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Thursday, July 16, 2026



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Top Stories of The Day

- Jio Platforms Appoints **Pankaj Pawar** as CEO Ahead of Planned IPO to Drive Future Growth
- **EaseMyTrip** Signs MoU with Jharkhand Government to Promote Tourism Through Digital Platforms
- **India and Nepal** Strengthen Energy Cooperation Through Talks on Power Trade and Hydropower Development
- **Tamil Writer Poomani Passes Away** at 79, Remembered for His Contribution to Literature
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- **India-UK CETA** Comes into Force to Boost Trade, Investment, and Economic Cooperation
- MoSPI Launches First Trial Index of Services Production to **Track Services Sector Growth**
- Government Introduces '**Seafarer-First**' Initiative to Protect Indian Seafarers During Maritime Crisis
- **R. Vairamuthu** Receives 60th Jnanpith Award for Outstanding Contribution to Tamil Literature

Jio Platforms Appoints Pankaj Pawar as CEO Ahead of Planned IPO



- Jio Platforms has appointed Pankaj Pawar as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO), replacing Kiran Thomas, ahead of the company's proposed Initial Public Offering (IPO). He succeeded Kiran Thomas.

About Pankaj Pawar:

- Also serves as Managing Director of Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd.
- Associated with the Reliance Group since 2000.
- Has nearly 30 years of experience in telecom and digital services.

Jio Platforms IPO:

- The company plans to raise around USD 4 billion (₹37,700 crore) through the IPO.
- The IPO values Jio Platforms at approximately USD 137 billion.
- Up to 27 crore fresh equity shares (face value ₹10 each) will be issued.
- Shares will be priced through the book-building process as per SEBI regulations.

Board Composition:

- Mukesh D. Ambani – Chairman & Non-Executive Director.
- Akash Ambani – Managing Director.
- Manoj Harjivandas Modi – Non-Executive Director.
- Isha Ambani and Anant Ambani – Non-Executive Directors.

Significance of IPO:

- Aims to unlock value from Jio's telecom, digital services, enterprise solutions, and technology businesses.
- If successful, it will become India's largest IPO, surpassing Hyundai Motor India's ₹27,870 crore IPO (2024).

Background:

- Jio Platforms was launched in 2016 as the digital services arm of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL).
- In 2020, the company raised over USD 20 billion from global investors.
- Major foreign investors include Meta, Google, KKR, Silver Lake, and General Atlantic.
- Reliance Jio Infocomm is the world's second-largest mobile operator by subscribers within a single country, after China Mobile.

About Jio Platforms:

- Parent Company: Reliance Industries Limited (RIL).
- Chairman: Mukesh D. Ambani.
- Managing Director: Akash Ambani.
- Business Areas: Telecommunications, Digital Services, Enterprise Solutions, Cloud & Emerging Technologies.
- Regulator for IPO: Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

Other Related Developments:

- National Stock Exchange (NSE) has also filed IPO papers to raise up to USD 3.3 billion.
- Jio Platforms continues to expand its digital ecosystem through AI, cloud, fintech, and enterprise services.

Exam Focus Points:

- Company: Jio Platforms.

- New CEO: Pankaj Pawar
- Outgoing CEO: Kiran Thomas
- IPO Size: Around USD 4 billion (₹37,700 crore).
- Company Valuation: Around USD 137 billion
- Fresh Issue: Up to 27 crore equity shares

- Chairman: Mukesh D. Ambani
- Managing Director: Akash Ambani
- IPO Regulator: SEBI
- Launch Year of Jio Platforms: 2016.

EaseMyTrip Signs MoU with Jharkhand Government to Promote Tourism



- Online travel technology platform EaseMyTrip has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Department of Tourism, Government of Jharkhand, to promote the state's tourism through digital campaigns. The partnership aims to increase Jharkhand's visibility among domestic travellers and boost tourism.

- Encourage domestic tourism.
- Showcase Jharkhand's spiritual, cultural, and nature-based attractions.
- Support the state's tourism-driven economic growth.

Background:

- Domestic tourism in India is witnessing rapid growth, with increasing demand for authentic cultural and nature-based experiences.
- Jharkhand is known for its religious sites, waterfalls, forests, wildlife, and tribal heritage.
- Shri Baidyanath Dham at Deoghar is one of the 12 Jyotirlingas of Lord Shiva and a major pilgrimage centre.

About EaseMyTrip:

- Founded: 2008
- Headquarters: New Delhi
- CEO & Co-founder: Rikant Pittie
- Business: Online travel booking platform
- Special Tourism Vertical: EasyDarshan (Spiritual Tourism)

Tourism Promotion:

- EaseMyTrip will promote Shri Baidyanath Dham, temples, waterfalls, forests, eco-tourism, agri-tourism, and the state's cultural heritage.
- Digital marketing campaigns will target travellers across India.

Role of EaseMyTrip:

- The company will leverage its technology platform and customer base to increase tourist footfall.
- It will also use its dedicated spiritual tourism platform EasyDarshan to promote religious destinations.

Objective of the Partnership:

- Enhance destination visibility.

About Jharkhand:

- Capital: Ranchi
- Chief Minister: Hemant Soren
- Governor: Santosh Kumar Gangwar
- Statehood Day: 15 November 2000
- Famous Tourist Attractions: Shri Baidyanath Dham, Dassam Falls, Hundru Falls, Betla National Park, Parasnath Hills.

Other Recent Tourism Initiatives:

- The Government of Jharkhand is promoting eco-tourism, rural tourism, and religious tourism to increase visitor inflow.
- Digital partnerships with private travel platforms are being encouraged to improve tourism outreach.

Exam Focus Points:

- Company: EaseMyTrip

• Partner: Department of Tourism, Government of Jharkhand
• Purpose: Promotion of Jharkhand tourism through digital initiatives
• Tourism Platform: EasyDarshan
• Major Religious Site: Shri Baidyanath Dham (Deoghar)
• State Capital: Ranchi
• Statehood: 15 November 2000

Nepal and India Hold Energy Talks to Strengthen Bilateral Cooperation



- India is Nepal's largest market for electricity exports.
- Both countries are expanding cross-border transmission infrastructure.
- Nepal exports surplus hydropower to India, particularly during the monsoon season.
- Energy cooperation is a key pillar of the India–Nepal bilateral partnership.

About Nepal:

- Nepal and India held high-level meetings in Kathmandu to strengthen cooperation in the energy sector. The Indian delegation included Power Secretary Pankaj Agarwal and Additional Foreign Secretary Munu Mahawar.

• Capital: Kathmandu
• Currency: Nepalese Rupee (NPR)
• Prime Minister: K. P. Sharma Oli
• President: Ram Chandra Poudel
• Major Rivers: Koshi, Gandaki, Karnali
• Bordering Countries: India and China

Focus Areas of Discussion:

- Expansion of cross-border electricity trade.
- Strengthening transmission connectivity between the two countries.
- Cooperation in hydropower development.
- Enhancing regional energy security.

Objective of the Meeting:

- Deepen bilateral energy cooperation.
- Promote clean and renewable energy.
- Improve regional power connectivity and energy integration.

India–Nepal Energy Relations:

Other Recent Bilateral Developments:

- India and Nepal continue to expand cross-border electricity trade under the Long-Term Power Trade Agreement.
- Both countries are collaborating on hydropower projects and regional energy connectivity under the BBIN (Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal) framework.
- India has supported the development of several transmission lines connecting the two countries.

Exam Focus Points:

- Countries: India and Nepal
- Venue: Kathmandu, Nepal
- Nepal's Minister: Biraj Bhakta Shrestha
- Indian Officials: Pankaj Agarwal and Munu Mahawar

- Key Sectors: Cross-border electricity trade, hydropower, transmission connectivity, regional energy security
- Capital of Nepal: Kathmandu
- Currency: Nepalese Rupee (NPR)

Renowned Tamil Writer Poomani Passes Away at 79



- Celebrated Tamil novelist and Sahitya Akademi Award winner Poomani passed away at the age of 79 due to age-related health issues. Known for his realistic portrayal of rural Tamil Nadu.

Background:

- Poomani was born in Tamil Nadu and drew inspiration from the lives of rural communities.
- His works focused on caste, social inequality, and human relationships.
- He was recognized as one of the leading voices in contemporary Tamil literature.

Literary Contributions:

- One of the most respected writers in modern Tamil literature.
- Best known for novels depicting rural life, social justice, and the struggles of ordinary people.
- Authored acclaimed works including Vekkai and Agnyaadi.

Recognition:

- Received the Sahitya Akademi Award in 2014 for his novel Agnyaadi.

- Widely regarded for his authentic storytelling and contribution to Tamil literature.

Contribution to Cinema:

- His novel Vekkai was adapted into the blockbuster Tamil film Asuran.
- Asuran, starring Dhanush, won widespread critical and commercial success.
- Poomani also directed the film Karuvelam Pookkal for the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC).

About Sahitya Akademi:

- Established: 1954
- Headquarters: New Delhi
- Type: India's National Academy of Letters
- Purpose: Promotion of Indian literature in various recognized languages.
- Award: Sahitya Akademi Award is one of India's highest literary honours.

Other Related Facts:

- Asuran (2019) was directed by Vetrimaaran and based on Poomani's novel Vekkai.
- The film won multiple National Film Awards and brought Poomani's literary work to a wider audience.

Exam Focus Points:

- Person: Poomani
- Known For: Tamil novelist and short-story writer

- Award: Sahitya Akademi Award (2014)
- Award-Winning Novel: Agnyaadi
- Famous Novel Adapted into Film: Vekkai → Asuran
- Film Directed by Poomani: Karuvelam Pookkal

- Organization: National Film Development Corporation (NFDC)

NASA and Roscosmos Launch Expedition 75 Crew to the International Space Station (ISS)



- NASA and Russia's Roscosmos successfully launched the Expedition 75 crew to the International Space Station (ISS) from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. The mission highlights continued U.S.–Russia cooperation in human spaceflight despite ongoing geopolitical tensions.

Objective of the Mission:

- Conduct scientific experiments in microgravity.
- Carry out maintenance and technological upgrades aboard the ISS.
- Support long-duration human spaceflight research.
- Strengthen international cooperation in space exploration.
- Ensure continuous human presence aboard the ISS.

Significance:

- Demonstrates that NASA–Roscosmos cooperation continues despite the Russia–Ukraine conflict.
- Supports research for future Moon and Mars missions.
- Highlights the importance of international collaboration in space science.

- Marks another milestone for Indian-origin astronaut Anil Menon.

Background:

- The International Space Station (ISS) is the world's largest habitable space laboratory.
- It has been continuously occupied by astronauts since 2 November 2000.
- The ISS is expected to remain operational until around 2030, after which it will be decommissioned.

Crew Members:

- Anil Menon (NASA) – First spaceflight.
- Sergey Kud-Sverchkov Dubrov (Roscosmos) – Second spaceflight.
- Anna Kikina (Roscosmos) – Second spaceflight and one of Russia's active female cosmonauts.

NASA–Roscosmos Cooperation:

- The mission reflects continued cooperation between NASA and Roscosmos despite the Russia–Ukraine conflict.
- Joint missions continue because both agencies depend on each other for ISS operations.

NASA Administrator's Visit:

- NASA Administrator Jared Isaacman visited the Baikonur Cosmodrome and met Roscosmos Director Dmitry Bakanov.
- It was the first visit by a NASA Administrator to Baikonur since 2018.

ISS Operations:

- U.S. solar panels provide electrical power to the ISS.
- Russian propulsion systems help maintain the station's orbit.
- Both agencies continue to cooperate on maintenance and astronaut safety.

About the International Space Station (ISS):

- Launch of First Module: 1998
- Continuous Human Presence: Since 2 November 2000
- Orbit: Low Earth Orbit (LEO)
- Altitude: Approximately 400 km
- Partners: NASA, Roscosmos, ESA, JAXA, and CSA
- Purpose: Scientific research, technology demonstration, and human spaceflight.

Other Recent Space Developments:

- NASA and Roscosmos continue joint astronaut exchange missions despite geopolitical tensions.

- The agencies are working on ensuring the safe operation of the aging ISS until its planned retirement.
- International discussions are underway regarding future commercial space stations after the ISS.

Exam Focus Points:

- Mission: Expedition 75
- Purpose: Conduct scientific research in microgravity, maintain the ISS, support long-duration human spaceflight, and strengthen international cooperation.
- Destination: International Space Station (ISS)
- Launch Site: Baikonur Cosmodrome, Kazakhstan
- NASA Administrator: Jared Isaacman
- Roscosmos Director: Dmitry Bakanov
- Indian-Origin Astronaut: Anil Menon
- ISS Operational Since: 2 November 2000
- Orbit: Low Earth Orbit (LEO)
- Expected Retirement: Around 2030

Unjha Cumin and Fennel Receive Geographical Indication (GI) Tag



- Unjha Cumin (Jeera) and Unjha Fennel (Saunf) from Gujarat have been granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag. The recognition identifies the spices as products originating from Unjha, North Gujarat.

Background:

- India is the world's largest producer and exporter of cumin.
- Gujarat contributes the largest share of India's cumin production and exports.
- Major cumin- and fennel-producing districts include Mehsana, Patan, Banaskantha, and Gandhinagar.

Institutions Involved:

The GI registration was secured through the joint efforts of:

- Unjha Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC)
- Department of Horticulture & Farmers' Welfare, Government of Gujarat

- | |
|--|
| • Sardarkrushinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University (SDAU) |
| • Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII) |

- Supports the Government of India's One District One Product (ODOP) and Vocal for Local initiatives.
- Promotes rural livelihoods and agricultural branding.

Benefits of GI Recognition:

- Provides legal protection against misuse of the geographical identity.
- Ensures product authenticity and quality.
- Enhances domestic and international market credibility.
- GI-tagged products can fetch 20–30% higher prices than non-GI products.
- Expected to increase farmers' income and promote exports.

Importance of Unjha:

- Unjha is one of Asia's largest spice trading centres.
- It is the principal market for cumin and fennel produced in Gujarat and Rajasthan.
- Gujarat is India's largest producer of cumin and among the leading producers of fennel.

Objective of GI Recognition

- Protect the unique identity of regional agricultural products.
- Prevent unauthorized use of the product's geographical name.
- Promote exports of value-added agricultural products.
- Increase farmers' income through premium pricing.
- Preserve traditional agricultural practices and regional heritage.

Significance:

- Strengthens Gujarat's position as India's leading spice-producing state.
- Enhances global recognition of Indian spice products.

About Geographical Indication (GI) Tag:

- | |
|---|
| • Legal Framework: Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999. |
| • Implemented Since: 15 September 2003. |
| • Registry: Geographical Indications Registry, Chennai. |
| • Administered By: Office of the Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trade Marks (CGPDTM), Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce & Industry. |
| • Validity: 10 years (renewable). |
| • Purpose: Protect products whose quality or reputation is linked to a specific geographical region. |

Other GI Products of Gujarat:

- | |
|-------------------|
| • Gir Kesar Mango |
| • Bhalia Wheat |
| • Kachchhi Kharek |
| • Amalsadi Chikoo |

Exam Focus Points:

- | |
|---|
| • GI Tag Awarded To: Unjha Cumin (Jeera) and Unjha Fennel (Saunf) |
| • State: Gujarat |
| • Region: Unjha, North Gujarat |
| • Purpose: To provide legal protection, preserve geographical identity, improve farmers' income, and promote exports. |
| • Major Institution: Unjha APMC |
| • India's Position: World's largest producer and exporter of cumin. |
| • GI Act: Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999. |

- GI Registry: Chennai.
- Validity of GI Tag: 10 years (renewable).

India–UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) Comes into Force



The India–UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) came into effect on 16 July 2026, marking one of India's most significant Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with a developed economy. The agreement aims to boost bilateral trade, investment, market access, and economic cooperation between the two countries.

Key Highlights:

Implementation of CETA:

- It is the sixth Free Trade Agreement (FTA) implemented during the Narendra Modi government's tenure.
- It is among India's first major trade agreements with a developed economy in recent years.

Objective of the Agreement:

- Increase bilateral trade and investment.
- Provide greater market access for goods and services.
- Reduce or eliminate tariffs on several products.
- Strengthen supply chains and global value chain integration.
- Enhance economic cooperation between India and the UK.

Benefits for India:

- Duty-free access to the UK market for labour-intensive products such as:
- Textiles & garments
- Footwear
- Carpets
- Processed food
- Cereals
- Fruits & vegetables
- Spices
- Fish and meat products

Boost to exports of:

- Automobiles & auto components
- Engineering goods
- Electronics
- Machinery
- Ceramics, glass, stone and cement products

- Indian IT companies will benefit through the Double Contribution Convention, exempting employees posted in the UK from paying social security contributions for up to five years.

Benefits for Consumers in India:

- Lower tariffs on UK products will make imports more affordable, including:
- Scotch whisky
- Salmon and lamb
- Chocolates
- Cosmetics and perfumes
- Soft drinks
- Electronics
- Machinery

Major Tariff Reductions:

- Import duty on Scotch Whisky reduced from 150% to 75% initially, and to 40% over 10 years.
- Tariff on UK-made cars reduced gradually from 110% to 10%.
- Import duty on silver will be reduced to zero over 10 years.
- Duty on UK trucks reduced from 44% to 8.8% in phases.
- Products Excluded by India

India has excluded:

- Fresh apples
- Walnuts
- Whey products
- Blue-veined cheese
- Gold bars
- Smartphones
- Certain seeds
- UK Exclusion List

The UK excluded:

- Meat products
- Egg-based products
- Rice
- Cane and beet sugar

Trade & Investment Highlights

- Bilateral Trade (2025–26): USD 25.12 billion
- India's Exports: USD 13.44 billion
- India's Imports: USD 11.68 billion
- UK FDI into India (2025–26): USD 1 billion

Significance:

- Strengthens the India–UK strategic economic partnership.
- Improves competitiveness of Indian exports.
- Enhances India's participation in global value chains.

- Promotes employment in labour-intensive industries.
- Supports the Government's export-led growth strategy.
- Makes premium UK products more affordable for Indian consumers.

Background:

- The India–UK FTA negotiations began in 2022.
- The agreement was concluded in 2026 after multiple rounds of negotiations.
- The UK is among India's major trading partners in Europe.

India has previously signed FTAs with:

- UAE
- Australia
- Mauritius
- European Free Trade Association (EFTA)

About Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA):

- Type: Free Trade Agreement (FTA)
- Countries: India and the United Kingdom
- Implemented: 16 July 2026

Coverage:

- Trade in Goods
- Trade in Services
- Investment
- Government Procurement
- Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)
- Digital Trade
- Labour Mobility
- Rules of Origin

Other Key Provisions:

Government Procurement:

- UK firms will gain access to around 40,000 high-value procurement contracts floated by Indian central ministries.
- Intellectual Property Rights (IPR):
- India retained the right to use Compulsory Licensing.
- No patent-term extension or pharmaceutical data exclusivity was accepted.

Steel Trade:

- India's steel exports may face challenges due to the UK's new steel safeguard measures introduced in 2026.

Exam Focus Points:

- Agreement: India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)

- Implemented On: 16 July 2026
- Purpose: Increase bilateral trade and investment, reduce tariffs, improve market access, strengthen supply chains, and promote economic cooperation.
- Partner Countries: India and the United Kingdom
- Major Beneficiaries: Textiles, garments, footwear, engineering goods, automobiles, IT services, agriculture, marine products.
- Social Security Benefit: Indian professionals exempt from UK social security contributions for 5 years.
- Bilateral Trade (2025–26): USD 25.12 billion
- FDI from UK (2025–26): USD 1 billion

MoSPI Releases India's First Trial Index of Services Production (ISP)



- The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has released India's first trial Index of Services Production (ISP) with 2024–25 as the base year.

Key Highlights

- The trial index covers 19 formal services sub-sectors, accounting for about 60% of India's services economy.
- 14 out of 19 sub-sectors recorded double-digit year-on-year growth in April 2026.
- The overall ISP will be introduced after expanding coverage and assessing the stability of the trial series.

- Sub-sectoral indices will be released on the 29th of every month.
- Sector-wise Performance

Top-performing sectors:

- Accommodation & Food Services – 37.2%
- Retail Trade – 30.8%
- Administrative & Support Services – 28.7%
- Real Estate – 27.7%
- Telecommunications – 22.8%
- Banking – 12.2%

Declining sectors:

- Air Transport – –13.9%
- Railway Transport – –0.4%

Major Weightage in ISP

- Wholesale & Retail Trade – 23%
- Information & Banking-related Services – 22.5%
- Administrative & Support Services – 15%

• Banking – 11%
• Road Transport – 7.68%
• Accommodation & Food Services – 4.27%
• Telecommunications – 3.24%
• These eight sectors account for 86.8% of the trial ISP.

Background

- The services sector contributes more than 50% of India's economic activity.
- India previously had the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) for manufacturing but lacked a monthly production index for services.
- The ISP has been introduced to improve high-frequency measurement of services sector performance.

About MoSPI

• Full Name: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
• Function: Nodal ministry for official statistics and programme implementation in India.
• Key Role: Conducts national surveys and releases major economic indicators such as GDP, CPI, and IIP.

• New Initiative: Trial Index of Services Production (ISP).

Other Recent Statistical Initiatives

- MoSPI has adopted 2024–25 as the new base year for the trial ISP.
- The ministry plans to expand the ISP's coverage beyond the current 60% before launching the overall index.

Exam Focus Points

• Ministry: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)
• Index: Index of Services Production (ISP)
• Base Year: 2024–25
• Coverage: 19 formal services sub-sectors
• Current Coverage: About 60% of the services economy
• Purpose: High-frequency measurement of India's services sector
• Highest Growth Sector: Accommodation & Food Services (37.2%)
• Release Frequency: 29th of every month (sub-sectoral indices)

Government Launches ‘Seafarer-First’ Initiative to Protect Indian Seafarers



- Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal has launched the ‘Seafarer-First’ initiative to protect Indian seafarers amid the escalating maritime security crisis in West Asia following attacks on merchant vessels in the Strait of Hormuz. The

initiative aims to ensure the safety, welfare, and emergency support of Indian seafarers in the conflict-affected region.

Key Measures under the Initiative:

- Sarbananda Sonowal chaired a high-level inter-ministerial review meeting in New Delhi.
- Directed real-time vessel-by-vessel monitoring of Indian seafarers operating in the Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, and Gulf of Oman.
- Ordered the appointment of a dedicated liaison officer for every affected Indian seafarer.
- Directed the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) to establish a real-time operational

dashboard to track every Indian seafarer, irrespective of the vessel's flag.

- Instructed authorities to coordinate closely with Indian Missions in Iran, Oman, and the UAE for navigational safety, medical evacuation, and repatriation.
- Directed shipowners, vessel managers, and recruitment agencies to ensure that no Indian seafarer is compelled to sail without adequate information, protection, and support.

Background

- The initiative follows attacks on MT Al Bahiyah and MT Mombasa in the Strait of Hormuz.
- The two vessels carried 30 Indian seafarers among a total crew of 46.
- One Indian seafarer lost his life, while several others were injured, including two critically injured.
- The Government has assured all possible assistance to affected seafarers and their families.

About Directorate General of Shipping (DGS)

- Ministry: Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW)
- Headquarters: Mumbai
- Role: India's maritime administration for merchant shipping and seafarer welfare.

- Function: Regulates shipping and implements the Merchant Shipping Act and international maritime conventions.

About Strait of Hormuz

- Connects the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea.
- Located between Iran and Oman.
- One of the world's most important maritime chokepoints for global oil and trade.

Exam Focus Points

- Initiative: Seafarer-First
- Minister: Sarbananda Sonowal
- Ministry: Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW)
- Implementing Agency: Directorate General of Shipping (DGS)
- Purpose: Protect Indian seafarers and ensure their safety and welfare in the West Asia maritime crisis.
- Affected Region: Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, Gulf of Oman
- Countries Involved in Coordination: Iran, Oman, UAE

Tamil Poet R. Vairamuthu Receives 60th Jnanpith Award (2025)



- Renowned Tamil poet and lyricist R. Vairamuthu has been conferred the 60th Jnanpith Award (2025), India's highest literary honour.

- The award was presented by Dr. Karan Singh at the Chinmaya Mission Auditorium, New Delhi.

Literary Contributions

- Vairamuthu is a renowned Tamil poet, novelist, and lyricist.
- His novel Kallikkattu Ithikasm received the Sahitya Akademi Award (2003).
- He has won the National Film Award for Best Lyrics seven times.

His notable works include:

- Karuvachi Kaaviyam
- Moondram Ulaga Por
- Thanneer Desam
- Sigaramgalai Nokki

- His literary works have been translated into several international languages.

Background

- R. Vairamuthu was born into a farming family in Tamil Nadu.
- His childhood was marked by poverty and displacement, which became major themes in his writings.
- He has been writing poetry, novels, and film lyrics for over five decades.

About Jnanpith Award

- Instituted: 1961
- First Award: 1965
- Presented By: Bharatiya Jnanpith
- Purpose: India's highest literary honour for outstanding contribution to literature.

Award Components:

- Cash prize of ₹11 lakh
- Citation plaque
- Bronze replica of Goddess Vagdevi (Saraswati)
- About Bharatiya Jnanpith
- Established: 1944
- Founder: Sahu Shanti Prasad Jain and Rama Jain
- Headquarters: New Delhi
- Objective: Promotion of Indian literature and languages through awards and publications.

Exam Focus Points

- Award: 60th Jnanpith Award (2025)
- Recipient: R. Vairamuthu
- Language: Tamil
- Presented By: Dr. Karan Singh
- Purpose: India's highest literary honour
- Instituted: 1961
- First Award: 1965
- Prize Money: ₹11 lakh

Lets Revise

- ❖ Who has been appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Jio Platforms ahead of its planned IPO? **Pankaj Pawar**
- ❖ Which former CEO did Pankaj Pawar replace at Jio Platforms? **Kiran Thomas**
- ❖ EaseMyTrip signed an MoU with which state government to promote tourism?
Jharkhand

- ❖ Which department signed the MoU with EaseMyTrip? **Department of Tourism, Government of Jharkhand**
- ❖ India and Nepal recently held talks to strengthen cooperation in which sector?: **Energy sector**
- ❖ Renowned Tamil writer Poomani, who recently passed away, received the Sahitya Akademi Award for which novel? **Agnyaadi**
- ❖ Which mission recently transported a new crew to the International Space Station (ISS)? **Expedition 75**
- ❖ Which Indian-origin NASA astronaut made his first spaceflight in the Expedition 75 mission? **Anil Menon**
- ❖ Which two agricultural products from Gujarat recently received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag? **Unjha Cumin (Jeera) and Unjha Fennel (Saunf).**
- ❖ In which state is Unjha, the famous spice trading hub, located? **Gujarat.**
- ❖ What is the full form of CETA signed between India and the United Kingdom? **Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement.**
- ❖ Which ministry released India's first trial Index of Services Production (ISP)? **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).**
- ❖ Which Union Minister launched the 'Seafarer-First' initiative? **Sarbananda Sonowal.**
- ❖ Who received the 60th Jnanpith Award (2025)? **R. Vairamuthu.**
- ❖ What is the cash prize awarded under the Jnanpith Award? **₹11 lakh**



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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.

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