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CURRENT AFFAIRS

Important Current News for UPSC & UPPSC

1st Mar 2026

TOPICS:-

- 1. Pakistan–Afghanistan Armed Conflict**
- 2. Very Short-Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS)**
- 3. Micron ATMP Facility – Sanand, Gujarat**
- 4. Amondawa Tribe (Brazil)**
- 5. Forest Rights Act (FRA) Cells**
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PAKISTAN–AFGHANISTAN ARMED CONFLICT

F. Firstpost

Pakistan in 'open war' against Afghanistan: Which military is more powerful?

Pakistan has declared 'open war' against Afghanistan, launching deadly airstrikes across different provinces. As the conflict worsens,...



Why in News

- Tensions escalated into open hostilities after Pakistan launched **Operation Ghazab lil-Haq** in response to alleged border aggression by the Afghan Taliban.

Nature of the Conflict

- It marks a shift from intermittent border skirmishes to a **conventional military confrontation**.
- Engagement now involves **air force units, tanks, and heavy artillery**.
- Pakistan Armed Forces are directly confronting the **Afghan Taliban regime**.



Geographic Flashpoints

- **Durand Line**: A 2,640 km porous border, historically disputed as Afghanistan does not recognise it as an international boundary.
- **Torkham crossing**: Major transit and trade point witnessing intense clashes.
- **Kandahar and Paktia province**: Key Taliban strongholds.
- Airstrikes reportedly expanded to **Kabul**, the Afghan capital.

Drivers of Escalation

- Pakistan accuses Kabul of sheltering **Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)** militants.
- Taliban opposes Pakistan's fencing of the Durand Line, causing repeated firing incidents.

Regional and Strategic Implications

- The **United Nations** flagged civilian impact, especially at border transit hubs.
- Conflict risks destabilising a **nuclear-sensitive South Asian region**.
- May invite indirect involvement of powers like **Russia or China**.
- Prolonged war can revive extremist groups and strain Pakistan's fragile economy.

VERY SHORT-RANGE AIR DEFENCE SYSTEM (VSHORADS)

PIB

DRDO conducts successful flight-trials of Very Short-Range Air Defence System

Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully conducted three successive flight-trials of Very Short-Range Air Defence...



Why in News

- The **Defence Research and Development Organisation** conducted three successful flight trials of VSHORADS at **Chandipur, Odisha**.

System Overview

- A **Man Portable Air Defence System (MANPADS)**.
- Developed indigenously by **Research Centre Imarat** with DRDO labs and production partners.
- Designed for use by Army, Navy and Air Force.



Technical Features

- Maximum range of **8 km** and engagement altitude up to **4.5 km**.
- Equipped with a **miniaturised Reaction Control System (RCS)** for precision steering.
- Integrated avionics enhance accuracy and manoeuvrability.
- Capable of neutralising low-flying aircraft and helicopters.

Strategic Importance

- Strengthens India's **short-range air defence shield**.
- Enhances self-reliance under **Atmanirbhar Bharat in defence manufacturing**.
- Critical in countering aerial threats including drones.

MICRON ATMP FACILITY – SANAND, GUJARAT

Why in News

- **Micron Technology** began operations at India's first advanced memory **ATMP facility in Sanand** and shipped its first DRAM module to **Dell Technologies**.

News On AIR

PM Modi inaugurates Micron Technology's Semiconductor plant at Sanand in Gujarat

Prime Minister Narendra Modi today inaugurated the Semiconductor Assembly, Test and Packaging (ATMP) facility of Micron Semiconductor...



Key Highlights

- Inaugurated by **Narendra Modi** as India's first advanced memory Assembly, Testing, Marking and Packaging (ATMP) site.
- Houses a **500,000 sq ft Class 1000 clean room**, the **largest raised-floor semiconductor assembly clean room globally**.
- Total planned investment is **\$2.7 billion**, with phased capacity expansion.



Manufacturing Operations

- Assembles and tests **DRAM (volatile working memory)** and **NAND flash (non-volatile storage)**.
- Follows a **wafer-in to finished-product-out model**, including thinning, dicing, testing and module mounting.
- Output to scale from millions of units to nearly **1 billion annually by 2027**.

Workforce & Technology

- Employs about **1,300 workers**, nearly half fresh engineering graduates.
- Uses **AI-driven automation, yield engineering and global-standard semiconductor tools**.
- Supplies planned for firms like **Asus and Qualcomm**.

Strategic Significance

- Expands India's semiconductor value chain into **advanced memory packaging and testing**.
- Supports national goals of **electronics self-reliance and reduced import dependence**.
- Strengthens India's role in the global semiconductor supply chain.

AMONDAWA TRIBE (BRAZIL)

Why in News

- Researchers highlighted that the **Amondawa tribe in Brazil** lives without clocks, calendars, or numerical age concepts.

 The Times of India

No calendars, no clocks, no years! Inside the Amondawa tribe where life is measured by stages, not time

The Amondawa, a small Amazonian tribe, seem to live in a very different way from most of us. Their language doesn't have a word for "time."



Identity-Based Social Structure

- Members do not calculate age; instead, they change **names at different life stages**.
- Social identity, not numerical age, determines maturity and status.
- This challenges the modern linear concept of time used in governance and demography.



Concept of Time and Language

- They have no linguistic equivalents for **“week, month, year or time”**.
- Events are described in sequence, but time is not treated as an abstract dimension.
- Daily life is guided by **natural cycles and relationships**, not mechanical schedules.

Location and Demography

- They live deep in the **Amazon rainforest of Brazil**.
- First contacted by outsiders in **1986**.
- Population is around **150**, dependent on hunting, fishing and farming.

Societal and Anthropological Significance

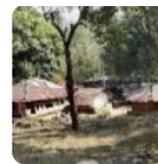
- Illustrates diversity of **temporal cognition** across cultures.
- Raises ethical concerns regarding **indigenous autonomy and cultural preservation**.

FOREST RIGHTS ACT (FRA) CELLS

TH The Hindu

Tribal Affairs Ministry set to revamp forest rights cells, form ‘one-stop’ coordinating units

A year after the Tribal Affairs Ministry started a programme to fund Forest Rights Act Cells (FRA cells) to aid the implementation of the...



Why in News

- The Union Government expanded the mandate of **FRA Cells** at State and UT levels for better implementation of the **Forest Rights Act, 2006**.

Institutional Framework

- Sanctioned under **Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyaan (DAJGUA)** (October 2024).
- Funded by the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs**.

- State-level cell: 3 personnel (Coordinator, IT/Data Expert, MIS Assistant).
- District/Sub-Divisional level: 2 personnel.

Functions and Administrative Support

- Assist in recognition of **Individual Forest Rights (IFR)** and **Community Forest Rights (CFR)**.
- Support digitisation of land records and tracking of claims.
- Facilitate conversion of **forest villages into revenue villages**.
- Help Gram Sabhas in preparing claim documents and collecting evidence.

Implementation Status

- 324 district-level cells sanctioned across 18 States/UTs.
- 17 State-level cells operational.
- Provide technical support without interfering in statutory decision-making.

Governance and Constitutional Dimensions

Rights for the dwellers

What the Forest Rights Act, 2006, entails

- Tenurial security over the forestland under occupation prior to December 13, 2005
- Recognition of community right over forest and forest products
- Protection and conservation of community forest resources
- Conversion of all forest villages and habitation located inside the forestland into revenue villages
- In situ rehabilitation of displaced persons evicted without compensation prior to December 13, 2005
- Recognition of ancestral domain (habitat) right to



Residents of Gunduribadi village in Odisha's Nayagarh district get ready for mapping their land boundaries for the Forest Rights Act implementation. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups

- Seasonal access to nomadic, pastoral and semi-nomadic communities over forestland

- Conversion of all leases granted by erstwhile governments, zamindars and king into permanent land records

- Addresses historical injustice to forest dwellers under the **Forest Rights Act, 2006**.
- Linked to **Article 46**, which directs the State to promote the interests of Scheduled Tribes.
- Strengthens decentralised governance by **empowering Gram Sabhas** in forest management.

INDIAN COMPUTER EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT-IN)

PIB

India's Space Ecosystem Gets Cyber Shield as SIA-India, CERT-In Release Joint Guidelines

Space cyber security, including Satellite Communication systems, is of paramount importance to India's space architecture.



Why in News

- The **Indian Computer Emergency Response Team** and the **Satcom Industry Association of India** released cybersecurity guidelines for India's space ecosystem.

Legal and Institutional Basis



- Designated under **Section 70B of the Information Technology Act, 2000**.
- Functions under the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)**.
- Operational since **January 2004**.

Core Functions

- Collects and analyses information on cyber incidents.
- Issues alerts, advisories, vulnerability notes and white papers.
- Coordinates incident response and emergency measures.
- Empowered to call for information and issue directions to service providers.

Strategic and Security Implications

- Strengthens protection of **critical information infrastructure**, including space assets.
- Enhances India's preparedness against **cyber warfare and digital espionage**.
- Supports international cooperation on emerging cyber threats.
- Operates a 24x7 incident response helpdesk for public and private sectors.

OTHER IMPORTANT NEWS OF THE DAY

Places in
News

PANGONG LAKE

Why in News

- **Ladakh hosted the world's highest frozen lake half marathon** at Pangong Tso, recorded in the Guinness World Records.

Geographical Features



- **Pangong Lake**, also called Pangong Tso, is an **endorheic brackish water lake**.
- Located at about **4,350 metres** above sea level in eastern Ladakh.
- Length is 134 km; one-third lies in India and two-thirds in China (Tibet region).

Strategic and Hydrological Aspects

- Lies in a separate landlocked basin, not part of **the Indus River system**.
- The **Line of Actual Control (LAC)** passes through the lake.
- It freezes completely in winter despite saline content.

Ecological Importance

- Known for colour-changing waters from blue to green and red hues.
- Breeding ground for **bar-headed geese, Brahminy ducks, black-necked cranes**.
- Sensitive high-altitude ecosystem vulnerable to climate change and militarisation.

Environment

NILGIRI WOOD PIGEON

TH The Hindu

Climate change could restrict habitat availability for Western Ghats birds such as The Nilgiri Wood Pigeon, warn researchers



Researchers warn that climate change may drastically limit habitats for the Nilgiri Wood Pigeon in the Western Ghats.

Why in News

- Research warns that **climate change** may restrict the habitat of endemic Western Ghats species like the **Nilgiri Wood Pigeon** to isolated pockets.



Habitat and Distribution

- Endemic to **the Western Ghats** biodiversity hotspot.
- Found in **high-elevation wet evergreen and semi-evergreen forests**, including sholas.
- Occurs up to **2,250 metres above sea level**.
- Major presence in **Nilgiris and Anamalai Hills**; isolated groups in Biligirirangan and Nandi Hills.

Ecological Characteristics

- Scientific name: **Columba elphinstonii**.
- Large, dark pigeon with distinctive **checkerboard pattern on nape**.
- Primarily **frugivorous**, feeding in forest canopies.
- Plays a role in **seed dispersal and forest regeneration**.

Threats and Legal Protection

- Threatened by **deforestation, plantation expansion, hunting, infrastructure growth and climate change**.
- IUCN Status: **Least Concern**.
- Listed under **Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**, ensuring highest statutory protection.

Conservation and Climate Linkages

- Demonstrates vulnerability of **endemic high-altitude species** to temperature rise.
- Highlights need for **landscape-level conservation planning in Western Ghats**.

AMUR FALCON

 India Today NE

Three satellite-tagged Amur falcons from Manipur spend winter in Africa

Three Amur falcons tagged with satellite transmitters in Manipur are currently spending their winter migration period across three African...



Why in News

- Three **Amur Falcon** tagged in Manipur are currently wintering in African countries.

Migration Pattern

- Breeds in **southeastern Siberia and northern China**.
- Migrates to **Southern and East Africa**.
- Undertakes **the longest regular overwater passage of any raptor**.
- Large flocks pass through **Northeast India**, especially Manipur.

Biological Features

- Scientific name: **Falco amurensis**.
- Wingspan ranges between 63–71 cm; average weight about 120 g.
- Male is dark grey with reddish thighs; female has spotted chest pattern.
- Both sexes have distinctive **orange eye-ring and feet**.

Conservation and Ecological Importance

- IUCN Status: **Least Concern**.
- Highlights importance of **international flyway conservation mechanisms**.
- Example of successful **community-led conservation initiatives in Manipur**.

Defence

EXERCISE VAYU SHAKTI-26

Why in News

- The **Indian Air Force** conducted Exercise Vayu Shakti-26 at Pokhran, Rajasthan.



Location and Objective

- Held at **Pokhran air-to-ground range near Jaisalmer.**
- Demonstrates operational preparedness and combat capability.
- Guided by values of **“Achook, Abhedya aur Sateek.”**

Operational Highlights

- Over 130 aircraft participated, including Rafale, Su-30 MKI, Mirage-2000, MiG-29 and Jaguar.
- Featured systems like **Akash missile system, SpyDer, Counter-Unmanned Aerial Systems (CUAS).**
- First time executed under a defined operational storyline simulating live combat theatre.

Health

MENINGOCOCCAL INFECTION



NDTV
<https://www.ndtv.com> > Health

Two Agniveer Trainees Die Of Suspected Meningococcal ...

17 hours ago — Both trainees had developed symptoms similar to that of meningitis. The deaths occurred within hours of hospitalisation in separate cases ... [Read more](#)

Why in News

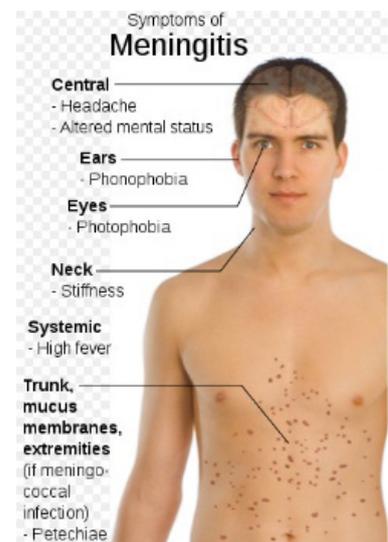
- **Meghalaya government** issued an advisory after a **meningococcal infection** scare.

Causative Agent and Nature

- Caused by the bacterium **Neisseria meningitidis.**
- Leads to **meningitis** (brain lining inflammation) or **meningococemia** (blood poisoning).
- Rapid progression makes it life-threatening if untreated.

Transmission

- Spread through **respiratory and throat secretions** such as saliva.
- Requires close or prolonged contact for transmission.
- Less contagious than common cold or influenza viruses.



Symptoms and Treatment

- Symptoms include **high fever, severe headache, stiff neck, and non-blanching rash.**
- Treated primarily with **antibiotics.**
- Severe cases may require oxygen therapy, blood pressure support, or surgery.

Public Health Significance

- Adolescents and young adults are more susceptible.
- Advisories focus on avoiding crowded spaces and early medical consultation.
- Highlights importance of **disease surveillance and rapid response mechanisms.**

UTTAR PRADESH IN NEWS

TH The Hindu

Interfaith marriages not prohibited under new U.P. conversion law: HC

Allahabad HC affirms interfaith marriages are legal, granting police protection to couples against state interference under new conversion...



INTERFAITH MARRIAGES AND UP CONVERSION LAW

Why in News

- The **Allahabad High Court** clarified that interfaith marriages are not barred under the **Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Act.**

Key Judicial Observations

- Interfaith marriage or live-in relationships between consenting adults do not violate the Act.
- Law applies only in cases involving **force, fraud, coercion or allurement** for religious conversion.
- Mere marriage across religions does not amount to conversion.

Constitutional Principles Affirmed

- Relied on **Article 14 (Equality), Article 15 (Non-discrimination), and Article 21 (Life and Personal Liberty).**
- Reinforced adult autonomy in choosing a life partner.
- Emphasised that state interference without legal basis violates fundamental rights.

Case Background and Impact

- Judgment arose from 12 petitions seeking protection from harassment.
- No allegation of forced conversion was found in these cases.
- Prevents misuse of anti-conversion provisions against consenting adults.
- Clarifies narrow interpretation of the statute, ensuring constitutional conformity.