

- Applicant must be a permanent resident of Uttar Pradesh.

- Should be a small or marginal farmer with agricultural land.
- The applicant should not already have adequate irrigation facilities on the concerned land.
- Preference is given to economically weaker farmers and eligible Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe beneficiaries under the scheme guidelines.

Required Documents:

• Aadhaar Card.
• Land ownership documents (Khatauni/Khasra).
• Passport-size photograph.
• Caste certificate (where applicable).
• Bank account details.
• Mobile number.
• Farmer registration details under the relevant state portal/PM-KISAN, wherever applicable.

About Nishulk Boring Yojana:

- State: Uttar Pradesh.
- Implementing Department: Minor Irrigation Department, Government of Uttar Pradesh.
- Provides free boring for installation of private tube wells for eligible farmers.
- Supports the development of assured irrigation facilities for agriculture.
- Applications can be submitted through the Minor Irrigation Department and its online portal.

About the Minor Irrigation Department, Uttar Pradesh:

- Established to promote irrigation through private tube wells, borewells, ponds, and other minor irrigation projects.

- Plays a key role in groundwater-based irrigation development.
- Contributes to increasing agricultural productivity and drought resilience in the state.

Additional Key Facts:

- Minor Irrigation: Refers to irrigation projects with a Culturable Command Area (CCA) up to 2,000 hectares.
- Major Irrigation: CCA exceeding 10,000 hectares.
- Medium Irrigation: CCA between 2,000 and 10,000 hectares.
- Groundwater irrigation in India is mainly carried out through tube wells, dug wells, and borewells.
- Uttar Pradesh has one of the largest irrigated agricultural areas in India, with irrigation supported by canals, tube wells, and groundwater resources.

Exam Focus Points:

• Scheme: Nishulk Boring Yojana.
• State: Uttar Pradesh.
• Implementing Department: Minor Irrigation Department.
• Beneficiaries: Small and marginal farmers.
• Major Benefit: Free boring for private tube wells and assistance for irrigation equipment as per scheme norms.
• Objective: Expand irrigation coverage and improve agricultural productivity.
• Mode of Application: Online/offline through the Minor Irrigation Department.
• Sector: Agriculture and Irrigation.

Lets Revise

- ❖ How many MoUs were signed between India and New Zealand recently? **Five.**
- ❖ Which Rules were recently amended to strengthen regulation of high alcohol-containing medicinal formulations? **Drugs Rules, 1945.**
- ❖ How much investment has Jharkhand proposed under its Draft AI Policy 2026–2031? **₹1,150 crore.**
- ❖ Which smart card has been made mandatory for free bus travel for women in Delhi from August 2026? **Pink Saheli Smart Card.**
- ❖ Which global credit rating agency awarded Federal Bank its first international investment-grade issuer rating? **S&P Global Ratings.**
- ❖ Which two epics are the focus of the International Centre for Civilizational Studies inaugurated jointly by India and Kyrgyzstan? **Mahabharata (India) and Manas (Kyrgyzstan).**
- ❖ Which flagship initiative of the Department of Telecommunications won the WSIS Prize 2026 under Action Line C6 – Enabling Environment? **Samriddh Gram: Integrated Phygital Service Delivery Model Enabled by BharatNet.**
- ❖ According to the AISHE 2023–24 report, what was India's Female Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education? **31.2%.**
- ❖ Who became the 12th Indian cricketer to be inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame? **Sourav Ganguly.**
- ❖ Which Uttar Pradesh government scheme provides free borewell drilling facilities to eligible small and marginal farmers to improve irrigation? **Nishulk Boring Yojana (Free Boring Scheme).**



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Daily **NEWS CHRONICLE**

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.

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