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CURRENT AFFAIRS**

Important Current News for UPSC & UPPSC

22nd Mar 2026

TOPICS:-

- 1. Neodymium-Iron-Boron (NdFeB) Magnet**
- 2. Chapchar Kut Festival**
- 3. National Productivity Council (NPC)**
- 4. Navroz (Nowruz)**
- 5. Lipulekh Pass**
- 6. Other Important News of the day**
- 7. Uttar Pradesh in News**

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NEODYMIUM-IRON-BORON (NDFEB) MAGNET



PIB

<https://www.pib.gov.in> > PressReleasePage

Pilot Plant for the Manufacture of Nd-Fe-B Rare Earth ...

2 days ago — Pilot Plant for the Manufacture of Nd-Fe-B Rare Earth Permanent Magnets established at ARCI, Hyderabad. Posted On: 20 MAR 2026 5:02PM by PIB ... [Read more](#)

Why in News

- A pilot plant for **Nd-Fe-B rare earth magnets** was established at **ARCI, Hyderabad**.

Material Science and Composition

- NdFeB magnets are the **strongest permanent magnets** known with very high magnetic energy density.
- They are based on a **tetragonal crystal structure** composed of **Neodymium (Nd), Iron (Fe), Boron (B)**.
- Additional elements like **Dysprosium and Praseodymium** enhance thermal stability and coercivity.
- They belong to the category of **rare earth ferromagnetic materials** critical for advanced technologies.

Industrial Variants and Production Dynamics

- **Sintered NdFeB magnets** dominate global production due to superior magnetic strength.
- **Bonded NdFeB magnets** provide cost efficiency, shape flexibility, and mechanical durability.
- **Hot-pressed NdFeB magnets** achieve high performance without heavy rare earth elements.
- Manufacturing processes significantly influence **magnetic properties, corrosion resistance, and applications**.



Strategic and Economic Significance

- These magnets are critical for **electronics, EV motors, wind turbines, defence systems, and robotics**.
- They are part of **critical mineral supply chains**, reducing import dependence is strategically important.
- India's push via **ARCI (under Department of Science and Technology)** strengthens domestic capabilities.

CHAPCHAR KUT FESTIVAL

 News On AIR

[Chapchar Kut, Mizoram's spring festival, celebrates Mizo culture, featuring traditional dances, music, art & cuisine](#)

Chapchar Kut, Mizoram's spring festival, is a celebration of Mizo culture, featuring traditional dances, music, art, and cuisine.



Why in News

- **Chapchar Kut**, the largest festival of **Mizoram**, concluded recently.

Cultural and Historical Context

- It is a **spring festival** celebrated after completion of **jhum cultivation clearing phase**.
- Origin dates to **1450–1700 A.D. in Suaipui village**.
- It reflects the **agrarian cycle and tribal ecological adaptation** in Northeast India.

Ethnographic Significance

- People wear **traditional attire with headgear and ornaments**, reinforcing ethnic identity.
- Community celebrations include **music using drums, gongs, cymbals, and flutes**.
- It promotes **social cohesion and preservation of indigenous traditions**.



Performing Arts and Symbolism

- The **Cheraw (bamboo dance)** is the most prominent feature of the festival.
- Dancers synchronise movements with bamboo sticks symbolising **harmony with nature**.
- Dance forms are inspired by **natural elements and daily life activities**.

Cultural Governance and Tourism Linkages

- Festivals like Chapchar Kut support **cultural tourism and regional economy**.
- They align with **Article 29 (protection of cultural rights)** and tribal heritage preservation.
- Mizoram also celebrates **Pawl Kut, Lyuva Khutla, Anthurium Festival** enhancing cultural diversity.

NATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL (NPC)

Hindustan Times

National Productivity Council to strengthen environmental compliance mechanisms| India News

NPC has signed an agreement with the ministry of environment, forest and climate change (MoEF&CC) to act as the Environment Audit Designated...



Why in News:

- NPC signed an agreement with **MoEF&CC** to act as **Environment Audit Designated Agency (EADA)**.

Institutional Framework and Structure

- Established in **1958**, NPC is an **autonomous, non-profit organization**.
- It functions under **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**.
- It has a **multipartite structure** including government, industry, and labour representatives.
- Headquarters is located in **New Delhi**.



International Linkages

- NPC is a constituent of the **Asian Productivity Organisation (APO), Tokyo**.
- India is a **founding member of APO**, strengthening global productivity collaboration.

Functional Domains and Governance Role

- NPC provides **consultancy, capacity building, and project monitoring services**.
- It conducts **productivity research, training, and awareness programmes**.
- It supports **policy formulation and microeconomic efficiency enhancement**.

Environmental Governance Role

- As **EADA**, NPC will facilitate **environmental audits and compliance mechanisms**.
- This aligns with **sustainable development goals (SDGs)** and environmental regulation.

NAVROZ (NOWRUZ)

 The Times of India

Nowruz 2026: The Persian New Year festival that survived invasions, outlasted ayatollahs and arrives again

Middle East News: At 14:46 GMT on Friday, March 20, 2026, the earth does what it has done for billions of years. The sun crosses the...



Why in News

- The Prime Minister greeted citizens on the occasion of **Parsi New Year – Navroz**.

Historical and Cultural Origins

- Navroz originates from the **ancient Persian Empire and Zoroastrian calendar**.
- The term means “**new day**” (nov = new, roz = day).
- It is associated with **King Jamshed and the Shahenshahi calendar**.

Cultural and Religious Significance

- It marks the **arrival of spring and renewal of life**.
- Celebrated by **Parsi and Iranian communities worldwide**.
- It reflects **Zoroastrian values of purity, renewal, and cosmic balance**.

Global Recognition and Heritage

- It is listed under **UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity**.
- It showcases India’s **syncretic culture and minority traditions protection**.

Indian Context and Evolution

- Introduced in India by **Nusservanji Kohyaji, a Surat-based trader**.
- Reflects **cultural diffusion and trade linkages between India and Persia**.

LIPULEKH PASS

 News18

India-China Border Trade Via Lipulekh Pass To Resume After 6 Years: What Is Nepal’s Objection?

India-China border trade via Lipulekh pass after 6 years marks a thaw in ties: Why does Lipulekh matter? What is Nepal's objection?



Why in News

- **India-China border trade via Lipulekh Pass** is set to resume.

Geographical and Strategic Location

- Located in **Kumaon region of Uttarakhand near India-Nepal-China trijunction**.

- Lies at an altitude of **5,334 meters** in the Himalayas.
- Connects India to **Tibet Autonomous Region of China**.



Historical and Economic Role

- Used as an **ancient trade route between India and Tibet**.
- First border trade post opened with China in **1992**.
- Followed by **Shipki La (1994) and Nathu La (2006)**.

Cultural and Religious Significance

- Serves as a key route for **Kailash Mansarovar Yatra**.
- Supports livelihoods of **Bhotiya tribal communities** through trade.

Strategic and Diplomatic Relevance

- Enhances **border area development and connectivity**.
- Plays a role in **India-China relations and border management strategy**.

OTHER IMPORTANT NEWS OF THE DAY

Places in News

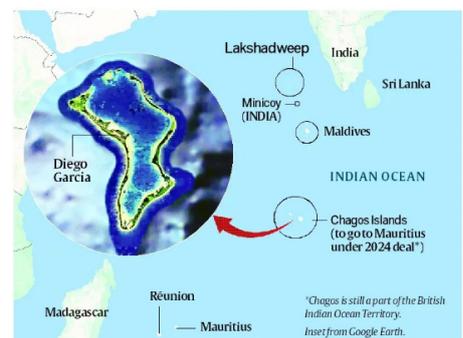
DIEGO GARCIA

Why in News

- Iran targeted the **U.S.-U.K. military base at Diego Garcia** amid rising tensions.

Geostrategic Location

- Diego Garcia is a **coral atoll in the central Indian Ocean**.
- It is part of the **Chagos Archipelago** under **British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT)**.
- It holds **critical maritime positioning in Indo-Pacific geopolitics**.



Historical and Legal Dimensions

- Separated from **Mauritius in 1965** during British colonial restructuring.
- Leased to the **United States in 1966 for military base development.**
- Indigenous population was **forcibly displaced**, raising human rights concerns.
- **UNGA (2019)** called for return of Chagos Archipelago to Mauritius.

Strategic Military Significance

- It serves as a **major logistics and surveillance base for US forces.**
- Supports operations in **Middle East, Africa, and Indo-Pacific region.**
- Critical for **sea lane security and power projection.**

Environ- ment

 The New Indian Express

National Board for Wildlife gives nod to rationalisation of areas in Pobitora Sanctuary in Assam

The proposal aims for an overall increase in the total sanctuary area from 3,880.61 hectares to 3,978.29 hectares. Pobitora Wildlife...



Why in News

- **NBWL** approved boundary rationalisation of **Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary (Assam).**

Ecological Profile and Location

- Located in **Assam**, established in **1998.**
- Comprises **Pobitora and Rajamayang Reserve Forests.**
- Part of **Brahmaputra floodplains ecosystem.**

Conservation Governance

- **NBWL (National Board for Wildlife)** plays a role in habitat management approvals.
- Rationalisation aims at **balancing conservation with human pressures.**

Biodiversity Significance

- Holds the **highest density of Greater One-Horned Rhinoceros** in India.
- Fauna includes **leopard, wild boar, barking deer, wild buffalo.**
- Linked to **Indian Rhino Vision 2020 conservation programme.**

Vegetation and Habitat Features

- Dominated by **alluvial grasslands and wet savannah ecosystems.**
- Key species include **Arundo donax, Saccharum spp., Phragmites karka.**
- Invasive **Eichhornia crassipes (water hyacinth)** affects aquatic ecosystems.

PROSOPIS JULIFLORA

TH The Hindu

[HC directive on removing Prosopis juliflora hailed: MDMK leader Vaiko to start a people's movement](#)

MDMK leader Vaiko announces a movement to remove Prosopis juliflora trees in Tamil Nadu following a landmark High Court directive.



Why in News

- **Madras High Court** directed eradication of **Prosopis juliflora** in Tamil Nadu.



Ecological and Biological Profile

- It is an invasive species belonging to **family Fabaceae (mesquite).**
- Native to **Mexico, South America, and Caribbean.**
- Introduced in India during **British colonial period (1920s).**

Adaptive Traits and Spread Mechanism

- Thrives in **arid and semi-arid regions with high ecological tolerance.**
- Grows in **saline, alkaline, sandy, and clay soils across varied rainfall conditions.**
- Exhibits **aggressive growth, suppressing native biodiversity.**

Environmental and Socio-Economic Impact

- Consumes large water quantities affecting **groundwater availability**.
- Leads to **loss of grasslands and habitat degradation**.
- Produces **lower oxygen and alters soil chemistry negatively**.
- Impacts pastoral livelihoods and **reduces agricultural productivity**.

Water Bodies in News

CASPIAN SEA

Why in News

- Military activity involving **Iran** reported in the **Caspian Sea region**.

Geographical Characteristics

- It is the **world's largest enclosed inland water body (endorheic basin)**.
- Located between **Europe and Asia** with no outflow to oceans.
- Water salinity varies from **fresh in north to saline in south**.



Bordering Countries and Regional Politics

- Bordered by **Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Iran**.
- Key cities include **Baku (Azerbaijan) and Nowshahr (Iran)**.
- Region is geopolitically sensitive due to **shared resource governance**.

Hydrological and Resource Significance

- Major rivers include **Volga, Ural, and Terek**.
- Rich in **oil and natural gas reserves**, making it energy geopolitics hotspot.

Strategic Implications

- Energy resources influence **global energy security and pipeline politics**.
- Regional cooperation frameworks address **maritime boundaries and resource sharing**.

UTTAR PRADESH IN NEWS

PILIBHIT (DUDHWA TIGER RESERVE) – RHINO REINTRODUCTION

 The Times of India

6 rhinos to be released in DTR to boost genetic diversity

Pilibhit: In a major step to strengthen genetic diversity, Dudhwa Tiger Reserve (DTR) on Sat launched phase III of its rhino reintroduction...



Why in News

- **Dudhwa Tiger Reserve (Uttar Pradesh)** initiated a new phase of **rhino reintroduction** to improve **genetic diversity**.

Scientific and Conservation Approach

- **Greater One-Horned Rhinoceros (Rhinoceros unicornis)** are being translocated to reduce **inbreeding risks**.
- Selection is based on **DNA profiling by Wildlife Institute of India (WII)** ensuring genetic variation.
- The batch includes **two males and four females** for balanced population structure.

Ecological Significance

- Genetic diversity enhances **disease resistance, adaptability, and survival chances**.
- Prevents **inbreeding depression** in small and isolated populations.

Operational Measures

- Adoption of **soft release technique** for gradual acclimatisation in enclosed habitat.
- Use of **radio collars** for continuous monitoring and movement tracking.

Governance and Policy Linkages

- Implemented under **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972** and species recovery initiatives.
- Part of **Terai Arc Landscape conservation strategy** ensuring ecosystem stability.