

SANSKRITI IAS DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

28-07-2026

Atmanirbhar Panchayat Programme

DD India

Centre launches Atmanirbhar Panchayat Programme, SAMARTH Portal to strengthen financial independence of Panchayats

Union Minister for Panchayati Raj and Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh on Monday launched the...



Why in News

- The Union Minister of Panchayati Raj recently launched the **Atmanirbhar Panchayat Programme** along with the **SAMARTH Panchayat Portal**.

Governance Dimensions

- The programme is a flagship initiative of the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj**.
- It aims to transform **Gram Panchayats** and **Block Panchayats** into financially self-reliant local governments.
- It enables Panchayats to convert local assets and opportunities into **bankable, revenue-generating projects**.
- The programme strengthens **Own Source Revenue (OSR)** to reduce dependence on grants.

Eligibility and Institutional Significance

- Gram Panchayats** require a minimum **OSR of ₹50 lakh** for eligibility.
- Block Panchayats** require a minimum **OSR of ₹1 crore** for eligibility.
- Panchayats must have at least **three years of remaining tenure**.
- Relaxed eligibility norms are available for **Special Category States**.
- The programme complements **Part IX of the Constitution** and strengthens **Article 243G** relating to Panchayat functions.

Implementation Framework

- The **Ministry of Panchayati Raj** provides dedicated technical support for project preparation.
- Projects are financed through **PPP, CSR, convergence with government schemes, and bank finance**.
- NABARD and HUDCO serve as the institutional partners.
- The programme targets **350 projects in four years**, including **50 projects in the first year** and **100 projects annually thereafter**.

SAMARTH Panchayat Portal

 DD India

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Why in News

- The **SAMARTH Panchayat Portal** was launched with the **Atmanirbhar Panchayat Programme** to strengthen Panchayat finances digitally.

Digital Governance

- It is a first-of-its-kind digital platform developed by the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj**.
- It enables technology-driven management of **Own Source Revenue (OSR)**.
- It functions as a unified and configurable national platform for Gram Panchayats.

Key Features

- The portal supports **taxpayer registration** and **demand generation**.

- It facilitates online tax payment, collection, and real-time monitoring.
- It digitises the complete lifecycle of Panchayat revenue administration.

Current Status

- Chhattisgarh and Himachal Pradesh have already been onboarded.
- The portal promotes transparency, accountability, and financial sustainability in local governance.

National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme-2 (NAPS-2)

 The New Indian Express

Karnataka's NAPS success masks deep district-level gaps, with over half logging fewer than 5,000 apprentices

Data tabled in the Lok Sabha on Monday showed that 4,47,703 apprentices have been engaged under NAPS in Karnataka between 2018-19 and June 30...

Why in News

- The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) informed the Lok Sabha about the implementation of NAPS-2.

Scheme Overview

- NAPS-2 has been implemented nationwide since 2022-23 by MSDE.
- It builds upon the original National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme launched in August 2016.
- The scheme promotes apprenticeship training under the Apprentices Act, 1961.

Salient Features

- The Government provides partial stipend support to eligible apprentices.
- Financial assistance is transferred directly through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).

- Training is conducted in actual industrial workplaces for hands-on learning.
- A dedicated online portal manages registration, approvals, monitoring, and benefit disbursement.

Industry and Governance Relevance

- Third-Party Aggregators (TPAs) mobilise apprentices and industries, especially **MSMEs**.
- The scheme strengthens industry-academia linkage and improves workforce employability.
- It supports the objectives of **Skill India Mission** and **Atmanirbhar Bharat**.

Atal Beemit Vyakti Kalyan Yojana (ABVKY)

ET The Economic Times

Parliament Watch: ESIC disburses Rs 5.26 crore under ABVK, 79 FEMA applications disposed of since FY22

Parliament updates: Govt launched a 3-month drive to clear 16033 labour disputes, ESIC disbursed ₹5.26 crore under ABVKY, approved polymer...



Why in News

- The Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) has extended ABVKY from **1 July 2026 to 30 June 2027**.

Social Security Framework

- **ABVKY** is an unemployment relief scheme for workers covered under the **Employees' State Insurance (ESI) Act, 1948**.
- It was introduced on **1 July 2018**.
- The scheme is implemented by the **Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC)**.
- It provides temporary financial assistance to insured workers who lose employment.

MINISTRY OF LABOUR & EMPLOYMENT
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

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Atal Beemit Vyakti Kalyan Yojana Extended up to June 2022

Atal Beemit Vyakti Kalyan Yojana (ABVKY)

This scheme is a welfare measure for employees covered under Section 2(9) of the ESI Act, 1948, in the form of relief payment upto 90 days, once in a lifetime. Under the Scheme, 50% of wages are provided to the Insured Person (IP).

Insured Person (IP) should have been in insurable employment for a minimum period of 02 years immediately before her/his unemployment and should have contributed for not less than 78 days in the contribution period immediately preceding to unemployment and minimum 78 days in one of the remaining three contribution periods in two years prior to unemployment.

For further details,
Please visit ESIC Branch Office or Website, 'www.esic.nic.in'

Financial Benefits

- Eligible beneficiaries receive **50% of average daily earnings**.
- Assistance is calculated using the previous four contribution periods.
- Relief is available for a maximum of **90 days**.
- The benefit can be claimed **only once during the insured person's lifetime**.

Eligibility Conditions

- The employee must qualify under **Section 2(9) of the ESI Act, 1948**.
- The insured person must remain unemployed during the claim period.
- The individual must have completed at least **two years of insurable employment**.
- Contributions must have been made for at least **78 days in each of the previous four contribution periods**.
- **Aadhaar** and the bank account must be linked.

Important Exclusions

- The benefit is unavailable during **lockouts** and **illegal strikes**.
- It is not available after **voluntary retirement**, abandonment of service, or **superannuation**.
- Relief is denied upon re-employment, disciplinary dismissal, or false claims under **Section 84 of the ESI Act**.
- Claims must be filed within **one year** from the date of unemployment.

Microporellus kolhapurensis

 The Times of India

New fungus species discovered, named after Kolhapur

New polypore fungus species *Microporellus kolhapurensis* discovered in Bhudargad, Kolhapur; study highlights Western Ghats biodiversity and...



Why in News

- A new polypore fungus, *Microporellus kolhapurensis*, has been discovered in **Bhudargad Taluka, Kolhapur District, Maharashtra**.

Taxonomic Significance

Distinctive Characteristics

- It possesses an **umbrella-shaped fruiting body**.

• It is a newly identified species of polypore (bracket) fungus. • It was discovered growing on rotting wood. • Fruiting occurs mainly between July and September. • The species generally grows singly.	• It has a lateral stalk and a ground-growing habit. • The species contains large pores and teardrop-shaped spores. • It is characterised by thick-walled cystidia on the spore-bearing surface. • Its colour ranges from yellowish-orange to greyish-brown.
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About Polypores

- **Polypores** are fungi having pores on the underside of the fruiting body.
- The pores store and release **spores** for reproduction.
- They are commonly known as **bracket fungi** because of their shelf-like appearance.
- They occur on living trees and fallen logs and play an important role in **wood decomposition**.
- Their **mycelium** remains embedded inside host trees while only fruiting bodies are visible.

Museum Grant Scheme

 ANI News

[Centre outlines Museum Grant Scheme, says financial assistance available for new museums, digitisation and heritage preservation](#)

Union Minister for Culture and Tourism Gajendra Singh Shekhawat informed the Lok Sabha in a written reply that the Ministry of Culture is...



Why in News

- The **Ministry of Culture** informed the Lok Sabha about the implementation of the **Museum Grant Scheme**.

Scheme Overview

- It is a **Central Sector Scheme** of the **Ministry of Culture**.
- The scheme was launched in **2013**.
- It provides financial assistance for establishing new museums and modernising existing museums.
- It also promotes **digitisation of museum collections** and capacity building of museum professionals.



Eligible Institutions

- Assistance is available to **Central and State Governments**.
- **PSUs, Local Bodies, Societies, Autonomous Bodies, Academic Institutions, and Registered Trusts** are also eligible.
- The scheme aims to develop at least **one Central/State Government Museum in every State Capital each year**.

Categories and Funding

- **Category I:** Renowned Central or State Government museums in State capitals.
- **Category II:** Other Central/State Government museums, including **PSU museums**.
- **Category III:** Museums managed by societies, trusts, autonomous bodies, local bodies, and academic institutions.
- Funding extends up to ₹15 crore (Category I), ₹10 crore (new Category II), ₹8 crore (existing Category II), ₹5 crore (new Category III), and ₹4 crore (existing Category III).
- Digitisation and training assistance extends up to ₹50 lakh (Category I) and ₹25 lakh (Category II).

National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)



News On AIR

National Biodiversity Authority forms panel to address invasive alien species

The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) has constituted an Expert Committee on Invasive Alien Species to address the growing ecological...



Why in News

- The **National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)** has constituted an **Expert Committee on Invasive Alien Species** to address increasing ecological and socio-economic threats.

Institutional Framework

- The **NBA** is an autonomous statutory body established under the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**.
- Its headquarters are located in **Chennai, Tamil Nadu**.
- It performs **regulatory, advisory, and facilitative** functions related to biodiversity conservation.
- Its objectives include conservation, sustainable use, and **fair and equitable benefit sharing (ABS)**.

Three-Tier Biodiversity Governance

- The **NBA** functions at the national level.
- **State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs)** regulate access to biological resources within states.
- **Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs)** function at the local body level.
- The three-tier framework promotes decentralised biodiversity governance and implementation.

Regulatory and Advisory Functions

- The NBA regulates access to biological resources and associated traditional knowledge.
- Foreign individuals and companies require prior approval before accessing Indian biological resources.

- Prior NBA approval is mandatory before seeking **Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs)** based on Indian biological resources.
- Indian citizens and companies obtain commercial access permissions from the respective **State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs)**.
- The Authority advises governments on notifying **Biodiversity Heritage Sites** and biodiversity conservation policies.

Composition and Grassroots Role

- The Authority consists of a Chairperson, 10 Ex-officio Members, and 5 Non-Official Members appointed by the **Central Government**.
- It supports capacity building of **SBBs** and **BMCs**.
- It organises awareness programmes and monitors compliance with the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**.
- It ensures that benefits arising from biological resources reach local and indigenous communities.

Other Important News of the day

Places in
News

Bab el-Mandeb Strait

Why in News

- The **Bab el-Mandeb Strait** has regained strategic importance after Yemen's **Iran-backed Houthi movement** announced a maritime blockade against **Saudi Arabia**.

Geographical Profile

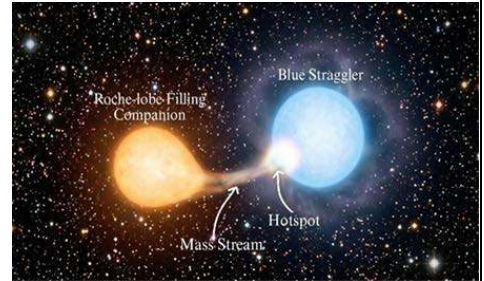
- Bab el-Mandeb means the "Gate of Tears" in Arabic due to its history of shipwrecks.
- It lies at the southern end of the **Red Sea**, between **Yemen** and the **Horn of Africa**.



	• It connects the Red Sea with the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. • It separates the Arabian Peninsula from the African continent. • It provides a maritime link between the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea through the Suez Canal. Physical Characteristics • The strait is approximately 30 km wide. • Perim Island (Yemen) divides it into two navigation channels. • The eastern channel is called Alexander's Strait. • The western channel is known as the Dact-el-Mayun Channel. Strategic Significance • It is one of the world's most important maritime chokepoints. • It carries trade between Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. • Oil shipments from the Middle East to Europe and North America pass through this route. • Any disruption affects global shipping, energy security, and supply chains.
Environment	Blue Straggler Star (BSS)  PIB <u>Astronomers discover an actively forming luminous blue straggler star</u> Indian astronomers, along with their international collaborators, have reported the rare discovery of a Blue Straggler Star (BSS) caught in...  Why in News • Indian astronomers, along with international collaborators, have reported the rare discovery of a Blue Straggler Star (BSS).

Astronomical Features

- Blue Straggler Stars are hotter, brighter, and more massive than neighbouring stars in the same cluster.
- They follow an unusual evolutionary path compared to normal stars.
- They are commonly observed in old globular clusters.
- They appear as an extension of the main sequence beyond the normal turn-off point.
- They are also found in dwarf galaxies and the galactic field.



Why Are They Unique?

- They become hotter and brighter instead of expanding and cooling with age.
- Their blue colour indicates higher surface temperature.
- They appear younger than other stars of the same stellar population.
- Their delayed evolution gives rise to the term "straggler."

Proposed Formation Mechanisms

- One hypothesis suggests they are not original members of the star cluster.
- Another proposes mass transfer from a giant companion star.
- A third hypothesis involves a triple-star system facilitating mass transfer.

	• These mechanisms increase the star's mass, temperature, and luminosity.
Defence	Bhargavastra  The Times of India <u>Army gets demo of indigenous counter-drone system 'Bhargavastra'</u> A new counter-swarm drone system called 'Bhargavastra' has been showcased to the army, marking a significant step in India's efforts to...  Why in News • The indigenous Bhargavastra counter-swarm drone system has recently been showcased to the Indian Army. Defence Significance • Bhargavastra is India's first indigenous micro-missile-based counter-swarm drone system. • It has been developed by Economic Explosives Ltd. • The system is designed to neutralise both individual drones and coordinated drone swarms. • It offers a cost-effective alternative to expensive surface-to-air missile systems. Operational Capabilities • It employs a dual-layered kill mechanism. • It combines unguided micro-rockets with precision-guided micro-missiles. • Guided micro-missiles can intercept targets up to 2.5 km. • Unguided rockets provide a lethal radius of about 20 metres.

	Detection and Surveillance • It detects large UAVs up to 10 km and smaller drones up to 6 km. • It integrates Radar, Electro-Optical/Infrared (EO/IR) sensors, and Passive RF sensors. • These systems operate through a C4I (Command, Control, Communication, Computers and Intelligence) architecture. Strategic Utility • It employs both hard-kill and soft-kill mechanisms, including electronic jamming. • It operates effectively from deserts to high-altitude regions above 5,000 metres. • The system significantly strengthens India's indigenous counter-drone capability.
Science and Technology	Kalpasar Project  DD India Kalpasar project expected to cut Bhavnagar-Surat distance by half The Detailed Project Report (DPR) for Gujarat's ambitious Gulf of Khambhat (Kalpasar) Project is at an advanced stage of finalisation,... Why in News • The Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the Kalpasar (Gulf of Khambhat Development) Project is at an advanced stage of finalisation. Strategic Infrastructure • The Kalpasar Project is a proposed multipurpose water infrastructure project in Gujarat. • It aims to meet irrigation, drinking water, transport, and energy requirements of the Saurashtra region.

- The project proposes a **64-km dam** across the **Gulf of Khambhat**.
- It seeks to create one of the world's largest coastal freshwater reservoirs covering about **2,000 sq km**.
- The proposed reservoir will have a **gross storage capacity of 13,000 MCM**.

Hydrological Features

- The reservoir will capture freshwater flowing into the gulf.
- It will receive water from the **Sabarmati, Mahi, Dhadhar, and Narmada** rivers.
- The project is expected to irrigate nearly **10 lakh hectares** across **nine districts**.
- It is designed to reduce water scarcity in the **Saurashtra** region.

Connectivity and Energy

- The project includes a **highway-cum-rail corridor** over the dam.
- It will reduce the **Bhavnagar–Surat** travel distance by about **179 km**.
- Around **2,470 MW** of hybrid renewable energy capacity is proposed on reclaimed land.
- Renewable energy will support freshwater pumping for irrigation.

International Cooperation

- The **Netherlands** is providing technical expertise and engineering support.
- The project integrates water security, transport infrastructure, and renewable energy under a single framework.

Uttar Pradesh in News

UP Implements Nipun Lakshya to Overhaul Primary Education



Jagran

<https://www.jagran.com> > lucknow-... • [Translate this page](#) ⋮

यूपी के सरकारी स्कूलों में बदलेगी शिक्षा की तस्वीर, 'निपुण लक्ष्य ...

3 days ago — उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार ने 'कैच-अप शिक्षण अभियान' शुरू किया है, जिसका उद्देश्य कोरोना काल के कारण पढ़ाई में पिछड़े बच्चों के लर्निंग गैप को खत्म करना है। इसमें निपुण लक्ष्य, 10 प्रभावी शिक्षण प्रथाएं और ...

Why in News

- **Uttar Pradesh** has launched the **Nipun Lakshya** initiative to improve Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) in government primary schools.

Learning Framework

- It aligns with the **NIPUN Bharat Mission** under **NEP 2020**.
- It aims to ensure **Grades 1–3** students achieve foundational reading, writing, and numeracy skills.

Key Features

- Introduces **10 activity-based classroom practices**, including peer learning, workbooks, and mathematics kits.
- Provides **daily remedial classes** for slow learners.
- Uses the **Nipun Lakshya App** for weekly digital assessments and progress tracking.

Implementation

- Over **5 lakh teachers** are being trained in pedagogy and digital tools.
- PTA meetings and **Shikshak Sankul (Teacher Clusters)** strengthen community participation and academic monitoring.