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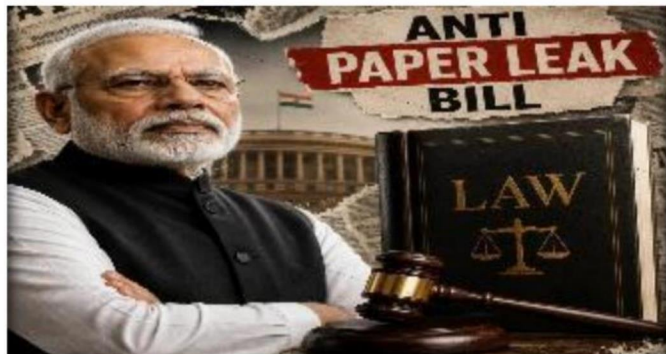


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Top Stories of The Day

- Cabinet Approves Tougher *Anti-Paper Leak Bill* with Stronger Penalties and Fast-Track Courts.
- *President Murmu* Receives Honorary Doctorate from Bucharest University for India–Romania Relations.
- Cabinet Approves ₹3,030 Crore *BHAVYA Rasayan Scheme* for Chemical Park Development.
- *Viswanathan Anand* Takes Charge as FIDE Interim President After Dvorkovich Suspension.
- Bangladesh President *Shahabuddin Resigns*; Speaker Hafiz Uddin Ahmad Takes Interim Charge.
- UN Reappoints *Volker Türk* as Human Rights Chief for Second Four-Year Term.
- *Venezuela* Starts Withdrawal from ICC, Citing Bias Against Global South.
- *BNP Paribas Cardif* to Acquire 26% Stake in IndiaFirst Life Insurance.
- *Raghu Vamsi Aerospace* Plans ₹600 Crore Telangana Superalloy Plant Investment.
- *UNESCO* Adds Sebastia and Mount Amel Castles to Heritage and Danger Lists.
- *Dharmendra Pradhan Resigns* as Education Minister Over Examination Irregularities.

Union Cabinet Approves Tougher Anti-Paper Leak Bill



- The Union Cabinet has approved amendments to the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024 to introduce stricter penalties against paper leaks and organised examination malpractices.
- The proposed amendments provide for imprisonment of up to 10 years, a fine of up to ₹10 crore, and statutory fast-track courts to ensure speedy disposal of paper leak cases. The Bill will now be introduced in Parliament.

About the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024:

- The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024 was enacted to prevent paper leaks, organised cheating, impersonation, and other unfair practices in public examinations.

Public Examinations Covered Under the Act

The Act applies to examinations conducted by:

- | |
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| • Union Public Service Commission (UPSC). |
| • Staff Selection Commission (SSC). |
| • Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs). |
| • National Testing Agency (NTA). |
| • Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS). |
| • Any other Central Government-notified public examination authority. |

What Constitutes "Unfair Means"?

The Act defines unfair means to include:

- Leakage of question papers or answer keys.
- Unauthorized access to examination papers.

Impersonation.

- Tampering with computer systems or examination software.
- Manipulation of merit lists.
- Conducting fake examinations.
- Issuing fake admit cards or appointment letters.
- Organized cheating for monetary gain.

Proposed Amendments:

The proposed amendments aim to strengthen the existing law by:

- | |
|--|
| • Increasing punishment for paper leak offences. |
| • Raising the maximum fine from ₹1 crore to ₹10 crore. |
| • Prescribing a minimum imprisonment of 5 years for offenders. |
| • Providing statutory backing to fast-track courts. |
| • Ensuring disposal of paper leak cases within three months. |

Fast-Track Courts:

- Fast-track courts are special courts established for speedy disposal of specific categories of cases.

Objectives:

- | |
|--|
| • Reduce pendency of cases. |
| • Deliver timely justice. |
| • Improve judicial efficiency. |
| • Act as a deterrent against serious offences. |

National Testing Agency (NTA):

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| • Established | : 2018 |
| • Headquarters: | New Delhi |
| • Director General: | Abhishek Singh |

Major Examinations Conducted:

• NEET (UG).
• JEE Main.
• CUET (UG & PG).
• UGC-NET.
• NCET.
• Other national-level entrance examinations.

Union Public Service Commission (UPSC):

• Constitutional Provision Articles 315–323
• Established : 1 October 1926 (Public Service Commission); Constitutional status from 1950
• Headquarters: New Delhi
• Chairperson: Ajay Kumar

Functions:

- Conducts Civil Services Examination.
- Conducts recruitment examinations.
- Advises the Government on recruitment and service matters.

Staff Selection Commission (SSC):

• Established: 1975
• Headquarters: New Delhi
• Chairman: S. Gopalakrishnan
• Ministry: Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT)

Functions

- Recruitment to Group B and Group C posts in Central Government ministries and departments.

Constitutional Provisions:

• Article: Provision
• Article 315: Public Service Commissions
• Article 320: Functions of Public Service Commissions
• Article 14: Equality before Law
• Article 16: Equality of Opportunity in Public Employment

Exam Focus Points:

• Act: Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024.
• Purpose: Prevent paper leaks and examination malpractices.
• Maximum Proposed Punishment: 10 years' imprisonment.
• Maximum Proposed Fine: ₹10 crore.
• Minimum Proposed Imprisonment: 5 years.
• New Provision: Statutory fast-track courts.
• Cases to be Disposed Within: Three months.
• Examinations Covered: UPSC, SSC, NTA, RRB, IBPS, and other notified public examinations.
• Related Constitutional Articles: 14, 16, 315, 320.

Bucharest University of Economic Studies Confers Honorary Doctorate on President Droupadi Murmu

- During her State Visit to Romania, President Droupadi Murmu was conferred the prestigious Doctor Honoris Causa (Honorary Doctorate) by the Bucharest University of Economic Studies (ASE) in recognition of her distinguished public

service, commitment to education and social inclusion, and contribution to strengthening India–Romania relations.

- Accepting the honour, the President dedicated it to the 1.4 billion people of India and described

education as the greatest force for social transformation.



About Doctor Honoris Causa:

- Doctor Honoris Causa (Honorary Doctorate) is the highest honorary academic degree awarded by a university to individuals who have made exceptional contributions to public service, education, science, culture, leadership, or international cooperation.

About Bucharest University of Economic Studies (ASE):

- The Bucharest University of Economic Studies (ASE) is Romania's premier institution for higher education in economics, business, and public administration.

• Established: 1913
• Location: Bucharest, Romania
• Specialisation: Economics, Business, Public Administration
• Highest Academic Honour: Doctor Honoris Causa

India–Romania Educational Cooperation:

Major areas of cooperation include:

• Student exchange programmes.
• Faculty exchange.
• Joint research projects.
• Capacity building.
• Scholarships.
• Innovation and technology.

• Artificial Intelligence.
• Higher education partnerships.
• ITEC training programmes.

Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC):

- The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme is India's flagship capacity-building initiative for partner countries.
- Launched: 1964

Areas Covered:

• Information Technology.
• Artificial Intelligence.
• Public Administration.
• Renewable Energy.
• Governance.
• Entrepreneurship.
• Cyber Security.

National Education Policy (NEP), 2020:

The President referred to the vision of NEP 2020, which promotes:

• Internationalisation of higher education.
• Research and innovation.
• Academic collaboration.
• Multidisciplinary education.
• Global partnerships.
• Skill development.

India–Romania Relations

- India and Romania established diplomatic relations in 1948.

• Major Areas of Cooperation
• Trade and Investment.
• Science & Technology.
• Education.

- Sports.
- Renewable Energy.
- Pharmaceuticals.
- Information Technology.
- Agriculture.

Important Personalities:

- Rabindranath Tagore visited Bucharest in 1926 and delivered a lecture on the unity of humanity.
- Romanian national poet Mihai Eminescu studied the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita.
- Romanian scholar Mircea Eliade studied Sanskrit and Indian philosophy at the University of Calcutta.

About Romania:

- Capital: Bucharest
- Currency: Romanian Leu (RON)
- President: Nicușor Dan
- Prime Minister: Ilie Bolojan

- Region: Southeastern Europe
- Member of NATO: Since 2004
- Member of European Union: Since 2007

Exam Focus Points:

- Award: Doctor Honoris Causa (Honorary Doctorate).
- Recipient: President Droupadi Murmu.
- Awarding Institution: Bucharest University of Economic Studies (ASE), Romania.
- University Established: 1913.
- Country: Romania.
- Capital: Bucharest.
- ITEC Launched: 1964.
- Administered By: Ministry of External Affairs.
- Related Policy: National Education Policy (NEP), 2020.
- India–Romania Diplomatic Relations: 1948.

Cabinet Approves ₹3,030 Crore BHAVYA Rasayan Scheme for Three Chemical Parks



- The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana Rasayan (BHAVYA Rasayan) Scheme with a financial outlay of ₹3,030 crore for establishing three dedicated Chemical Parks across India.
- The scheme aims to strengthen India's chemical manufacturing ecosystem through plug-and-play infrastructure, attract domestic and foreign investments, reduce import dependence, boost exports, and promote sustainable industrial

growth. It was announced in the Union Budget 2026–27.

Objectives of BHAVYA Rasayan Scheme

The scheme seeks to:

- Develop world-class chemical manufacturing hubs.
- Strengthen upstream, downstream, and ancillary chemical industries.
- Reduce logistics and production costs.
- Promote Atmanirbhar Bharat through import substitution.
- Increase exports and integrate India into Global Value Chains (GVCs).
- Attract domestic and foreign investments.
- Generate employment.

- Promote environmentally sustainable industrial development.

Major Infrastructure Facilities:

Each Chemical Park will provide plug-and-play infrastructure, including:

- Common Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP).
- Treatment, Storage and Disposal Facility (TSDF).
- Hazardous waste management facilities.
- Water supply and distribution systems.
- Steam generation and distribution network.
- Solvent recovery and distillation facilities.
- Interconnected pipeline network.
- Logistics and warehousing infrastructure.

What is a Chemical Park?

- A Chemical Park is an integrated industrial cluster where multiple chemical manufacturing units operate with shared infrastructure and common utilities.

Benefits

- Lower infrastructure costs.
- Better environmental compliance.
- Efficient resource utilisation.
- Improved supply chain connectivity.
- Enhanced global competitiveness.
- Easier investment and industrial expansion.

Plug-and-Play Infrastructure:

- Plug-and-play infrastructure refers to ready-to-use industrial facilities where companies can start production with minimal additional investment.

Advantages

- Faster project implementation.
- Reduced capital expenditure.
- Shared utilities.

- Lower operating costs.
- Improved ease of doing business.

Indian Chemical Industry:

- India is the 6th largest producer of chemicals in the world and the 3rd largest producer in Asia.

Importance

- Contributes significantly to manufacturing GDP.
- Supports exports.
- Provides raw materials to several industries.
- Generates large-scale employment.

Major User Industries:

- Agriculture.
- Pharmaceuticals.
- Textiles.
- Automobiles.
- Construction.
- Electronics.
- Nutraceuticals.
- Consumer goods.

Environmental Infrastructure:

- The scheme emphasises sustainable industrial development through:
- Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs).
- Hazardous Waste Management.
- Treatment, Storage and Disposal Facilities (TSDFs).
- Pollution control systems.
- Resource-efficient manufacturing.

- These facilities will help industries comply with environmental regulations and reduce pollution.

Challenge Route:

- Under the Challenge Route, State Governments compete based on predefined criteria such as:
- Availability of land.

- Project readiness.
- Infrastructure planning.
- Environmental compliance.
- Investment potential.

- States meeting the highest standards are selected for Central assistance.

Global Value Chains (GVCs):

- A Global Value Chain (GVC) refers to the international network of production, processing, and distribution where different stages of manufacturing take place across multiple countries.

Benefits:

- Higher exports.
- Technology transfer.
- Greater foreign investment.
- Employment generation.
- Enhanced competitiveness.

Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers

- Headquarters: New Delhi
- Departments: Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals, Department of Fertilizers, Department of Pharmaceuticals

Additional Facts:

- Common Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP): A CETP is a centralized facility that treats industrial wastewater from multiple industries before discharge.

Viswanathan Anand Takes Charge as FIDE Interim President

Viswanathan Anand assumed charge as FIDE Interim President.

- He succeeds Arkady Dvorkovich on an interim basis.

- Treatment, Storage and Disposal Facility (TSDF): A TSDF is an authorised facility for the safe treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous industrial waste.

Major Chemical Producing States:

- Gujarat.
- Maharashtra.
- Tamil Nadu.
- Andhra Pradesh.
- Odisha.

Exam Focus Points:

- Scheme: Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana Rasayan (BHAVYA Rasayan).
- Approved By: Union Cabinet.
- Financial Outlay: ₹3,030 crore.
- Chemical Parks: 3.
- Duration: FY 2026–27 to FY 2030–31.
- Central Grant: Up to ₹1,000 crore per park.
- Minimum State Contribution: ₹500 crore.
- Selection Method: Challenge Route.
- Minimum Land Requirement: 8 sq. km (2,000 acres).
- Major Infrastructure: CETP, TSDF, logistics, pipeline network, warehousing.
- Related Initiative: Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- Implementing Ministry: Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.

- Dvorkovich voluntarily suspended his duties after being placed under EU sanctions.
- Anand has been serving as FIDE Deputy President since 2022.
- He will continue as Interim President until the sanctions are lifted or otherwise cease to apply.

- The FIDE Presidential Elections 2026 are scheduled during the FIDE Congress in Samarkand, Uzbekistan (September 2026).



About Viswanathan Anand

- Viswanathan Anand, popularly known as "Vishy Anand", is India's greatest chess player and one of the most successful players in world chess history.

Major Achievements

- First Indian Grandmaster (1988).
- Five-time World Chess Champion.
- Former World No. 1.
- Current FIDE Interim President (2026).
- Former FIDE Deputy President (2022–2026).

World Chess Championship Titles:

• 2000	FIDE World Chess Champion
• 2007	World Chess Champion
• 2008	Defeated Vladimir Kramnik
• 2010	Defeated Veselin Topalov
• 2012	Defeated Boris Gelfand

Major National Honours Received by Viswanathan Anand:

• Arjuna Award: 1985
• Padma Shri : 1987
• Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna (First Recipient): 1991–92
• Padma Bhushan: 2000
• Padma Vibhushan: 2007

About FIDE

- The International Chess Federation (FIDE) is the global governing body of chess.
- Full Form: Fédération Internationale des Échecs (International Chess Federation)
- Established: 20 July 1924
- Headquarters: Lausanne, Switzerland

FIDE Titles:

• Title: Eligibility
• Grandmaster (GM): Highest open title
• International Master (IM): Second-highest title
• FIDE Master (FM): Awarded based on rating norms
• Candidate Master (CM): Entry-level FIDE title
• Woman Grandmaster (WGM): Highest women's title

What is an Interim President?

- An Interim President temporarily performs the functions of the President when the incumbent is unable to discharge official responsibilities due to resignation, suspension, incapacity, or any other legal reason.

Role

- Ensure continuity of administration.
- Oversee day-to-day functioning.
- Exercise presidential powers under organisational rules.
- Maintain institutional stability.

Exam Focus Points:

• Interim President: Viswanathan Anand.
• Organisation: FIDE (International Chess Federation).
• Reason for Appointment: Suspension of Arkady Dvorkovich's duties following EU sanctions.
• Anand's Previous Position: FIDE Deputy President.
• FIDE Established: 1924.
• Headquarters: Lausanne, Switzerland.
• Motto: Gens Una Sumus.

- First Indian Grandmaster: Viswanathan Anand (1988). - World Chess Championship Titles: Five.	FIDE Elections 2026 Venue: Samarkand, Uzbekistan.
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Bangladesh President Mohammed Shahabuddin Resigns on Health Grounds



- President Mohammed Shahabuddin resigned citing ill health.
- He became the 22nd President of Bangladesh in April 2023.
- The resignation was submitted under Article 50(3) of the Constitution of Bangladesh.
- Speaker Hafiz Uddin Ahmad assumed the role of Acting President under Article 54.
- A new President will be elected in accordance with the Constitution.
- Mohammed Shahabuddin is a former judge, lawyer, and freedom fighter who participated in Bangladesh's 1971 Liberation War.

Election of the President:

- Elected by the Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament).
- Serves a five-year term.
- Eligible for one re-election.

Vacancy in the Office:

- If the President resigns, dies, or is unable to perform duties, the Speaker of Parliament acts as President until a new President is elected.

Relevant Constitutional Articles:

Article: Provision
Article 48: Office of the President
Article 50(3): Resignation of the President

- Article 54: Speaker to discharge presidential functions during vacancy

President of Bangladesh:

- The President is the constitutional Head of State of Bangladesh.

Powers and Functions

Appoints the Prime Minister.
Appoints the Chief Justice and constitutional authorities.
Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.
Grants pardons and reprieves.
Performs constitutional and ceremonial functions.
Note: Under Bangladesh's parliamentary system, executive power is exercised by the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers.

About Bangladesh:

Capital: Dhaka
Currency: Bangladeshi Taka (BDT)
National Parliament: Jatiya Sangsad
Neighbouring Countries
India
Myanmar
Major Rivers
Ganga (Padma)
Brahmaputra (Jamuna)
Meghna

India–Bangladesh Relations:

India and Bangladesh maintain close cooperation in:

- Trade and connectivity.
- Inland waterways.
- Energy and power.
- Security and border management.
- Culture and education.
- BIMSTEC and BBIN initiatives.

Major Connectivity Projects:

- Maitree Express (Kolkata–Dhaka).
- Bandhan Express.
- Mitali Express.
- Akhaura–Agartala Rail Link.
- India–Bangladesh Inland Water Transit.
- Bangladesh Liberation War (1971)
- Led to the creation of Bangladesh.
- India played a decisive role in supporting Bangladesh's liberation.
- The war ended with Pakistan's surrender on 16 December 1971, celebrated as Victory Day in Bangladesh.

SAARC:

- Bangladesh is a founding member of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).
- Established: 1985
- Secretary-General: Golam Sarwar
- Chairmanship : Bangladesh
- Headquarters: Kathmandu, Nepal
- Members: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka

BIMSTEC:

- Bangladesh is also a founding member of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC).
- Chairmanship: Bangladesh (since March 2025)[5]

Secretary General: India (since 2023)

- Members
- Bangladesh
- Bhutan
- India
- Myanmar
- Nepal
- Sri Lanka
- Thailand

Additional Facts:

- Liberation War of Bangladesh
- Year: 1971.
- India recognised Bangladesh on 6 December 1971.
- Pakistan surrendered on 16 December 1971.
- Bangladesh Economy
- One of the world's leading exporters of ready-made garments (RMG).
- Major sectors include textiles, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, and shipbuilding.

Exam Focus Points:

- Country: Bangladesh.
- Resigning President: Mohammed Shahabuddin.
- Reason: Health complications.
- Succeeded by (Acting): Speaker Hafiz Uddin Ahmad.
- Constitutional Provision for Resignation: Article 50(3).
- Acting President Provision: Article 54.
- Capital: Dhaka.
- Currency: Bangladeshi Taka.
- Parliament: Jatiya Sangsad.
- Government System: Parliamentary Republic.
- President Assumed Office: April 2023.



Why is it in News?

- The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has reappointed Volker Türk as the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) for a second four-year term, despite opposition from the United States, Israel, and Russia. He received 144 votes in favour, while 10 countries voted against and 13 abstained.

Background & Significance

- Volker Türk, an Austrian lawyer, became the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in 2022.
- The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights is the top UN official responsible for promoting and protecting human rights worldwide.
- During his first term, Türk criticised the human rights records of several countries, including Russia (Ukraine war), Israel (Gaza conflict), China (Uyghur issue), and the United States (immigration detention).
- His reappointment became controversial because the US, Israel, and Russia argued that the nomination process lacked transparency and questioned his impartiality.

Why is it Important?

- Reaffirms the independence of the UN human rights system.
- Highlights divisions among major powers on global human rights issues.
- Demonstrates the authority of the UN General Assembly in approving key UN appointments.

- The office plays a crucial role in monitoring human rights violations and advising governments on human rights protection.

About the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR)

Particular	Details
Established	1993
Created by	UN General Assembly
Headquarters	Geneva, Switzerland
Current Office Holder	Volker Türk (Austria)
Term	4 years (renewable)
Main Role	Promote and protect human rights worldwide

Way Forward

- Strengthen the independence and credibility of the UN human rights system.
- Promote constructive dialogue between the UN and member states.
- Ensure transparency in future appointments to key UN positions.
- Enhance international cooperation to address global human rights challenges.

Exam Focus Points

Person in News:	Volker Türk.
Country:	Austria.
Post:	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR).
Headquarters:	Geneva, Switzerland.
Established:	1993.
Reappointed By:	United Nations General Assembly.
Term:	4 years.
Vote:	144–10, with 13 abstentions.
Opposing Countries:	United States, Israel, and Russia.

Venezuela Decides to Withdraw from the International Criminal Court (ICC), Alleging Bias



Why is it in News?

- Venezuela has officially informed the United Nations (UN) of its decision to withdraw from the International Criminal Court (ICC). The government accused the ICC of showing "geographical bias", claiming that it disproportionately targets countries in Africa and Latin America (Global South).

Background & Significance

- The International Criminal Court (ICC) is the world's first permanent court that tries individuals for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and the crime of aggression.
- Venezuela has been under ICC investigation since 2021 over alleged crimes against humanity during the government's crackdown on anti-government protests in 2017.
- In December 2025, Venezuela's National Assembly voted to withdraw from the Rome Statute, the treaty that established the ICC.
- The latest decision formally begins Venezuela's withdrawal process. Under Article 127 of the Rome Statute, withdrawal takes effect one year after notification to the UN. Ongoing investigations are not automatically terminated.

Why is it Important?

- Raises questions about the credibility and impartiality of international judicial institutions.

- Highlights growing tensions between some countries and the International Criminal Court.
- Could affect international efforts to ensure accountability for serious international crimes.
- Important for understanding international law, global governance, and the Rome Statute.

About the International Criminal Court (ICC)

Particular	Details
Established	2002
Founded By	Rome Statute (1998)
Headquarters	The Hague, Netherlands
Nature	Permanent international criminal court
Tries Crimes	Genocide, Crimes Against Humanity, War Crimes, Crime of Aggression
Jurisdiction	Tries individuals (not States) when national courts are unwilling or unable to prosecute
Withdrawal Clause	Article 127 of the Rome Statute

Way Forward

- Strengthen the independence and impartiality of international judicial institutions.
- Encourage constructive engagement between member states and the ICC.
- Improve transparency and cooperation to enhance confidence in international justice.
- Continue ensuring accountability for serious international crimes through international legal mechanisms.

Exam Focus Points

- | |
|---|
| Country in News: Venezuela. |
| Organisation: International Criminal Court (ICC). |

- Headquarters: The Hague, Netherlands.
- Founded By: Rome Statute (1998).
- Operational Since: 2002.
- Withdrawal Provision: Article 127 of the Rome Statute.

- Reason for Withdrawal: Alleged geographical bias against the Global South.
- Key Fact: Withdrawal does not automatically stop ongoing ICC investigations.

BNP Paribas Cardif to Acquire 26% Stake in IndiaFirst Life Insurance



Why is it in News?

- BNP Paribas Cardif, the insurance arm of France's BNP Paribas Group, has signed an agreement to acquire a 26% stake in IndiaFirst Life Insurance from Warburg Pincus. The deal will make BNP Paribas Cardif a strategic shareholder in the Indian life insurance company, subject to regulatory approvals.
- Strengthens foreign investment (FDI) in India's insurance sector.
- Enhances BNP Paribas Cardif's presence in one of the world's fastest-growing insurance markets.
- Brings global expertise in insurance products, digital innovation, and risk management.
- Reflects investor confidence in India's long-term financial services sector.

Why is it Important?

About BNP Paribas Cardif

Particular	Details
• Country	France
• Parent Company	BNP Paribas Group
• Business Insurance	(Life & General Insurance)
• Founded	1973
• Headquarters	Paris, France

Background & Significance

- IndiaFirst Life Insurance was established in 2009 as a joint venture between Bank of Baroda, Union Bank of India, and Legal & General (UK).
- In 2019, global private equity firm Warburg Pincus acquired a 26% stake in the company.
- Through this acquisition, BNP Paribas Cardif will replace Warburg Pincus as the foreign strategic investor.
- The transaction reflects the growing interest of global insurers in India's expanding life insurance market.

About IndiaFirst Life Insurance

Particular	Details
• Established	2009
• Sector	Life Insurance
• Headquarters	Mumbai, Maharashtra
• Promoters	Bank of Baroda and Union Bank of India

Current Shareholding (After the Proposed Deal)

Shareholder Stake

• Bank of Baroda	65%
• Union Bank of India	9%
• BNP Paribas Cardif	26%

Way Forward

- Obtain approvals from IRDAI and other regulatory authorities to complete the transaction.
- Leverage BNP Paribas Cardif's global expertise to improve insurance penetration and product innovation in India.
- Expand digital insurance solutions to reach underserved customers.

• Buyer: BNP Paribas Cardif (France).
• Seller: Warburg Pincus.
• Target Company: IndiaFirst Life Insurance.
• Stake Acquired: 26%.
• Parent Company: BNP Paribas Group.
• IndiaFirst Life Established: 2009.
• Headquarters: Mumbai.
• Key Regulator: Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI).

Exam Focus Points

Raghu Vamsi Aerospace to Set Up ₹600 Crore Integrated Superalloy Plant in Telangana



- Raghu Vamsi Aerospace Group has announced an investment of over ₹600 crore to establish a 50-acre integrated nickel-based superalloy manufacturing facility in Telangana. The announcement was made during the Farnborough International Airshow 2026 in the United Kingdom. The project aims to strengthen India's aerospace and defence manufacturing ecosystem, reduce dependence on imported superalloys, and promote Aatmanirbhar Bharat. The facility is expected to commence commercial production by January 2028 with an annual production capacity of 5,000 tonnes. It will be led by Dr. S. K. Jha, former CMD of Mishra Dhatu Nigam Limited (MIDHANI).

temperatures. Among them, nickel-based superalloys are the most widely used due to their excellent heat resistance and durability.

Applications of Superalloys:

- Nickel-based superalloys are essential for manufacturing aircraft engines, space systems, defence equipment, gas turbines, nuclear reactors, oil & gas equipment, medical implants, and emerging hydrogen technologies. The new facility will manufacture round bars, wires, forgings, castings, tungsten carbide powders, and other specialised products using advanced processes such as vacuum melting, vacuum casting, forging, heat treatment, and powder metallurgy.

Significance of the Project:

- The project will reduce India's dependence on imported strategic materials, strengthen domestic aerospace and defence supply chains, promote indigenous manufacturing, attract investment, generate skilled employment, and enhance India's participation in global aerospace value chains.

What are Superalloys?

- Superalloys are high-performance alloys that retain their strength, corrosion resistance, and mechanical properties at very high

About Raghu Vamsi Aerospace Group:

- Raghu Vamsi Aerospace Group is a Hyderabad-based precision engineering and deep-tech company serving the aerospace, defence, and energy sectors. It manufactures critical aero-engine components and supplies leading global companies such as GE Aerospace, Pratt & Whitney, Honeywell, Safran, and Collins Aerospace.

About MIDHANI:

- Mishra Dhatu Nigam Limited (MIDHANI) is a Mini Ratna Category-I PSU under the Ministry of Defence. Established in 1973 and headquartered in Hyderabad, it is India's premier producer of special metals, superalloys, titanium alloys, and special steels used in strategic sectors.

About Farnborough International Airshow:

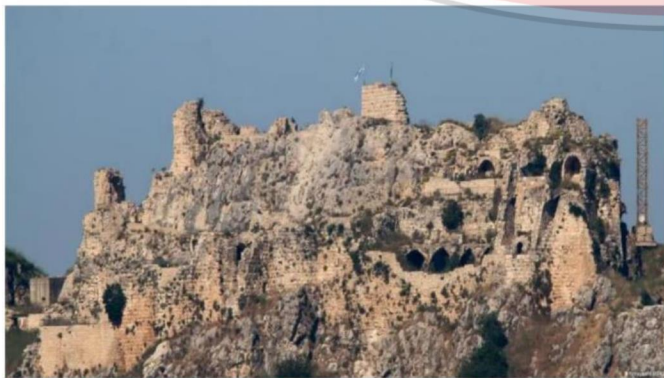
- The Farnborough International Airshow is one of the world's leading biennial aerospace and

defence exhibitions, held in Farnborough, United Kingdom, showcasing the latest developments in aviation, defence, and space technologies.

Exam Focus Points:

• Project: Integrated Nickel-Based Superalloy Manufacturing Facility.
• Company: Raghu Vamsi Aerospace Group.
• Investment: ₹600 crore.
• Location: Telangana.
• Area: 50 acres.
• Production Capacity: 5,000 tonnes per year.
• Commercial Production: January 2028.
• Project Head: Dr. S. K. Jha.
• Related PSU: MIDHANI.

UNESCO Adds Sebastia (West Bank) and Mount Amel Castles (Lebanon) to World Heritage List



Sebastia (State of Palestine) and Mount Amel Castles (Lebanon) were added to the UNESCO World Heritage List.

- Both sites were simultaneously included in the List of World Heritage in Danger.
- The inscriptions were approved during the 48th Session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in Busan, South Korea.

- Israel opposed the inscriptions, arguing they ignored the site's Jewish and Christian heritage and security concerns.

About Sebastia:

- Sebastia, located near Nablus in the West Bank, is identified with the ancient city of Samaria, the capital of the Kingdom of Israel during the Iron Age. The site preserves remains from several civilizations, including the Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian (Achaemenid), Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, Islamic, Crusader, Ayyubid, Mamluk, and Ottoman periods. It is also associated with the traditional burial place of John the Baptist.

About the Mount Amel Castles:

The Mount Amel inscription comprises five historic castles in southern Lebanon:

- Beaufort Castle (Qalaat Al Chakif)
- Toron Castle (Qalaat Tibnin)
- Dubieh Castle (Qalaat Chakra)
- Maron Castle (Qalaat Deir Kifa)
- Chama' Castle (Qalaat Chama')

- These fortifications reflect nearly nine centuries of military architecture, combining Crusader, Ayyubid, Mamluk, Ottoman, and local architectural traditions.

UNESCO World Heritage List:

- The UNESCO World Heritage List includes cultural, natural, and mixed sites considered to possess Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and deserving of protection for present and future generations.

Categories:

- Cultural Heritage.
- Natural Heritage.
- Mixed Heritage.

List of World Heritage in Danger:

- The List of World Heritage in Danger identifies World Heritage Sites facing serious threats such as:

- Armed conflict.
- Natural disasters.
- Urbanisation.
- Pollution.
- Illegal construction.
- Climate change.

- Its objective is to mobilise international support for conservation.

UNESCO World Heritage Committee:

- The World Heritage Committee is responsible for implementing the 1972 World Heritage Convention and deciding on new inscriptions.

- Established under 1972 World Heritage Convention
- Members 21 States Parties
- Elected from 196 States Parties
- Meeting Frequency Once every year
- 48th Session (2026) Busan, Republic of Korea

About UNESCO:

- Full Form United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- Established 1945
- Headquarters Paris, France
- Director-General Khaled El-Enany
- Parent Organisation United Nations

World Heritage Convention, 1972:

- The Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage was adopted by UNESCO in 1972 to identify, protect, and preserve sites of outstanding universal value.

India and the Convention:

- Ratified by India: 1977.
- India's World Heritage Sites (2026): 44 (36 Cultural, 7 Natural, 1 Mixed).

Palestine and UNESCO:

- State of Palestine became a UNESCO member in 2011.
- With the inscription of Sebastia, Palestine now has six UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Additional Facts:

- UNESCO Headquarters
- Paris, France.
- India's Latest UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Ancient Buddhist Site, Sarnath (Varanasi) was inscribed during the 48th Session of the World Heritage Committee (2026).
- Mixed World Heritage Site in India

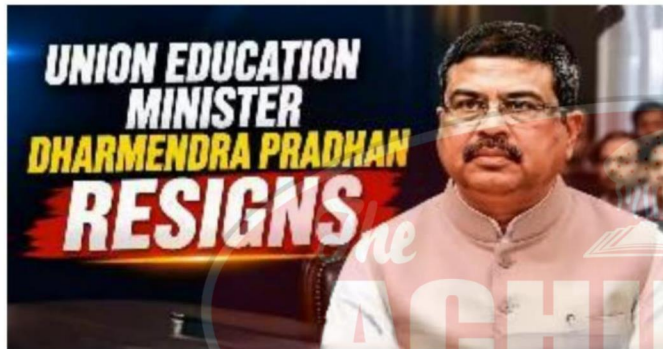
- Khangchendzonga National Park (Sikkim).

Exam Focus Points:

- Organisation: UNESCO.
- Committee Session: 48th World Heritage Committee.
- Venue: Busan, Republic of Korea.
- New World Heritage Sites: Sebastia (State of Palestine) and Mount Amel Castles (Lebanon).

- Also Added To: List of World Heritage in Danger.
- UNESCO Headquarters: Paris, France.
- World Heritage Convention: 1972.
- Palestine UNESCO Membership: 2011.
- Palestine's World Heritage Sites: 6.

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Resigns



- Dharmendra Pradhan resigned as the Union Minister of Education.
- The resignation was submitted to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- It followed widespread protests over alleged examination irregularities.
- Pradhan stated that he was taking moral responsibility while emphasizing that reforms against the "exam mafia" would continue.
- The Union Government had earlier announced measures such as CBI investigation, re-examination, Computer-Based Testing (CBT) for future NEET exams, and stronger anti-paper leak legislation.

About the Ministry of Education:

- The Ministry of Education (MoE) is responsible for formulating and implementing policies relating to school education, higher education, research, and skill development.

Major Departments:

- Department of School Education & Literacy.
- Department of Higher Education.

Major Functions:

- Formulation of national education policy.
- Administration of higher education institutions.
- Promotion of research and innovation.
- Implementation of educational reforms.

National Education Policy (NEP), 2020:

- The National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 aims to transform India's education system through:

- Multidisciplinary education.
- Holistic and flexible learning.
- Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).
- National Research Foundation (NRF).
- Digital education.
- Internationalisation of higher education.
- Vocational education.

National Testing Agency (NTA):

- The National Testing Agency (NTA) is an autonomous organisation under the Ministry of Education responsible for conducting major national-level entrance examinations.
- Established: 2018
- Headquarters: New Delhi

Major Examinations:

- NEET (UG).
- JEE Main.
- CUET (UG & PG).

- UGC-NET.
- NCET.

Union Council of Ministers

- The Union Council of Ministers is headed by the Prime Minister and functions under Articles 74 and 75 of the Constitution of India.

Constitutional Provisions:

- Article: Provision
- Article 74: Council of Ministers to aid and advise the President.
- Article 75: Appointment, tenure, collective responsibility, and resignation of Ministers.

- A Union Minister holds office during the pleasure of the President, on the advice of the Prime Minister.

Constitutional Position of a Union Minister:

- Appointed by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister.

- A Minister may resign by submitting the resignation to the Prime Minister, who advises the President on its acceptance.
- The Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha under Article 75(3).

Exam Focus Points:

- Resigning Minister: Dharmendra Pradhan.
- Portfolio: Union Minister of Education.
- Resignation Submitted To: Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- Related Ministry: Ministry of Education.
- Major Agency: National Testing Agency (NTA).
- Relevant Constitutional Articles: 74 and 75.
- Related Policy: National Education Policy (NEP), 2020.
- Related Law: Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024.

Lets Revise

- ❖ Which Act is proposed to be amended to strengthen action against paper leaks? **Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024.**
- ❖ Which Romanian university conferred the Honorary Doctorate on President Droupadi Murmu in 2026? **Bucharest University of Economic Studies (ASE).**
- ❖ What does BHAVYA Rasayan Scheme stands for? **Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana Rasayan.**
- ❖ What is the total financial outlay of the BHAVYA Rasayan Scheme? **₹3,030 crore.**
- ❖ How many Chemical Parks will be established under the BHAVYA Rasayan Scheme? **Three.**
- ❖ Who has taken charge as the Interim President of FIDE in 2026? **Viswanathan Anand.**

- ❖ Who resigned as the President of Bangladesh in July 2026? **Mohammed Shahabuddin.**
- ❖ Who has been reappointed as the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR)? **Volker Türk.**
- ❖ Volker Türk belongs to which country? **Austria.**
- ❖ Which UN body reappointed Volker Türk for a second term? **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).**
- ❖ Which country recently decided to withdraw from the International Criminal Court (ICC)? **Venezuela.**
- ❖ Which treaty established the International Criminal Court (ICC)? **The Rome Statute (1998).**
- ❖ In which year did the International Criminal Court (ICC) become operational? **2002.**
- ❖ Where is the headquarters of the International Criminal Court (ICC)? **The Hague, Netherlands.**
- ❖ Which Article of the Rome Statute governs the withdrawal of a State from the ICC? **Article 127 of the Rome Statute.**
- ❖ Which company recently agreed to acquire a 26% stake in IndiaFirst Life Insurance? **BNP Paribas Cardif.**
- ❖ BNP Paribas Cardif belongs to which country? **France.**
- ❖ From whom is BNP Paribas Cardif acquiring the 26% stake in IndiaFirst Life Insurance? **Warburg Pincus.**
- ❖ What percentage stake will BNP Paribas Cardif acquire in IndiaFirst Life Insurance? **26%.**
- ❖ Which company has announced a ₹600 crore investment to establish an integrated superalloy manufacturing plant in Telangana? **Raghu Vamsi Aerospace Group.**
- ❖ Which two new heritage properties were added to the UNESCO World Heritage List during the 48th World Heritage Committee Session in 2026? **Sebastia (State of Palestine) and the Mount Amel Castles (Lebanon).**
- ❖ Which Union Minister resigned in July 2026 amid examination-related protests? **Dharmendra Pradhan.**



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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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