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CURRENT AFFAIRS**

**Important Current News for UPSC & UPPSC**

***20th April 2026***

**TOPICS:-**

- 1. Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)**
- 2. Kuls River**
- 3. National Mineral Exploration Trust (NMET)**
- 4. Amchang Wildlife Sanctuary**
- 5. Dung Beetle**
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# PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA (PMGSY)

Hindustan Times

## Cabinet approves extension of rural roads scheme PMGSY-III till March 2028 | India News

Union Cabinet on Saturday approved extension of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana Phase III (PMGSY) from March 2025 to March 2028,...

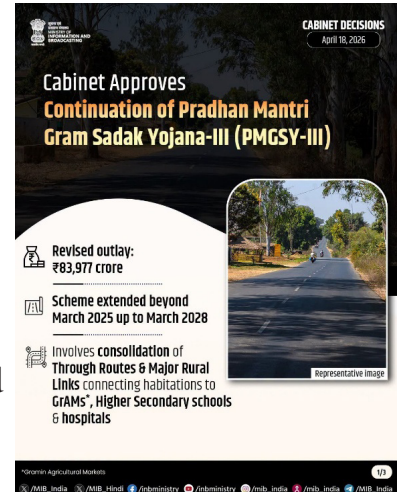


### Why in News

- The Union Cabinet has approved the continuation of **PMGSY-III till March 2028** to strengthen rural connectivity.

### Scheme Design and Objectives

- It is a flagship rural development programme launched on **25 December 2000** by the Government of India.
- The scheme aims to provide **all-weather road connectivity to unconnected rural habitations** to improve accessibility.



### Eligibility and Coverage Criteria

- The scheme covers habitations based on **population size and connectivity status**.
- In plain areas, habitations with a population of **500 or more** are eligible if unconnected.
- In **North-Eastern and Himalayan regions**, the threshold is reduced to **250 population (as per 2001 Census)**.

### Institutional Mechanism

- The scheme is implemented by **State Governments through Programme Implementation Units (PIUs)** at the district level.
- Funds are released through **District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs)** for execution.

### Governance Significance

- It enhances **rural connectivity, economic integration, and access to health and education services**.

## KULSI RIVER

ETV Bharat

### Proposed Kulsī Hydropower Project Triggers Protests In Assam, Meghalaya Over Displacement And Ecological Risks

Guwahati: A proposed hydropower project on the Kulsī River is facing opposition from local residents. Student groups and environmentalists...



### Why in News

- A proposed **hydropower project on Kulsī River** is facing opposition from local communities.

### Geographical Characteristics

- The Kulsī River is a **south-bank tributary of the Brahmaputra River** flowing through Northeast India.
- It originates from the **West Khasi Hills of Meghalaya at an elevation of about 1800 metres.**



### Course and Tributaries

- The river is formed by the confluence of **Khri, Krishniya, and Umsiri rivers.**
- It flows through **Meghalaya and Assam** before joining the Brahmaputra near **Nagarbera.**
- The total length of the river is about **220 km**, with **100 km in Meghalaya and 120 km in Assam.**

### Ecological Importance

- The river is an important habitat for the **endangered Gangetic Dolphin (Platanista gangetica gangetica).**

## NATIONAL MINERAL EXPLORATION TRUST (NMET)

BS Business Standard

### [Parliamentary panel flags policy, capacity gaps in offshore mining push](#)

Govt annulled first auction of 13 offshore mineral blocks after muted investor response last December. Parliamentary panel flags policy,...



### Why in News

- A Parliamentary Committee highlighted the importance of **offshore mineral exploration** under NMET.

## Legal and Institutional Basis

- NMET was established under the **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2015**.
- It functions under the **Ministry of Mines** with a two-tier structure comprising a Governing Body and Executive Committee.


## Funding Mechanism

- The Trust is funded through a contribution of **2% of royalty paid by mining lease holders**.

## Core Functions

- It supports **regional and detailed exploration of minerals**, including deep-seated and concealed deposits.
- It promotes **advanced scientific techniques, sustainable mining practices, and mineral processing technologies**.

## AMCHANG WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

 The Assam Tribune

### Guwahati Ring Road project faces legal scrutiny over forest clearance, tree felling

A PIL before Gauhati HC claims the project alignment threatens Amchang Wildlife Sanctuary & nearby elephant corridors, raising concerns over...



## Why in News

- The **Gauhati High Court** has questioned tree felling in the sanctuary without mandatory clearance.

## Location and Formation

- The sanctuary is located on the **eastern fringe of Guwahati in Assam**.
- It was formed by merging **South Amchang, Amchang, and Khanapara Reserve Forests**.


## Ecological Features

- The sanctuary contains diverse forest types such as **East Himalayan mixed deciduous and semi-evergreen forests**.
- The flora includes species like **teak, arjun, terminalia, and wild jamun**.

## Faunal Diversity

- It is home to species like **Asian elephants, leopards, gaur, and various bird species**.

## DUNG BEETLE

 The Indian Express

### Meet the insect that navigates via the Milky Way

Some dung beetles navigate using the Milky Way as a natural compass. Scientists explain how these insects use starlight patterns to move in...



### Why in News

- Scientists discovered that dung beetles navigate using the **Milky Way galaxy even in darkness.**

### Biological Classification

- Dung beetles belong to the **family Scarabaeidae under the order Coleoptera.**

### Behavioural Features

- They roll dung balls in straight lines using **celestial cues like sunlight or the Milky Way.**
- They exhibit three behavioural types: **rollers, tunnelers, and dwellers.**

### Ecological Role

- They play a vital role in **nutrient recycling, soil aeration, seed dispersal, and parasite control.**

## GLUTATHIONE

 Nature

[SLC33A1 exports oxidized glutathione to maintain endoplasmic reticulum redox homeostasis](#)

The endoplasmic reticulum (ER) requires an oxidative environment to support the efficient maturation of secretory and membrane proteins.

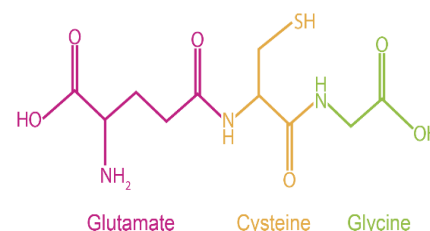


### Why in News

- Research highlights the role of glutathione in **cellular functioning of the endoplasmic reticulum.**

### Biochemical Nature

- Glutathione is a **tripeptide antioxidant composed of glutamate, cysteine, and glycine.**
- It is naturally produced in the **liver through enzymatic reactions.**



### Physiological Functions

- It plays a key role in **detoxification, immune function, and tissue repair.**

### Health Relevance

- Its levels decline due to **aging, stress, poor nutrition, and environmental toxins.**

## OTHER IMPORTANT NEWS OF THE DAY

### Schemes in News

## BHARAT MARITIME INSURANCE POOL (BMI POOL)

PM India

Cabinet approves proposal for creation of 'Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool' (BMI pool) with a sovereign guarantee of Rs 12,980 crore to facilitate continuous maritime insurance...

The Domestic Insurance Pool addresses global volatility, geopolitical instability and reduces external Insurance dependency of Indian...



### Why in News

- The Government has launched the **BMI Pool to safeguard maritime trade during global disruptions.**

### Institutional Design

- It is a **Centre-backed maritime insurance mechanism** with a **sovereign guarantee of ₹12,980 crore.**
- It is designed to ensure **affordable and uninterrupted marine insurance coverage.**

### Coverage and Scope

- It covers **Indian-flagged vessels, cargo, and ships operating on global routes.**
- It includes risks such as **war risk, cargo damage, hull, and machinery insurance.**

### Strategic Importance

- It enhances **India's maritime security and trade resilience during geopolitical crises.**

### Environment

## NEW SPECIES OF JUMPING SPIDERS

Research Matters

Researchers discover two new species of jumping spiders from India's arid drylands and urban parks

A team of scientists has discovered two new species of jumping spiders thriving in the country's drylands and urban green spaces.



### Why in News

- Two new species, **Mogrus shushka and Mogrus pune**, have been discovered in India.

### Taxonomic Details

- These species belong to the genus **Mogrus**, which includes jumping spiders found in arid regions.

### Species-specific Features

- **Mogrus shushka** was discovered in **Desert National Park, Rajasthan**, and is adapted to dry conditions.
- **Mogrus pune** was discovered in **Pune's biodiversity park**, showing adaptation to urban ecosystems.



### Scientific Significance

- The discovery highlights **biodiversity richness in desert and urban habitats in India**.

## DALMA WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

### Why in News

- A herd of **38 elephants returned to Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary after three years**.



### Location and Geography

- The sanctuary is located in **Jharkhand on the Chotanagpur Plateau**.
- It lies within the **catchment area of the Subarnarekha River**.

### Vegetation and Flora

- It consists of **Dry Peninsular Sal and Northern Dry Mixed Deciduous forests**.
- It contains **medicinal plants such as Sarpagandha and Satawari**.

### Faunal Diversity

- It is known for **elephants, sloth bears, pangolins, and barking deer**.

## Science and Technology

## FRUCTOSE

Outlook India

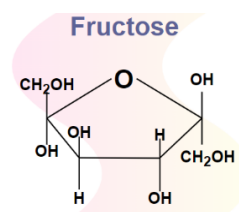
Fructose Identified As Key Driver Of Metabolic Disorders, Says New Study

A Nature Metabolism study identifies fructose as a key driver of obesity and metabolic syndrome. By bypassing energy controls and promoting...



### Why in News

- A recent study links excessive fructose consumption with **obesity and metabolic disorders**.



### Chemical Nature

- Fructose is a **simple sugar (monosaccharide) with chemical formula C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>12</sub>O<sub>6</sub>**.
- It is naturally found in **fruits, vegetables, honey, sugarcane, and sugar beet**.

### Metabolic Features


- Fructose is converted into glucose in the **liver before being used by the body**.
- It does not require **insulin for absorption**, unlike glucose.

### Health Implications

- Excess consumption can lead to **metabolic syndrome, obesity, and fructose intolerance**.

## UTTAR PRADESH IN NEWS

### SMART METER ROLLOUT SUSPENSION IN UTTAR PRADESH

 Hindustan Times

[UP: Smart meter rollout on hold pending technical panel report | Hindustan Times](#)



Lucknow, The replacement of conventional electricity meters with smart meters in Uttar Pradesh has been put on hold until a technical...

#### Why in News

- The **Uttar Pradesh Government** has paused the rollout of **prepaid smart meters** due to widespread consumer opposition.

#### Policy Action

- A **technical committee** including **IIT Kanpur, ERDA, and UPPCL** will review meter performance and submit a report within **10 days**.

#### Consumer Relief Measures

- Consumers will get electricity for **up to 3 days or till ₹200 dues (≤2 kW load)** even with zero balance.
- No disconnection will occur for **45 days** after installation, and not on **Sundays or holidays**.

#### Transparency and Grievance Redressal

- A **5-stage SMS alert system** will inform users about balance and disconnection status.
- Complaints can be addressed via **1912 helpline, UPPCL portal, and WhatsApp chatbot**.

#### Significance

- The move addresses concerns of **billing transparency, consumer awareness, and service continuity** in prepaid systems.