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**DAILY
CURRENT AFFAIRS**

Important Current News for UPSC & UPPSC

20th Mar 2026

TOPICS:-

- 1. Coconut**
- 2. Autonomous District Councils (ADCs)**
- 3. Small Hydro Power (SHP) Development Scheme**
- 4. IOS SAGAR**
- 5. Vietnam**
- 6. Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojna (BHAVYA)**
- 7. Cotton Corporation of India (CCI)**
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COCONUT

TH The Hindu

[Coconut growers face hard times as West Asia tensions hit export orders](#)

West Asia tensions disrupt GCC coconut exports, causing local price drops and surplus for Tamil Nadu farmers.



Why in News

- India is the **largest coconut producer globally**, contributing **30.37% of world production**.

Botanical and Geographical Profile

- Coconut (*Cocos nucifera*) belongs to the **family Arecaceae**.
- It originated in **Southeast Asia** and spread through **Polynesian and Indonesian migrations**.
- It grows in **subtropical coastal regions** of Asia and Oceania.
- In India, major producers include **Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Goa, West Bengal**.

Agro-Climatic Requirements

- Coconut requires **1000–3000 mm rainfall annually**, preferably evenly distributed.
- The optimum temperature is **27°C with 6–7°C diurnal variation**.
- It grows well up to **600 m altitude**, extendable to **800 m under favourable conditions**.
- It thrives in **warm humid climate with high sunlight exposure**.
- Suitable soils include **sandy, sandy loam, and laterite soils**.

Economic and Utilitarian Significance

- Coconut provides **multiple products** such as kernel, oil, milk, coir fibre, and husk.
- It supports **coastal livelihoods and agro-based industries**.
- It has high export potential in **value-added products like coir and coconut oil**.

Policy and Developmental Relevance

- Coconut cultivation aligns with **coastal economy development and blue economy initiatives**.
- Enhancing **value chain infrastructure and processing units** can increase farmer income.

AUTONOMOUS DISTRICT COUNCILS (ADCs)

Live Law

Meghalaya HC Quashes Garo Hills ADC Notification Requiring ST Certificate For Election Nomination, Says...

The Meghalaya High Court set aside a notification issued by the Garo Hills Autonomous District Council that required candidates to submit a...



Why in News

- The **Garo Hills Autonomous District Council (GHADC)** tenure was extended by six months.

Constitutional Framework and Structure

- ADCs are established under the **Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution**.
- The Sixth Schedule covers **10 tribal areas across Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram**.
- Each autonomous district has a council **with up to 30 members**.
- **26 members are elected**, while **4 are nominated by the Governor**.

Governance and Legislative Powers

- ADCs can legislate on **land, forests (excluding reserved forests), and traditional institutions**.
- They regulate **inheritance, marriage, divorce, and village courts**.
- They manage local governance institutions such as **schools, markets, roads, and fisheries**.

Fiscal Autonomy and Revenue Sources

- ADCs can levy taxes on **professions, trades, animals, vehicles, and goods entry**.
- They collect **tolls and fees for public services like ferries and markets**.
- Financial autonomy strengthens **grassroots governance in tribal areas**.

Governance Significance and Challenges

- ADCs protect **tribal identity, customs, and self-governance (Article 244)**.
- Overlapping jurisdiction with **state governments creates administrative conflicts**.
- Strengthening **financial devolution and accountability mechanisms** remains critical.

SMALL HYDRO POWER (SHP) DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

 NDTV

Cabinet Approves Rs 2,584 Crore Small Hydro Power Development Scheme



The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the 'Small Hydro Power (SHP) Development Scheme' for the period FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31 with a...

Why in News

- The Union Cabinet approved the **SHP Development Scheme (FY 2026–27 to 2030–31)**.

Core Features and Institutional Design

- The scheme targets **1500 MW capacity through projects of 1–25 MW**.
- It is implemented by the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)**.
- It promotes **run-of-the-river technology**, avoiding large dams.

Financial Incentives and Regional Focus

- North-East and border areas receive **₹3.6 crore/MW or 30% cost support (max ₹30 crore)**.
- Other states receive **₹2.4 crore/MW or 20% cost support (max ₹20 crore)**.
- ₹30 crore is allocated for **Detailed Project Reports (DPRs)** for ~200 projects.

Economic and Industrial Dimensions

- The scheme **mandates 100% domestic sourcing of machinery**, boosting **Make in India**.
- It is expected to generate **51 lakh person-days of employment**.
- It strengthens **decentralised energy systems in remote regions**.

Environmental and Strategic Significance

- SHP avoids **large-scale displacement, deforestation, and ecological disruption**.
- It supports India's commitments under **Paris Agreement and SDG-7 (Clean Energy)**.
- Expansion of SHP enhances **energy security in hilly and border areas**.

IOS SAGAR

Why in News

- The **second edition of IOS SAGAR** has been launched.

 PIB

[INDIAN NAVY CONTINUES IOS SAGAR INITIATIVE TO STRENGTHEN MARITIME PARTNERSHIP WITH INDIAN OCEAN NATIONS](#)

Reaffirming India's commitment to collaborative maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region, the second edition of Indian Ocean Ship (IOS)...



Strategic and Institutional Context

- IOS SAGAR is a maritime initiative aligned with India's **SAGAR doctrine (Security and Growth for All in the Region)**.
- It operates within the framework of **MAHASAGAR (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security Across Regions)**.
- It includes participation from **16 nations of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)**.



Operational Features and Activities

- It involves **training of foreign naval personnel in Kochi**.
- Participants sail onboard **Indian Naval Ships** for joint operations.
- Activities include **capacity building, maritime cooperation, and interoperability exercises**.

Geopolitical Significance

- It strengthens India's role as a **net security provider in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)**.
- It enhances **defence diplomacy and regional trust-building**.
- It counters **growing strategic competition in the Indo-Pacific**.

VIETNAM

[India Vietnam Boost Tribal Development Cooperation Ties](#)

India and Vietnam have strengthened bilateral cooperation in tribal and ethnic development following a high-level ministerial meeting held...



Why in News

- India and Vietnam held a **bilateral meeting on tribal and ethnic affairs**.

Geographical and Strategic Location

- Vietnam lies in **Southeast Asia, bordered by China, Laos, Cambodia**.
- It has maritime access to the **South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand**.
- Its **S-shaped geography spans ~1650 km north to south**.

Physical Geography and Resources

- Terrain includes **tropical lowlands, hills, and forested mountains**.

- Major rivers include **Mekong and Red River**.
- Rich in resources like **bauxite, rare earths, coal, oil, and gas**.

Geopolitical and Economic Relevance

- Vietnam is central to **Indo-Pacific strategy and ASEAN cooperation**.
- It is an important partner in **India's Act East Policy**.
- Maritime disputes in **South China Sea** enhance its strategic importance.

BHARAT AUDYOGIK VIKAS YOJNA (BHAVYA)

 PM India

Cabinet approves a New Era of Plug-and-Play Industrial Development through Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojna (BHAVYA)

Development of World-Class Industrial Parks with Rs.33,660 crore Expenditure.
Advancing Viksit Bharat through Manufacturing-Led Growth Jobs,...



Why in News

- The Union Cabinet approved **BHAVYA scheme for industrial infrastructure development**.

Policy Architecture and Targets

- The scheme aims to develop **100 plug-and-play industrial parks**.
- It involves collaboration between **Centre, States, and private sector**.
- Total outlay is **₹33,660 crore with ₹1 crore per acre support**.

Infrastructure and Industrial Ecosystem

- It provides **ready-built factories, testing labs, and integrated utilities**.
- Includes **worker housing and logistics infrastructure**.
- Aligns with **PM GatiShakti for multimodal connectivity**.

Economic and Strategic Significance

- Reduces time from **investment intent to production**.
- Enhances India's competitiveness in **global manufacturing value chains**.
- Supports **ease of doing business and industrial decentralisation**.

Sustainability and Governance Dimensions

- Promotes **green energy integration and no-dig infrastructure systems**.
- Selection through **challenge mode encourages state-level reforms**.

COTTON CORPORATION OF INDIA (CCI)

TH The Hindu

Cotton Corporation gets ₹ 1,718.56 crore to pay support price

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved a funding of ₹ 1718.56 crore to the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) to meet...



Why in News

- MSP funding approved for **Cotton Corporation of India for 2023–24 season.**

Institutional Framework and Mandate

- Established in **1970 under Companies Act 1956.**
- Operates under **Ministry of Textiles.**
- Ensures **price support operations when market prices fall below MSP.**

Operational Functions and Role

- Procures cotton without limit under **MSP mechanism.**
- Supplies cotton to **textile industry during lean periods.**
- Has a **PAN India network with HQ in Navi Mumbai.**

Agricultural and Economic Relevance

- Supports **income stability for cotton farmers.**
- Strengthens **textile sector supply chain.**
- Major cotton producers include **Gujarat, Telangana, Maharashtra.**

CABINET DECISION: 18-03-2024

Minimum Support Price (MSP) funding of ₹1,718.56 crore to the Cotton Corporation of India for cotton season 2023–24

- Direct price support to cotton farmers across the country
- Ensures remunerative returns and protects farmers from market price fluctuations
- Strengthens cotton cultivation and supports Aatmanirbhar Bharat
- Implemented through Cotton Corporation of India with a robust procurement infrastructure

OTHER IMPORTANT NEWS OF THE DAY

Environ-
ment

INDIAN WOLF

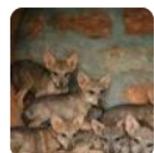
Why in News

- An Indian wolf gave birth to seven pups at **Pilikula Biological Park.**

TH The Hindu

Indian wolf at Pilikula zoo gives birth to seven pups

Seven pups of an Indian wolf, named Geetha, born at Pilikula Biological Park this January have now been let in the display enclosure,...



Ecological and Biological Features

- The Indian wolf (*Canis indica*) is a subspecies of the **Grey Wolf**.
- It inhabits scrublands, semi-arid grasslands, and agro-pastoral landscapes.
- It lives in small packs (6–8 members) and is mostly nocturnal.

Distribution and Adaptation

- Found in **India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Iran, Syria, Turkey, Israel**.
- It lacks a thick coat, adapting to **warmer climates**.

Threats and Conservation Status

- Major threats include **habitat loss, prey depletion, and human conflict**.
- IUCN status: **Vulnerable**.
- Listed under **CITES Appendix I and Schedule I of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**.

Conservation Significance

- It is a key species in maintaining **grassland ecosystem balance**.
- Conservation requires **community participation and habitat restoration**.

Science and Technology

ETHYL CHLOROFORMATE

THE The Hindu

India launches anti-dumping probe into ethyl chloroformate imports from China



India on Tuesday (March 17, 2026) opened an anti-dumping investigation into ethyl chloroformate imports from China after a domestic...

Why in News

- India initiated **anti-dumping investigation against imports from China**.

Chemical Properties and Nature

- It is a **colorless to yellowish toxic liquid with pungent odor**.
- Chemical formula: **C₂H₅OCOCl**.
- It is **flammable, corrosive, and hydrolyses in water**.

Industrial Applications

- Used as an intermediate in **pharmaceuticals, agrochemicals, and organic synthesis**.
- Plays role in **nitrile oxide synthesis**.

Health and Safety Concerns

- Toxic through **inhalation and exposure**.
- Emits **HCl fumes in moist air** and decomposes exothermically.
- Requires **strict storage in cool, ventilated environments**.

Trade and Policy Implications

- Anti-dumping measures protect **domestic chemical industry**.
- Reflects India's use of **trade remedy instruments under WTO framework**.

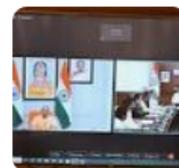
UTTAR PRADESH IN NEWS

JAL JEEVAN MISSION (JJM) 2.0 – REFORM-LINKED MOU WITH UTTAR PRADESH



PIB

[Uttar Pradesh Signed Reform-Linked MoU under Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0](#)



In a significant step towards deepening structural reforms in rural drinking water governance, a Reform-Linked Memorandum of Understanding...

Why in News

- A **Reform-Linked MoU under Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0** was signed between the **Union Government and Uttar Pradesh** to strengthen rural drinking water governance.

Governance Reforms and Institutional Architecture

- The MoU introduces **11 structural reform areas** for strengthening rural water governance systems.
- It mandates a shift towards a **Gram Panchayat-led, community-centered service delivery model**.
- Completed schemes will be transferred to **Gram Panchayats/VWSCs through “Jal Arpan” process**.
- It promotes **participatory governance (Jan Bhagidari)** to ensure accountability and ownership.

Digital and Administrative Transformation

- The MoU operationalises a **Decision Support System (DSS)** for planning at **district and Gram Panchayat levels**.
- DSS is integrated with **Sujalam Bharat and national water datasets** for better resource planning.
- **Jal Seva Aankalan** will be conducted at GP level to evaluate service delivery outcomes.
- Results will be displayed on the **Meri Panchayat Application**, enhancing transparency.

Service Delivery, Sustainability and Technical Focus

- The Mission emphasises **assured, continuous and quality drinking water supply** to rural households.
- Focus areas include **source sustainability, rainwater harvesting, and water conservation**.
- It promotes **run-time functionality, efficient scheme implementation, and O&M sustainability**.
- Special attention is given to **water quality issues (arsenic, fluoride affected regions)**.

Socio-Economic and Health Impact

- As per **SBI Research**, the Mission has freed **~9 crore women** from water-fetching drudgery.
- According to **WHO**, universal tap water access can **save 5.5 crore hours daily**.
- It can prevent **~4 lakh deaths annually due to diarrhoeal diseases**.
- Improved water access has reduced **disease burden (e.g., encephalitis in Eastern UP)**.
- It has contributed to **reduction in school dropout rates**, especially among girls.

Financial and Policy Dimensions

- The Mission involves **substantial central financial assistance**, requiring efficient utilisation.
- It follows **a zero-tolerance policy on corruption and quality lapses**.
- The scheme is extended till **December 2028 with enhanced outlay**.
- It aligns with **SDG-6 (Clean Water and Sanitation)** and **Viksit Bharat @2047 vision**.

Community Mobilisation and Behavioural Change

- The initiative promotes “**Jal Sanchay and Jan Bhagidari se Jal Aandolan**”.
- A three-tier campaign includes **Jal Mahotsav (National), Rajya Jal Utsav, Lok Jal Utsav**.
- **National Jal Mahotsav 2026 (8–22 March)** integrates cultural aspects of water conservation.
- Encourages **community awareness, behavioural change, and local stewardship of resources**.