

SANSKRITI IAS DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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Nuakhai Festival

News On AIR

President Murmu greets people on Nuakhai, calls it a symbol of social and family bonding

President Droupadi Murmu today extended greetings to the people of the country on the occasion of the agriculture-based community festival...



Why in News: The President extended greetings on the occasion of **Nuakhai**, an important agricultural festival of **Western Odisha**.

Cultural Significance

- **Nuakhai** is an agricultural festival celebrating the arrival of the **new rice crop** of the season.
- The term "**Nua**" means **new** and "**Khai**" means **food**.
- It is observed on the **fifth day of the lunar fortnight of Bhadrapada/Bhaadra (August–September)**.



Ritual Traditions

- The festival is associated with **nine sets of rituals**, performed as a prelude to the main celebration.
- The newly harvested crop, known as **Nabanha**, is offered to the respective presiding deities.
- After the offering, people prepare and consume delicacies from the new harvest.

Social Dimension

- **Nuakhai Juhar** is a major ritual involving greetings and social interaction among people.
- The festival reflects the close relationship between **agriculture, community life and religious traditions** in Western Odisha.

SPARSH Pension System

Why in News: The **Defence Accounts Department (DAD)** has made progress in resolving discrepant pension cases under **SPARSH** through a focused approach.



ANI News

<https://www.aninews.in/news/national/general-news>

Defence Accounts Department normalises all discrepant ...

2 days ago — New Delhi [India], September 15 (ANI): The Defence Accounts Department (DAD) has normalised all 1,45,182 discrepant pension cases pertaining ... [Read more](#)

Institutional Framework

- **SPARSH** stands for **System for Pension Administration – Raksha** and is an initiative of the **Ministry of Defence**.
- It is administered by the **Defence Accounts Department** through the **Principal Controller of Defence Accounts (Pensions), Prayagraj**.
- The system caters to the **Army, Navy, Air Force, Defence Civilians and allied organisations**.

Digital Governance Features

- SPARSH is a **centralised pension sanction, claim and disbursement system** that enables self-verification and data rectification.
- It directly deposits pension payments into beneficiaries' bank accounts without dependence on a **third-party intermediary**.
- Digital pensioner identification reduces the need for repeated visits to pension offices.
- Pensioners receive a **transparent view of their pension accounts** through the platform.

Administrative Significance

- The system maintains a complete record of **pension entitlements and events** from commencement of pension until cessation for the last eligible beneficiary.
- SPARSH seeks to provide a comprehensive digital solution for the **pension sanction and disbursement requirements of defence personnel**.

Ramjak Mountain

THE HINDU

Four from Munnar scale remote Ramjak mountain in Himachal Pradesh

Four climbers from Munnar conquer challenging Ramjak mountain in Himachal Pradesh, marking Kerala's first ascent of the peak.



Why in News: A four-member team from Kerala recently climbed **Ramjak**, a **6,318-metre** peak in the remote **Lahaul region of Himachal Pradesh**.

Geographical Setting

- **Ramjak** is a high-altitude peak located in the **Lahaul region of Himachal Pradesh**.
- It rises to approximately **6,318 metres (20,728 feet)**.
- The peak lies near **Shingo La**, an important trekking route connecting **Himachal Pradesh with Zaskar**.

Climbing Characteristics

- The mountain has a **sharp, icy summit** and technically difficult climbing terrain.

- Its route includes **glaciers, steep rock bands, snowfields, exposed slopes, crevasses, seracs and cornices.**

Mountaineering Significance

- The first successful ascent was achieved in **2002** by an **Indian Mountaineering Foundation (IMF)** expedition led by **Sangay Dorjee Sherpa.**
- Several expeditions had attempted the peak before the successful ascent.



Pangwala Tribe

The Tribune

Pangwala tribe in Himachal retains core gut microbiome despite migration, study finds

A detailed study on the gut microbiome of the Pangwala tribal community of Himachal Pradesh has found that members living in the remote...



Why in News: A study of the **Pangwala community** found that people living in the remote **Pangi Valley** and those who migrated to urban areas retain a remarkably similar **core gut microbiome** despite differences in lifestyle, diet and environment.

Geographical and Linguistic Profile

- The **Pangwala** are a **Scheduled Tribe** primarily residing in the **Pangi Valley of Chamba district, Himachal Pradesh.**
- Pangi Valley lies in the **Pir Panjal range of the Himalayas** and historically experienced considerable geographical isolation.
- The community speaks **Pangwali**, an **Indo-Aryan language** associated with the western Himalayan linguistic family.

Traditional Economy

- Traditional livelihoods include **mountain agriculture, animal husbandry and trade** through Himalayan routes.
- Major crops include **barley, wheat, maize, potatoes and peas**, while sheep and goat rearing is also practiced.
- Traditional houses commonly use **stone and wood**, adapted to cold weather and mountainous terrain.

Social and Cultural Features

- **Extended family networks and community cooperation** remain important in farming, livestock care and surviving harsh winters.

- Pangwala culture reflects influences from **Himalayan tribal traditions and neighbouring Hindu and Buddhist communities**.
- **Hindu religious traditions**, village festivals, temple worship and agricultural rituals form important elements of their cultural life.
- **Folk music, dances and seasonal festivals** contribute to Pangwala cultural identity.

Gucchi Mushroom

bt Business Today

Gucchi Marmik at BRICS 2026 dinner: What makes this rare Himalayan mushroom worth ₹40,000 per kg?

It is found in parts of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. The mushroom typically grows in mountainous coniferous forests,...



Why in News: The Himalayan **gucchi mushroom** was featured as a rare regional ingredient at the **BRICS Summit 2026**.

Scientific and Geographical Profile

- Guichi mushroom is scientifically known as ***Morchella esculenta* is a fungus**.
- It is found mainly in parts of **Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand**.
- It typically grows in **mountainous coniferous forests** under suitable soil, moisture, temperature and snowmelt conditions.

Economic Characteristics

- Guichi is difficult to **mass-cultivate**, making wild collection particularly important.
- Mountain communities traditionally collect it manually by trekking through **steep and rugged terrain**.
- Fresh mushrooms contain substantial moisture and are generally **dried for preservation**, substantially reducing their weight.
- The mushroom is regarded as **one of the most expensive mushrooms**.

Biological and Nutritional Features

- Its characteristic **honeycomb-like cap** ranges from pale yellow to dark brown, while the stem is generally pale and hollow.
- Guichi contains **protein, dietary fibre and antioxidant compounds** and is also reported to contain **vitamin D**.

PRELIMS PYQ – 2022

45. With reference to "Gucchi" sometimes mentioned in the news, consider the following statements :

1. It is a fungus.
2. It grows in some Himalayan forest areas.
3. It is commercially cultivated in the Himalayan foothills of north-eastern India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 3 only
- (c) 1 and 2
- (d) 2 and 3

Nagarahole Tiger Reserve

DH Deccan Herald

Nagarahole Tiger Reserve ESZ: Centre issues 2nd draft notification after 10 years

The Centre has issued a draft eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) notification for Karnataka's Nagarahole Tiger Reserve, covering 573.95 sqkm.



Why in News: The Centre issued a **draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) notification** for **Nagarahole Tiger Reserve** for the second time, covering **573.95 sq km** around the reserve forest for regulation of specified activities.

Geographical Significance

- **Nagarahole Tiger Reserve** is located in **Mysore and Kodagu districts of Karnataka**.
- It lies near the **tri-junction of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala**.
- The reserve represents an ecological confluence of the **Western and Eastern Ghats**.
- It forms part of the **Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve**, recognised as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**.



Riverine and Landscape Linkages

- The reserve is named after the **Nagarahole River**, meaning **“snake stream” in Kannada**, which joins the **Kabini River**.
- It is bordered by **Bandipur Tiger Reserve** to the southeast and **Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary** to the southwest.
- The **Kabini River** lies to its north, while the **Moyar River** lies to its south.

Biodiversity Profile

- Vegetation changes from **dry deciduous forests in the east** to **tropical moist and semi-evergreen forests towards the wetter west**.
- Important flora includes **rosewood, Indian kino, sandalwood, Indian laurel and bamboo species**.
- Fauna includes the **Bengal tiger, gaur, sloth bear, golden jackal, dhole and four-horned antelope**.

National Dam Safety Authority



NDSA Reviews Dam Safety Preparedness and Implementation of Dam Safety Act in Jharkhand

A team of the National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA), led by Shri Saurabh Agrawal, Member (Administration & Finance), NDSA, comprising Shri...



Why in News: The **National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA)** sought time-bound action in **Jharkhand** for comprehensive safety evaluation and rehabilitation of **Category-II dams**.

Legal and Institutional Framework

- The **NDSA** is a **statutory body** established by the Central Government under the **Dam Safety Act, 2021**.
- It regulates, oversees and inspects dams and is headquartered in **New Delhi**.
- The Authority is headed by a **Chairman** assisted by five members overseeing five wings.

Core Functions

- The NDSA implements policies formulated by the **National Committee on Dam Safety**.
- It resolves disputes between **State Dam Safety Organisations (SDSOs)** or between an SDSO and a dam owner.
- It specifies regulations for **dam inspection and investigation**.
- It provides accreditation to agencies involved in **dam construction, design and alteration**.

Safety and Disaster Management

- Its standards cover **structural integrity, environmental impact and emergency response protocols**.
- The NDSA undertakes **nationwide dam-safety awareness programmes**.
- It supports preparation of **emergency response plans** for natural calamities and unforeseen dam-related events.

Kishau Multipurpose Project



Kishau Project: What is the long-delayed dam project and how will it help six states?

The Kishau Multipurpose Project is a proposed 422 MW dam on the Tons River — straddling Himachal and Uttarakhand — that was delayed by years...



Why in News: Six states signed an agreement on **15 September 2026** to advance the **Kishau Multipurpose Project** in the **Upper Yamuna Basin**.

Key Features

- Participating states are **Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Delhi and Haryana**.
- The **National Project** involves a **232.6-metre-high concrete gravity dam** on the **Tons River** along the Uttarakhand–Himachal Pradesh border.
- It will store about **1,562 MCM of water**, irrigate around **97,000 hectares** and generate **1,476 million units of hydropower**.

Water Governance

- The **Centre will bear around 90% of the financial burden**, with the remaining 10% borne by participating states.
- The project is linked to improving **environmental flows in the Yamuna** and water availability, particularly for **Delhi**.
- It is one of the major **Upper Yamuna Basin storage projects**, along with **Lakhwar and Renukaji**.

Other Important News of the day

Places in News	New Zealand
	Why in News: The New Zealand Parliament passed legislation to implement a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with India. Geographical Profile ➤ New Zealand is an island country in the South Pacific Ocean, southeast of Australia. ➤ Its two principal islands are the North Island and South Island, separated by the Cook Strait. ➤ The capital of New Zealand is Wellington. Physical Geography ➤ New Zealand lies within the Pacific Ring of Fire, making it prone to earthquakes and volcanic activity. ➤ Its climate ranges from warm subtropical in the north to cool temperate in the south. ➤ Mount Cook is its highest peak at approximately 12,316 feet.



	Important Geographical Features ➤ Mount Ruapehu is an active volcano in New Zealand. ➤ Tasman Glacier is the country's largest glacier. ➤ Lake Taupo is New Zealand's largest natural lake. ➤ Major natural resources include gold, silver, iron sands, phosphate and limestone.
Environment	Hilsa Fish TH The Hindu <u>India exports around 500 tonnes of Hilsa fish to Bangladesh in two months</u> India has exported 500 tonnes of Hilsa fish to Bangladesh amid rising demand due to declining local catches.  Why in News: India exported around 500 tonnes of Hilsa to Bangladesh over two months, reversing the traditional direction of Hilsa trade between the two countries. Biological Profile ➤ Hilsa, also called Ilish, is a fish belonging to the Clupeidae family, which also includes herrings. ➤ It has a silvery, flattened body, pointed head and numerous small bones. ➤ Bangladesh accounts for around 70% of global Ilish production. Habitat and Migration ➤ Hilsa occurs in rivers and estuaries across Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Myanmar and the Persian Gulf region. ➤ It is euryhaline, living in both freshwater and saltwater environments. ➤ During spawning, Hilsa migrates upstream from marine or estuarine waters into rivers. Important Rivers and Conservation ➤ Important spawning or migration rivers include the Padma and Meghna in Bangladesh and the Ganga and Godavari in India. ➤ The IUCN Red List classifies Hilsa as Least Concern.
Science and Technology	Diplodocus DW.com <u>Spanish scientists find first signs of Diplodocus in Europe</u> Paleontologists in Spain say they have found the first evidence of the long-necked Diplodocus genus of dinosaur outside of North America.  Why in News: Fossils of the Jurassic dinosaur Diplodocus have been discovered in Spain, marking the first reported discovery of its remains outside the United States.

	Evolutionary Profile ➤ Diplodocus was a giant, herbivorous sauropod dinosaur with a long neck, massive body and pillar-like legs. ➤ It lived during the Late Jurassic period, around 155–145 million years ago. ➤ Its name means “double beam”, referring to distinctive paired projections on certain tail bones. Distribution and Habitat ➤ Fossils were previously known mainly from North America, particularly Colorado, Montana, Utah and Wyoming. ➤ The recent European discovery expands the known geographical record of the dinosaur. ➤ Diplodocus inhabited areas with dense vegetation, including meadows and forest margins. Distinctive Features ➤ It could reach about 27 metres in length and approximately 4.6 metres in height at the hips. ➤ Its lightweight body was aided by the hollow structure of its vertebrae.
Miscellaneous	Southern Railway: 100% Electrification  Business Today Southern Railway achieves 100% electrification across 5,068-km broad gauge network Southern Railway has completed electrification across its entire 5068 route-kilometre broad gauge network with the Pattukottai-Karaikudi...  Why in News: Southern Railway has achieved complete electrification of its 5,068 RKM broad-gauge network. Key Facts ➤ The final 71-km Pattukkottai–Karaikudi section completed electrification. ➤ Electrification will enable seamless electric operations, improve locomotive utilisation and reduce fossil-fuel dependence. ➤ Electric traction was introduced in Southern Railway in May 1931, making Madras the second Indian metropolitan city after Bombay to receive electric traction.

Uttar Pradesh in News

Varuna Elevated Corridor

 Swarajyamag

Rs 10,998 Crore Varuna Elevated Corridor To Link NH-31 With Varanasi Ring Road, Cut Airport And Kashi Station Travel Time



The Rs 10,998-crore Varuna Elevated Corridor in Varanasi is set to create a new high-capacity road link between NH-31 and the Varanasi Ring...

Why in News: The **₹10,998-crore, 43.218-km Varuna Elevated Corridor** has been approved to improve connectivity and decongest **Varanasi**.

Key Features

- **NHAI** will develop the predominantly elevated **6/4-lane corridor** under the **Ministry of Road Transport & Highways**.
- It will connect **NH-31 with Varanasi Ring Road** along the **Varuna River**.
- It will include **flyovers, ramps, loops, service roads, a cable-stayed bridge and an extradosed bridge**.

Transport and Economic Impact

- It is part of the **Varanasi Decongestion Plan** and targets congestion around **Varanasi Junction, Phulwaria and Chaukaghat**.
- Travel time between **NH-31 and Kashi Railway Station** is expected to fall from **40 minutes to about 20 minutes**.
- The project aligns with **PM Gati Shakti** and will improve access to **logistics nodes and the Chandauli Socio-Economic Zone**.