

SANSKRITI IAS DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

11-08-2026

Betwa River

Odisha TV

Betwa River Swells In Vidisha, Madhya Pradesh After Heavy Rains

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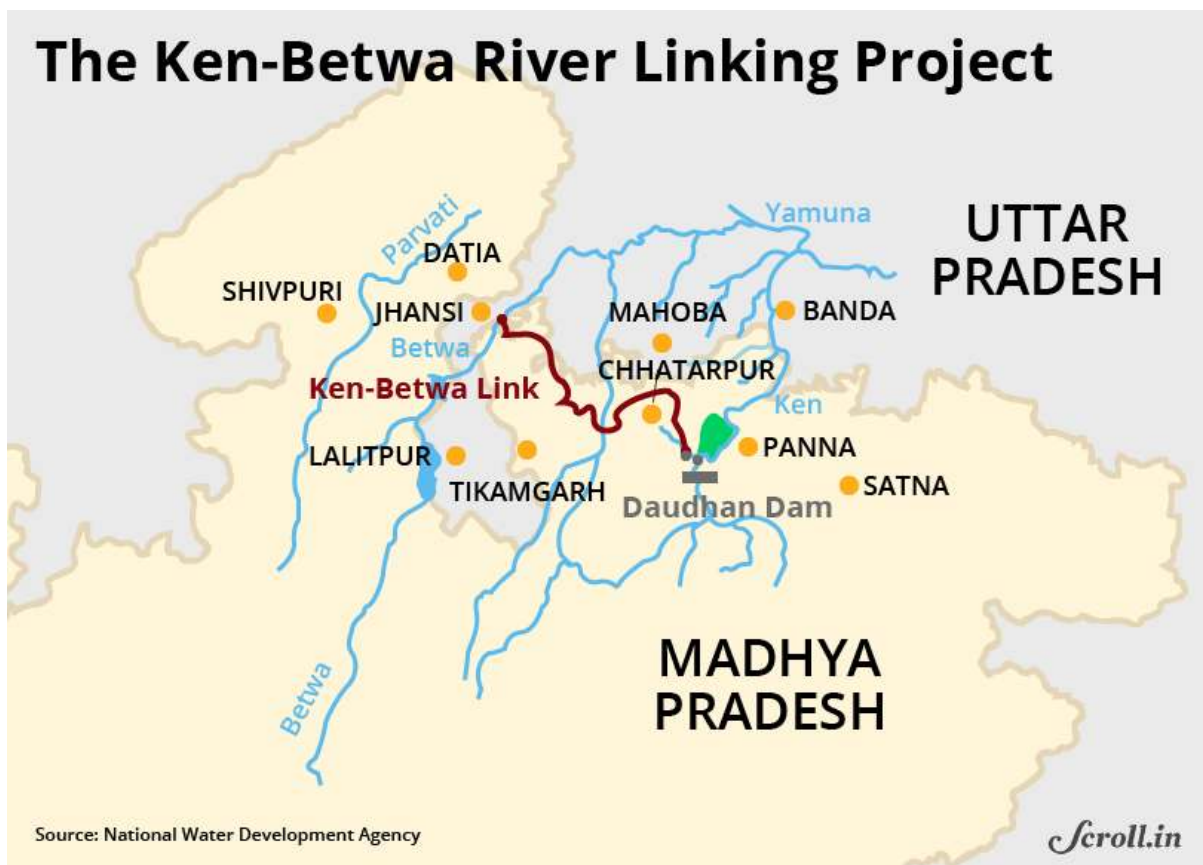
#betwariver#vidisha#madhyapradesh#havyrain#otvnews#otvnewsenglish



Why in News

- The **Betwa River** has witnessed a rapid rise in water levels in **Vidisha, Madhya Pradesh**, following continuous rainfall.

Geographical Course



- The Betwa is an important **right-bank tributary of the Yamuna River**.
- It originates at **Jhirri village in Raisen district**, near Bhopal, at about **460 m** elevation in the **Vindhya Hills**.

- It flows northeast through **Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh** before joining the Yamuna near **Hamirpur, Uttar Pradesh**.
- Its total length is about **590 km**, with **358 km in Uttar Pradesh** and **232 km in Madhya Pradesh**.

Hydrological Features

- The river has **high discharge during the monsoon** and **very low discharge during summer**.
- Its major tributaries include the **Jamni and Dhasan** rivers.
- **Dukwan and Deogarh dams** have been constructed on the Betwa for irrigation and water management.

Historical and Strategic Significance

- The Betwa is mentioned in the **Mahabharata** and was associated with the **Chedi Kingdom**, whose capital **Suktimati** stood on its banks.
- It forms part of the **Ken-Betwa Link Project**, which seeks to transfer water from the Ken River to the Betwa for irrigation and drinking purposes.
- The Indian Navy named a frigate **INS Betwa** after the river, while **Orchha** and the **Orchha Wildlife Sanctuary** are closely associated with its course.

Permanent Pictorial Cancellation



PIB

Kerala stands for unity, harmony and spirituality: Governor

Kerala stands for unity, harmony, spirituality and its age-old cultural traditions, Governor of Kerala Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar said...



Why in News

- The **Department of Posts, Kerala Circle** released a **Permanent Pictorial Cancellation (PPC)** and premium special cover commemorating the **Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple**.

Postal and Philatelic Features

- A **PPC** is a postmark featuring a replica, photograph, design or picture representing an important **tourist, religious, historical or cultural subject**.
- It is an accepted method of **postal cancellation** and is generally provided at post offices near significant locations.
- The cancellation seal retains regular features such as the **PIN code and date** along with the pictorial design.
- Unlike ordinary cancellation, a PPC is available **permanently at a designated post office** and can also be imprinted on **postcards and inland letters**.

Cultural Significance

- PPCs provide publicity to places of **historical, cultural and tourist importance** and are particularly significant for **philatelists**.
- The **Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple** is a Hindu temple dedicated to **Lord Vishnu** in **Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala**.
- The temple combines **Kerala and Dravidian architectural styles** and houses Vishnu in the **Anantha Shayanam** posture.
- Its **Mathilakam records** comprise around **3 million palm-leaf manuscripts** containing administrative and financial records of the temple town and Travancore kingdom.

Kalaburagi Fort

TH The Hindu

MP meets Culture Minister, seeks approval for ₹20 crore Kalaburagi fort conservation project

Kalaburagi MP seeks ₹20 crore approval from Culture Minister for fort conservation, enhancing heritage, tourism, and environmental...



Why in News

- The MP from **Kalaburagi** sought urgent approval for a proposed **₹20 crore conservation and rejuvenation project** for the historic Kalaburagi Fort.

Historical Evolution

- **Kalaburagi Fort**, also called **Gulbarga Fort**, is located in **Kalaburagi, Karnataka**.
- It was initially constructed by **Raja Gulchand**, a feudatory of the **Kakatiya dynasty**, in the 12th century.
- It was later strengthened by **Alauddin Hasan Bahman Shah**, founder of the **Bahmani dynasty**.
- Kalaburagi served as the capital of the **Bahmani Sultanate**, which ruled the region for a major period between the 14th and 16th centuries.

Military Significance

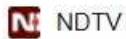
- The highly fortified structure has **15 towers and 26 guns**, with each gun measuring about **8 metres** in length.
- Its elevated location provided a **strategic defensive advantage**.

Architectural Character

- The fort exhibits a synthesis of **Hindu and Islamic architectural styles**, reflecting the cultural influences of different ruling traditions.

- Its structures include **mosques, palaces, tombs, massive walls, bastions and ornate gateways** built mainly with granite and limestone.
- Its **concentric defensive walls** reflect its strategic role in resisting sieges.

Merchant Discount Rate



UPI To Remain Free For Consumers, Merchants May Face Small Fee: Centre

The government has opened the door to introducing a nominal Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) on a limited set of UPI merchant transactions above...



Why in News

- The government has indicated that a proposed **Merchant Discount Rate (MDR)** on selected **UPI transactions** would be nominal and limited to certain high-value merchant transactions.

Concept and Payment Ecosystem

- **MDR** is the fee charged to a merchant for accepting a **digital payment**, making it a cost of payment acceptance.
- The payment ecosystem can involve the **merchant, payment gateway, acquiring bank, issuing bank, card network and payment infrastructure providers**.
- MDR may include **payment processor, interchange, assessment, markup and additional service fees**.
- It is generally calculated as a **percentage of the transaction value** and varies according to the payment mode and arrangement.

UPI Policy Evolution

- **UPI** was launched in **2016**, while the government removed MDR on **UPI and RuPay debit cards in January 2020** to promote digital-payment adoption.
- The zero-MDR regime resulted in compensation being provided by the government to support banks, **NPCI** and fintech participants.

Recent Policy Change

- The **Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026** reportedly empowers the government to levy MDR on selected electronic payment modes.
- A potential MDR of **0.25%–0.4%** has been indicated for certain business-directed UPI transactions.
- **P2P transfers** would remain free, while small merchants and transactions below the prescribed threshold are expected to remain outside the charge.

Eco-Educational Hub — Prakriti Gyan Dham

DD News

Jitendra Singh inaugurates CSIR-NBRI's 'Prakriti Gyan Dham' eco-educational hub in Lucknow

Union Minister of State for Science and Technology Dr Jitendra Singh on Saturday dedicated to the nation the first-of-its-kind...



Why in News

- The Union Minister of State for Science and Technology dedicated **Prakriti Gyan Dham**, described as a first-of-its-kind **eco-educational hub**.

Institutional Framework

- The hub has been developed by **CSIR–National Botanical Research Institute (CSIR-NBRI)**.
- It aims to connect **scientific knowledge with public engagement** through experiential and interactive learning.

Major Components

- PAaVan Path** is an interpretive heritage trail displaying curated plant collections representing diverse ecological regions and associated vegetation.
- Vibhav Enclave** is a **Threatened Plants of India Garden** dedicated to rare, endangered and threatened plant species.
- Bhairav Enclave** is a **State Plants of India Garden** showcasing officially designated State Plants of States and Union Territories.
- The hub promotes awareness about **biodiversity loss, habitat degradation, climate change and plant genetic-resource conservation**.

Export Promotion Capital Goods Scheme

Swarajya

Major Compliance Relief: DGFT Eliminates Manual Challan Submissions for Export Scheme Closures

The Directorate General of Foreign Trade has eliminated the requirement for physical duty payment challans in Export Obligation.



Why in News

- The **Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)** has removed the requirement to submit **physical duty-payment challans** while applying for Export Obligation Discharge Certificates under the **Advance Authorisation and EPCG Schemes**.

Scheme Framework

- The **Export Promotion Capital Goods (EPCG) Scheme** is a trade-promotion scheme that facilitates **duty-free import of capital goods** for export production.
- It was first operationalised on **1 April 2015** and is administered by the **DGFT** under India's **Foreign Trade Policy**.
- The scheme seeks to facilitate capital-goods imports for producing quality goods and services and improving **manufacturing competitiveness**.

Key Provisions

- EPCG permits import of capital goods for **pre-production, production and post-production** at **zero customs duty**.
- It covers **manufacturer exporters, merchant exporters** tied to supporting manufacturers and **service providers**.
- **Second-hand goods of any nature are not permitted** under the EPCG Scheme.
- The scheme covers both **goods and services** sectors.

Other Important News of the day

Persons in News	Deepti Gaur Mukerjee — Higher Education Secretary Why in News • Deepti Gaur Mukerjee, a 1993-batch Madhya Pradesh cadre IAS officer, was appointed Secretary of the Department of Higher Education on 10 August 2026. Administrative Framework • The Department of Higher Education functions under the Ministry of Education and handles universities, colleges and technical education. • The IAS is an All India Service under Article 312 of the Constitution. 
Places in News	Philippines Why in News • An enhanced southwest monsoon and tropical cyclones have affected more than 3.8 lakh people across eight regions of the Philippines.

Geographical Setting

- The **Philippines** is an island country in **Southeast Asia**, located in the western Pacific Ocean.
- It is surrounded by the **South China Sea, Philippine Sea, Celebes Sea and Sulu Sea**.
- Its capital is **Manila**, while **Mount Apo** is its highest point.

Physical Geography

- The country predominantly experiences **tropical and monsoonal climates**.
- The **Cagayan River** is the longest river, while **Laguna de Bay** is a major lake.
- Major volcanoes include **Mayon, Bulusan and Kanlaon**, with Mayon being among the country's most active volcanoes.
- Important mineral and natural resources include **nickel, cobalt, copper, gold, silver, petroleum, timber and salt**.



Energy and Economic Significance

- The Philippines is identified in the source as the world's **third-largest producer of geothermal energy**, after the **United States and Indonesia**.

Environment

Pteris madhusoodananii

 Research Matters

New 'critically endangered' fern discovered in Tamil Nadu's Koli Hills

A team of Indian botanists has discovered a rare new species of fern within the misty Koli hills of the Eastern Ghats.



Why in News

- Indian botanists have discovered a new fern species, **Pteris madhusoodananii**, in the **Kolli Hills of the Eastern Ghats** in Tamil Nadu.

Habitat and Conservation

- The species is currently known from only **two small sites covering about 8 sq km**.

	- It has been classified as Critically Endangered because of its extremely restricted habitat and threat from human encroachment. - Its discovery highlights the ecological significance of the Kolli Hills within the Eastern Ghats. Distinctive Morphology - The fern possesses stiff, leathery and lustrous deep-green leaves. - It has a prominent basal lobe and a distinctive pinna-pinnule arrangement of smaller leaflets along the stem. - Its spores possess a narrow, wavy-edged cingulum, distinguishing them from related species.
Defence	India–US Explosive Ordnance Disposal Exercise 2026  News On AIR <u>Indian Navy-US Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal Exercise 2026 to begin in Kochi</u> The Indian Navy-US Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Exercise 2026 will be conducted at Southern Naval Command, Kochi, from today till...  Why in News - The Indian Navy–US Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Exercise 2026 is being conducted at the Southern Naval Command, Kochi, until 14 August. Exercise Profile - The bilateral exercise focuses on improving interoperability and professional cooperation between specialist diving and EOD teams. - India and the US have conducted this specialised exercise since 2005, with the 2026 engagement marking its eighth edition. Operational Components - The exercise includes Subject Matter Expert Exchanges, cross-training, equipment demonstrations and scenario-based practical exercises. - Personnel exchange contemporary EOD methodologies, technologies and best practices during the engagement. - The exercise strengthens operational synergy and the ability to respond to complex and evolving EOD challenges.

Miscellaneous

International Linguistics Olympiad 2026

TH The Hindu

IIIT Hyderabad-backed India team wins four medals at Linguistics Olympiad

India won one gold and three bronze medals at the International Linguistics Olympiad 2026 in Romania, taking its overall medal tally to 37...



Why in News

- India won **1 gold, 3 bronze medals and 1 Honourable Mention** at the **23rd International Linguistics Olympiad (IOL)** in **Bucharest, Romania**.

Indian Performance

- Shrilakshmi Venkatraman** won gold, while **Aarav Anil Rao, Nishanth Shankar Lakshmanan and Advay Misra** won bronze medals.
- Soham Amit Pednekar** received an **Honourable Mention**.
- India's cumulative tally since **2009** reached **37 medals: 6 gold, 9 silver and 22 bronze**.

Competition and Selection

- The IOL is an annual competition for **secondary school students** testing analytical skills through language problems involving grammar, semantics and language comparison.
- The Indian team is selected through the **Panini Linguistics Olympiad (PLO)**.
- IIIT Hyderabad's Language Technologies Research Centre (LTRC)** has managed the mentorship programme since **2015**.
- The 2026 IOL had **255 competitors from 40+ countries** and awarded **84 medals**.

Uttar Pradesh in News

Dirac Medal

Deccan Chronicle

Indian Physicist Deepak Dhar Wins Prestigious 2026 Dirac Medal

Instituted in 1985, the Dirac Medal is considered one of the highest honours in physics.



Why in News

- Deepak Dhar**, a theoretical physicist from Uttar Pradesh, has been named a **co-recipient of the Dirac Medal**.



Award Profile

- The **Dirac Medal** was first awarded in **1985** in honour of physicist **P.A.M. Dirac**.
- It is awarded annually on **8 August**, Dirac's birthday, for significant contributions to **theoretical physics**.
- Winners are selected by an **international committee of distinguished scientists** from nominated candidates.
- Each medalist receives a cash prize of **US\$5,000**.

Institutional Linkages

- The award is given by the **International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP)**.
- **ICTP** was founded in **1964** and is located in **Trieste, Italy**.
- It operates under a tripartite agreement involving the **Italian Government, UNESCO and IAEA** and is a **UNESCO Category 1 Institute**.