

SANSKRITI IAS DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

22-06-2026

Khurasani Imli (GI Tag)

ET The Economic Times

GI tag puts Mandu's Khurasani Imli on the global map

Mandu's unique Khurasani Imli, the fruit of the iconic Baobab tree, has received a Geographical Indication (GI) tag.



Why in News

- **Khurasani Imli**, the fruit of Mandu's Baobab tree in Madhya Pradesh, has received a **Geographical Indication (GI) tag**.

Historical Background

- It is the fruit of the **Baobab tree** (*Adansonia digitata*).
- It was introduced during the reign of **Mahmud Khilji** in the **14th century**.
- It is also known as **Mandav Imli**.

Botanical Characteristics

- It grows across villages in the Mandu region of Madhya Pradesh.
- It has a light green fruit with a tangy sweet-sour flavour.
- The Baobab tree possesses a water-storing swollen trunk.

Medicinal Significance

- Tribal communities use its pulp, bark and juice for medicinal purposes.
- It is rich in **Vitamin C**, antioxidants and essential minerals.
- It is traditionally used to treat **diabetes**, digestive ailments, fever and fatigue.

GI Tag Provisions

- A GI indicates products linked to a specific geographical origin.
- It is governed by the **Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999**.
- A GI tag is valid for **10 years** and can be renewed thereafter.

New Cave-Dwelling Micro-Snails

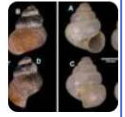
Why in News

- Researchers discovered two new cave-dwelling micro-snails, *Georissa meghalayaensis* and *Acmella bensoni*, in Meghalaya.

Research Matters

[Two New Species of Cave-Dwelling Micro Snails Uncovered in Meghalaya](#)

ATREE researchers have discovered two new species of tiny cave-dwelling micro-snails inside Meghalaya's limestone cave systems, warning of...



Geographical Focus

- They were discovered in the Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot.
- They inhabit damp limestone caves of Meghalaya.

Species Characteristics

- *Georissa meghalayaensis* was found near Krem Puri Cave.
- It has an orangish-red shell with a mesh-like ridge pattern.
- *Acmella bensoni* was found in Krem Puri and Arwah caves.

Additional Facts

- *Acmella bensoni* has a whitish translucent shell.
- It was named after William H. Benson, pioneer of Indian malacology.
- Malacology is the scientific study of molluscs.

India's First 3D-Printed Artificial Reef Modules

TNIE The New Indian Express

[New home for marine species: India's first 3D-printed reefs to be sunk off Ramanathapuram coast in TN](#)

Researchers believe that innovative habitat restoration tools could improve ecological resilience and support the recovery of marine...



Why in News

- Tamil Nadu will deploy India's first 3D-printed artificial reef modules under PM Matsya Sampada Yojana (Phase II).

Project Details

- The modules will be deployed off the **Ramanathapuram coast**.
- They were developed by **Tvasta**, an **IIT Madras-incubated startup**.
- **ICAR-CMFRI (Visakhapatnam Centre)** collaborated in development.



Technological Features

- The modules have multiple crevices and attachment surfaces.
- They are manufactured without iron reinforcement.
- They possess higher porosity for marine biodiversity enhancement.

Ecological Significance

- They support corals, sponges and reef-associated organisms.
- They allow species-specific habitat design.
- They can improve coastal ecosystem restoration.

Nabha Fort

TOI The Times of India

[Garbage out, heritage in: Nabha Fort gets citizens' push](#)

Patiala: Volunteers on Sunday cleared four trolley-loads of garbage from the 18th-century Nabha Fort and an adjoining park, renewing demands...



Why in News

- Conservation efforts have renewed demands to protect **Nabha Fort** in **Punjab**.

Historical Importance

- It is located in **Patiala district, Punjab**.
- It was the royal residence of the **Nabha princely state**.
- It belonged to the **Phulkian dynasty**.

Important Facts

- It played a role during the **Anglo-Sikh Wars**.
- **Maharaja Hira Singh** contributed significantly to its expansion.

Architectural Features

- It combines **Mughal, Rajput and Sikh architectural styles**.
- It contains frescoes, mirror work and stone jaalis.
- It houses a traditional cooling system called **Sard Khana**.

Biochar

TH The Hindu

Biochar offers a way to turn India's farm smoke into 'black gold'

Explore how biochar can transform India's agricultural waste into valuable resources, enhancing soil health and sustainability.



Why in News

- Studies show **Biochar** can increase crop productivity by **10-30%** and water retention by **10-25%**.

Scientific Characteristics

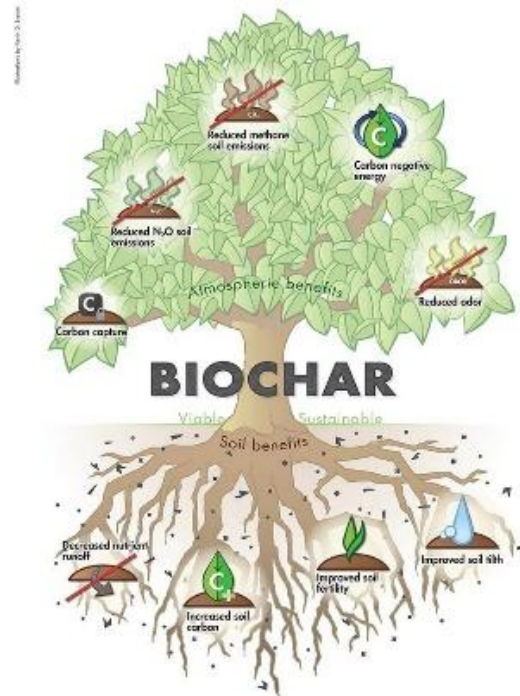
- Biochar is produced by heating biomass in **low-oxygen conditions (pyrolysis)**.
- It is prepared at **400°C-600°C**.
- It is a **carbon-rich granular material**.

Environmental Significance

- It can store carbon for **100-1,000 years**.
- It acts as a long-term **carbon sink**.
- It supports **climate change mitigation**.

Applications

- It improves soil fertility and water retention.
- It can adsorb **CO₂** from industrial emissions.
- It can be used in construction and wastewater treatment.



Periyar River

ThePrint

Unified authority to monitor Periyar river cleanliness important; lives at stake: Kerala HC

Kochi, Jun 20 (PTI) The Kerala High Court has stressed the need for a unified authority to monitor the cleanliness of the Periyar river,...



Why in News

- The **Kerala High Court** stressed the need for a unified authority to maintain the cleanliness of the **Periyar River**.

Geographical Profile

- Periyar is the **longest river in Kerala**.
- It originates in the **Sivagiri Hills of the Western Ghats**.
- Its total length is **244 km**.

Course and Tributaries

- It flows through **Periyar National Park** and **Periyar Lake**.
- It empties into **Vembanad Lake** before entering the **Arabian Sea**.
- Major tributaries include **Muthirapuzha, Mullayar, Cheruthoni, Perinjankutti** and **Edamala**.

Economic Significance

- It is called the **Lifeline of Kerala**.
- Around **25% of Kerala's industries** are located along its banks.
- It supports **irrigation, drinking water** and **hydropower generation**.

Related Facts

- **Idukki Hydroelectric Project** is the largest project on the river.
- Other dams include **Mullaperiyar, Neriya Mangalam, Pallivasal, Panniyar, Kundalam and Chenkulam**.
- **Kalady**, birthplace of **Adi Shankaracharya**, is located on its banks.

Uzbekistan Joins New Development Bank (NDB)

ANI News

[Uzbekistan joins New Development Bank as Central Asia's first representative](#)

The Republic of Uzbekistan has officially become a shareholder of the New Development Bank (NDB), marking a significant milestone in its...



Why in News

- **Uzbekistan** became the **10th member** of the **New Development Bank (NDB)** and the **first Central Asian country** to join the **BRICS-led bank**.

Institutional Framework

- **NDB** was established by **Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS)** at the 6th BRICS Summit (2014), Fortaleza, Brazil.
- It became operational in 2015 and is headquartered in **Shanghai, China**.

Financial and Governance Features

- It finances **infrastructure and sustainable development projects in Emerging Market and Developing Economies (EMDEs)**.
- The bank has an **authorised capital of USD 100 billion** and **initial subscribed capital of USD 50 billion**.
- Each member has **one vote**, there is **no veto power**, and founding BRICS members retain **over 55% voting share**.

Membership and Significance

- Current members are **Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Bangladesh, UAE, Egypt, Algeria and Uzbekistan**.
- **Uruguay, Colombia and Ethiopia** have been approved for future membership.
- Uzbekistan's entry expands NDB into **Central Asia**, strengthens the **Global South**, and promotes **local currency financing** to reduce dependence on the **US Dollar**.

Other Important News of the day

Places in News

Switzerland

Why in News

- Switzerland hosted the first round of high-level talks between Iran and the United States.

Geographical Profile

- Switzerland is a landlocked country in **Western and Central Europe**.
- Its capital is **Bern**.
- It shares borders with **Germany, France, Italy, Austria and Liechtenstein**.



Political Significance

- It is not a member of the **European Union (EU)**.
- It is not a member of **NATO**.
- It is globally known for its policy of neutrality.

Physical Features

- The **Alps** lie in the south and the **Jura Mountains** in the north.
- Its highest peak is **Monte Rosa** in the **Pennine Alps**.
- Its largest lakes include **Lake Geneva** and **Lake Neuchâtel**.

Other Important Facts

- Its four official languages are **German, French, Italian and Romansh**.
- Its climate is influenced by **Atlantic, Arctic, Continental and Mediterranean** systems.

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Solanum pandeyi

THE Hindu

New species of wild brinjal discovered in the Andamans

A new wild brinjal species, *Solanum pandeyi*, discovered in the Andamans, used by the indigenous Great Andamanese tribe.



Why in News

- Scientists from the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) discovered a new species of wild brinjal named *Solanum pandeyi* in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Taxonomic Features



- It is a species of wild brinjal found in **Middle Andaman's evergreen forests**.
- It belongs to the **Leptostemonum clade** of the genus **Solanum**.
- It belongs to the family **Solanaceae**.

Ethnobotanical Importance

- The **Great Andamanese (Negrito tribe)** use it for food and medicinal purposes.
- Its seeds and roots are used to treat **tooth infections**.
- Settler communities prepare a sour-sweet sauce using its ripe fruits.

Institutional Relevance

- **BSI** is India's apex taxonomic institution under **MoEFCC**.
- It was established on **13 February 1890**.
- It supports plant conservation, identification and sustainable use.

<p style="color: #e67e22; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">Defence</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">Dongfeng-17 (DF-17)</p>
	<div style="border: 1px solid #000; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;"> The Times of India</p> <p style="color: #000080; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">China releases first-ever footage of Dongfeng-17 hypersonic missile launch, sends message to US</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em; margin: 0;">International News: Chinese state broadcaster CCTV has for the first time aired footage showing the launch of a Dongfeng-17 (DF-17)...</p> </div> <div style="float: right; border: 1px solid #000; padding: 2px;">  </div> <p style="color: #008080; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 10px;">Why in News</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> China publicly aired footage of the Dongfeng-17 (DF-17) hypersonic missile launch. <p style="color: #008000; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 10px;">Technical Profile</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DF-17 is a solid-fuelled medium-range hypersonic ballistic missile. It was officially unveiled in 2019. Its NATO designation is CSS-22. <p style="color: #000080; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 10px;">Capabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Its range is approximately 1,800–2,500 km. It carries the DF-ZF Hypersonic Glide Vehicle (HGV). It travels at speeds between Mach 5 and Mach 10. <p style="color: #008000; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 10px;">Strategic Significance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The glide vehicle can manoeuvre within the atmosphere. It remains below radar detection for longer periods. It is mounted on a mobile launcher.
<p style="color: #4a4a8a; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">Science and Technology</p>	<div style="background-color: #e1f5fe; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em; color: #4a4a8a;">Ammonia (NH₃)</p> </div> <div style="padding: 10px;"> <p style="color: #c00000; font-weight: bold; margin-bottom: 10px;">Why in News</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An ammonia gas leak in Tiruvallur district, Tamil Nadu, affected several people. <div style="border: 1px solid #000; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;"> Planet Labs</p> <p style="color: #000080; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Seeing Beyond Greenhouse Gases: Researchers Use the Tanager Satellite to Detect Ammonia From Space</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em; margin: 0;">Remote sensing is entering a groundbreaking new era, made possible by Planet's Tanager-1 satellite, which has a VSWIR hyperspectral sensor.</p> </div> <div style="float: right; border: 1px solid #000; padding: 2px;">  </div> </div>

Chemical Profile

- Ammonia is a colourless gas with a pungent smell.
- Its chemical formula is NH_3 .
- It consists of nitrogen and hydrogen.

Production and Uses

- It is industrially produced through the **Haber-Bosch Process**.
- Its primary use is in fertilizer production.
- It is also used in refrigeration and water treatment.

Health Impact

- High exposure irritates the eyes, skin and lungs.
- It may cause coughing and burns.
- It naturally occurs in the nitrogen cycle.

Uttar Pradesh in News

Digital Governance in Uttar Pradesh: Technology & AI Transformation

TOI The Times of India

Digital governance in Uttar Pradesh: How technology & AI are reshaping transformation across the state

It is necessary to make the administrative system at the village level strong, transparent and technically capable.



Why in News

- **Uttar Pradesh** is rapidly emerging as a **digital-first state** through large-scale adoption of e-governance, AI, DBT and rural broadband connectivity.

Digital Governance Initiatives

- The e-District UP portal provides online access to certificates, pensions, revenue services and grievance redressal.
- VAHAN and SARATHI offer **49 faceless transport services** and manage over **5.3 crore vehicles**.

- **Manav Sampada** digitises employee records, leave management and transfers.
- **Nivesh Mitra 3.0** acts as a single-window platform for investment approvals.

AI and Digital Infrastructure

- **Lucknow** is being developed as India's first AI City with a target of a 5-GW AI compute corridor by 2040.
- Under **Project Ganga**, broadband connectivity will initially cover **20 lakh families in 21 districts** and eventually all **57,000 Gram Panchayats**.
- The project will create over **1 lakh jobs** through **Digital Service Providers (DSPs)**.

Digital Economy and Financial Inclusion

- Uttar Pradesh contributes **65% of India's mobile phone production** and 55% of component manufacturing.
- Digital transactions increased from ₹122.84 crore (2017-18) to ₹1,635.72 crore (2025-26).
- BC Sakhi Programme has deployed around **40,000 women** to provide rural banking services.

DBT and Governance Reforms

- UP operates **207 DBT-enabled schemes across 11 departments** benefiting **9.1 crore people annually**.
- More than **₹1.11 lakh crore** is transferred every year through DBT, saving around **₹10,000 crore** by reducing leakages.
- The state has adopted **AI-enabled land records, blockchain-based land management, UP-112, Trinetra and YAKSH** to improve governance and policing.
- Uttar Pradesh procured over **₹65,000 crore** through **GeM (2020-21 to 2024-25)**, making it the **top-buying state**.