

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

»»» 22 JUNE 2025



NATIONAL AFFAIRS / GOVERNMENT SCHEME

1. PM Modi Launches ₹18,600 Crore Development Projects in Odisha & Unveils Vision 2047 Roadmap.



On June 20, 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated projects worth ₹18,600 crore in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, focusing on drinking water, irrigation, highways, railways, health, and urban mobility. He also released the Odisha Vision Documents for 2036 and 2047, charting the state's future growth path.

- The flagship launch included 105 infrastructure and public service projects with a combined investment of ₹18,600 crore. These span crucial sectors: rural and urban drinking water systems, major irrigation works, expansion of highways and bridges, health facility upgrades, and new railway lines to bolster connectivity across Odisha.

- As part of a modern mobility agenda, PM Modi flagged off 100 electric buses under the Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT) scheme. These e-buses aim to decentralize urban transit, complement anticipated growth at Biju Patnaik International Airport, and support a vision of sustainable, low-carbon urban infrastructure.

- Modi unveiled two visionary roadmap documents—'Odisha Vision 2036' and 'Odisha Vision 2047'—crafted through public consultation involving over 3.2 lakh

citizens, with AI-enabled feedback integration. The 2036 milestone aligns with Odisha's 100th statehood anniversary, while Vision 2047 echoes India's centenary of independence, targeting \$500 billion and \$1.5 trillion economies respectively.

Key Points:-

(i) Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi reaffirmed Odisha's alignment with the Purvodaya (Eastern development) initiative. He outlined goals: boosting urban population (17% to 40% by 2036, rising to 60% by 2047), industrial growth, tourism expansion, and enhanced aviation infrastructure—including new airports at Paradip and Puri, plus a third terminal for Bhubaneswar airport.

(ii) Combined with earlier investment inflows (₹1.8 lakh crore via 56 enterprises), these initiatives position Odisha as a future-driven growth engine in eastern India. The projects and Vision documents reflect a firm commitment to inclusivity, prosperity, and sustainable development, shaping Odisha as a key contributor to India's Viksit Bharat 2047 goals.

2. MoWCD Hosts India's First National Consultation on Gender Budgeting in New Delhi.

In June 2025, the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD) conducted India's first-ever National Consultation on Gender Budgeting at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi. The event aimed to strengthen gender-responsive fiscal policies by bringing together policymakers and global development partners.

- The consultation was designed to align India's budgetary priorities with gender equity goals. Over 160 senior officials from 40 central ministries/departments and 19 states/UTs participated. Delegates included representatives from

UN Women, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and several national-level economists and budget experts.

- Discussions revolved around institutionalizing gender budgeting across ministries, evaluating gender outcomes under flagship schemes, and identifying fiscal tools to mainstream gender concerns. MoWCD emphasized making gender budgeting an integral component of Outcome-Based Budgeting (OBB) and the Gender Budget Statement (GBS) submitted annually with the Union Budget.

- Union Minister Annapurna Devi reaffirmed that Gender Budgeting has remained a policy pillar since 2005-06, but it has now evolved into a strategic governance instrument. In FY 2025-26, the Government of India allocated ₹4.49 lakh crore under the Gender Budget, reflecting a 37% increase from the previous year.

Key Points:-

(i) Over the last decade, India's Gender Budget allocations have grown 4.5 times—from ₹0.98 lakh crore in FY 2014-15 to ₹4.49 lakh crore in FY 2025-26. This demonstrates the Centre's increasing financial commitment toward gender equality and social inclusion through targeted schemes and public service delivery.

(ii) On the sidelines of the event, MoWCD also launched a new digital portal named 'Gender Budgeting Knowledge Hub', developed in collaboration with policy think tanks. This centralized portal will host gender-disaggregated data, policy briefs, scheme-level best practices, and training modules for departments at both central and state levels.

(iii) The consultation marks a pivotal step in embedding gender equity into India's fiscal architecture. The Knowledge Hub will act as a key enabler for real-time monitoring and capacity building. MoWCD plans to institutionalize such

consultations annually to refine frameworks and empower ministries to deliver more inclusive budgets.

3. Delhi University Launches 'JAIHIND' Scheme to Boost Digital and Higher Education Skills Among ST Students.



On June 17, 2025, Delhi University unveiled the Janajati Immersive Holistic Intervention for Novel Development (JAIHIND) scheme. Aimed at Scheduled Tribe school students, it combines CUET coaching, skill development, and digital training, promoting access to higher education and livelihood opportunities.

- A pilot batch of 25 class 9–12 students from the Tangkhul Naga tribe in Manipur's Ukhrul district has been selected through merit from four government schools. The two-week immersive program runs from June 17–29, covering CUET exam strategies, academic mentoring, and exposure to Delhi University campus life, including supportive sessions with Secretary Vineet Joshi.

- Alongside academic coaching, participants receive digital literacy training—covering computer skills and CUET applications — and practical livelihood training. The curriculum includes container-based pisciculture, fish feed production, essential oil extraction from local

GI-tagged herbs, and guidance on PM Vidyalakshmi Yojana to financially assist tribal students.

Key Points:-

(i) DU covers students' accommodation, travel, and campus expenses—highlighting its commitment to inclusion. With plans to annually expand the scheme to include other tribal regions and introduce remote extension via faculty visits, the program directly addresses the urban–rural and digital divides in education.

(ii) Vice Chancellor Prof. Yogesh Singh emphasised JAIHIND's mission to bridge educational gaps and foster sustainable livelihoods for tribal youths.

(iii) Delhi University envisions transforming this scheme into a national model, promoting socially equitable access to competitive exams and higher education for underrepresented communities.

4. Delhi to Launch First-Ever Cloud Seeding Trial to Induce Artificial Rainfall Amid Rising Pollution.



In June 2025, Delhi's Environment Minister, Manjinder Singh Sirsa, announced the city's first-ever cloud-seeding trial—carried out in collaboration with IIT-Kanpur—aimed at inducing artificial rain to reduce pollution and boost water

levels. The plan awaits final approvals before execution begins.

- The pilot cloud-seeding project aims to mitigate Delhi's persistent air pollution (PM_{2.5} – Particulate Matter less than 2.5 micrometers & PM₁₀ – Particulate Matter less than 10 micrometers) and supplement scarce rainfall by artificially inducing rain. All scientific systems are ready, with final clearances pending. Suitable weather conditions—moist, deep clouds—will trigger the operation.

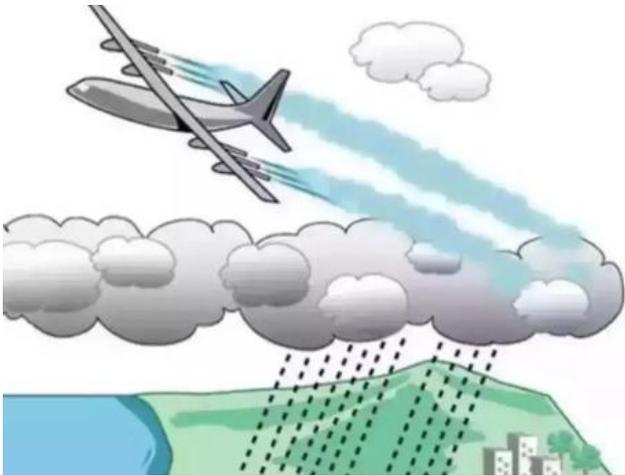
- Designed with IIT-Kanpur, the experiment uses specially equipped Cessna aircraft fitted with flare-based systems. The seeding particles include silver iodide nanoparticles, iodised salt, and rock salt. Up to five sorties, each covering 100 sq km for 1.5 hours, are planned over northwest and outer Delhi zones.

Key Points:-

(i) Flights are restricted to non-sensitive airspace, avoiding VIP zones like Rashtrapati Bhawan and Parliament. Regulatory approvals from agencies such as IMD (India Meteorological Department), DGCA (Directorate General of Civil Aviation), AAI (Airports Authority of India), and MoD (Ministry of Defence) are being finalized. Real-time CAAQMS (Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations) monitors will gauge air quality changes before and after the flights.

(ii) The estimated trial cost is ₹55 lakh per flight, totaling ₹2.75 crore. While IIT-Kanpur study suggests a 60–70% success rate, experts stress that effect duration may be limited and long-term sustainability is unproven. Post-trial data will evaluate environmental impacts before considering expansion.

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INTERNATIONAL

1. QS World University Rankings 2026: IIT Delhi Tops Among Indian Institutes; MIT Secures Global 1st Spot.



In June 2025, the QS World University Rankings 2026 were released by London-based global education analytics firm Quacquarelli Symonds (QS). Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT-D) emerged as the highest-ranked Indian university, marking a major milestone in international academic benchmarking.

- IIT Delhi secured the 123rd global rank in the QS World University Rankings 2026, making it the highest-ranked Indian institution on the list. It jumped an impressive 70 spots from 197th in 2024 to 123rd in 2026, outperforming all other Indian universities. The institute earned an overall score of 65.5.

- IIT Delhi's upward movement is attributed to high scores in Employer Reputation (50th), Citations per Faculty (86th), Academic Reputation (142nd), and Sustainability (172nd). This shows its consistent focus on global research impact, employability, and environmental goals.

- The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) topped the global QS rankings for the 14th time, maintaining its position with a perfect score of 100. It was followed by Imperial College London (99.2) and Stanford University, USA (98.9), ranking 2nd and 3rd respectively.

Key Points:-

(i) India had 54 universities in the rankings, including 11 IITs, making it the 4th most represented country after the USA (192 universities), UK (90), and Mainland China (72). This reflects India's growing global stature in higher education.

(ii) Apart from IIT Delhi, other prominent entries from India include IIT Bombay (IIT-B) and IIT Madras (IIT-M). These IITs continue to feature among the top 200 universities globally, showcasing India's technological and research leadership.

(iii) IIT Delhi's placement alongside globally reputed institutions such as the Georgia Institute of Technology (USA) signifies India's improving academic footprint on the global map. The rankings reaffirm the country's progress in higher education quality, research excellence, and internationalization.

2. According to UNCTAD Report 2025 "India Ranks 15th Globally in FDI Inflows with USD 27.6 Billion".



India has been ranked 15th among the top global destinations for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in 2024, as per the World Investment Report 2025 released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Despite a minor decline in inflows, India improved its position from 16th to 15th globally, reflecting continued investor confidence amid a challenging global environment.

- India received USD 27.6 billion in FDI inflows in 2024, compared to USD 28.1 billion in 2023, marking a marginal 1.9% year-on-year decline. However, this drop did not hinder India's climb in global rankings, showcasing its relative stability and attractiveness to foreign investors even during a period when global FDI declined by 11%, reaching USD 1.3 trillion. The report attributes India's resilience to structural reforms, large market size, and strong government-backed policy frameworks.

- India ranked 4th globally in greenfield project announcements, with 1,080 projects registered in 2024. This marked an increase of 28% compared to the previous year, highlighting the country's growing appeal in new investments across sectors like renewable energy, electronics, and manufacturing. Greenfield investments are key indicators of future employment generation and economic activity, and India's surge is a positive sign of investor sentiment.

● In the domain of international project finance, India secured 97 deals, placing it among the top 5 global destinations in this category. These projects were primarily in sectors like transportation, renewable infrastructure, digital services, and logistics. The strong project finance pipeline indicates rising investor interest in India's long-term growth sectors supported by stable regulatory frameworks and government-backed viability gap funding mechanisms.

Key Points:-

(i) UNCTAD's report reaffirmed India's position as the largest recipient of FDI in South Asia, far ahead of neighbouring countries. The bulk of South Asia's inward investments were directed toward India, solidifying its role as the regional investment hub. The report also cited India's proactive FDI policies, industrial corridors, and flagship schemes such as Make in India and PLI (Production Linked Incentive) as key drivers.

(ii) India witnessed a 25% surge in planned capital expenditure, reaching USD 110 billion in 2024, making up nearly one-third of Asia's total capital investment value. This significant jump is driven by strong investor confidence in digital technology, manufacturing ecosystems, and clean energy transitions. Sectors such as semiconductors, electric mobility, and AI-based infrastructure saw sharp interest from multinational corporations.

(iii) The report highlights that despite global challenges like geopolitical tensions, high interest rates, and supply chain issues, India maintained its investment appeal through macroeconomic reforms, ease of doing business, and sectoral liberalization. Key ministries like DPIIT and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry continue to support growth through investor-friendly policies and outreach.

MOUs and Agreement

1. India & Cyprus Sign MoU to Launch UPI-Based Cross-Border Payment System.



In June 2025, India and Cyprus signed a strategic MoU to integrate Unified Payments Interface (UPI) for cross-border remittances. The agreement aims to simplify payments for Indian and Cypriot users, strengthening bilateral trade and enhancing financial inclusion using India's fast-growing digital payments infrastructure.

● National Payments Corporation of India's international arm (NPCI International Payments Ltd) inked the MoU with Cyprus' fintech regulators. This collaboration paves the way for seamless, real-time UPI transactions between the two nations, mirroring earlier agreements with Greece and Singapore.

● UPI, launched in 2016, had already processed billions of domestic transactions. Its expansion to Cyprus aligns with India's Payments Vision 2025, RBI and NPCI goals to replicate low-cost, real-time remittance systems internationally, giving alternatives to card networks and SWIFT.

● Once operational, the UPI-Cyprus payment system will enable instant and low-cost remittances for NRIs and Indian students living in Cyprus, reducing reliance on costly wire transfers. It will also empower small and medium enterprises (SMEs) engaged in bilateral trade

by providing them with a fast and efficient payment channel. Additionally, Cypriot users will gain access to UPI-based platforms to directly pay Indian service providers for tourism, education, and IT services. This initiative is expected to democratize cross-border financial flows and minimize dependency on traditional banking rails like SWIFT and card networks.

Key Points:-

(i) The platform will function via bank QR codes and mobile apps, connected through NPCI and Cyprus' Central Bank. Key features include auto-litigation systems, settlement networks, and compliance with Anti-Money-Laundering (AML) and FATF "travel rule" regulations.

(ii) India already has UPI-based networks with France, Singapore, UAE, and Greece; Cyprus becomes another strategic partner in Europe. This positions India as a leader in shaping next-gen cross-border payment infrastructure beyond conventional networks.

(iii) Phased implementation is expected to begin by late 2025. First, travel-related remittances—like student tuition and tourist payments—will be enabled, followed by merchant and business flows. The scale-up will depend on regulatory harmonization and integration with Cyprus' financial ecosystem.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

1. Skechers Appoints Kartik Aaryan as Brand Ambassador to Boost Indian Market Presence.



In June 2025, global comfort footwear brand Skechers appointed Bollywood actor Kartik Aaryan as its brand ambassador for the Indian market. The collaboration, centered on the "Hands Free Slip-ins" series, aims to boost Skechers' appeal among Indian consumers.

- Skechers India has signed a multi-year agreement with Kartik Aaryan. The actor will feature prominently in marketing campaigns promoting its innovative Hands Free Slip-ins footwear—a slip-on design that merges convenience with comfort.

- The partnership reflects Skechers' intention to deepen market penetration by associating with a youthful, trend-savvy celebrity. Kartik's widespread appeal and vibrant persona align with the brand's focus on style, comfort, and accessibility.

- Under the campaign, Kartik will star in television, print, and digital advertisements. The aim is to highlight the footwear's hassle-free design—slip-on, slip-off functionality—tailored for India's fast-paced urban consumers.

Key Points:-

(i) With rising demand for casual and comfort-driven footwear in India, Skechers seeks to capitalize on Kartik's massive social media and fanbase. The brand anticipates greater visibility and adoption among millennials and Gen Z.

(ii) Aside from product awareness, Skechers plans to position itself as a lifestyle brand emphasizing innovation and ease. Kartik's endorsement is expected to reinforce this image, helping expand retail and online sales networks nationwide.

(iii) The campaign roll-out is scheduled for July 2025, coinciding with the monsoon season—when slip-on footwear typically sees increased demand in urban markets. Skechers aims for high recall and category leadership through this initiative.

SPORTS

1. Neeraj Chopra Wins Paris Diamond League 2025 with 88.16m Throw.



India's star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra won the men's javelin title at the Paris Diamond League 2025 with a powerful 88.16 metre throw. The event took place on June 20, 2025, at Stade Sébastien-Charléty, marking Chopra's first Diamond League win of the season and a major confidence boost ahead of the Paris Olympics.

- Neeraj opened the competition with an 88.16m throw in the first round, which remained unbeaten throughout the event. Although he fouled in three of his next five attempts and managed 82.89m in the final round, his opening effort was enough to dominate the leaderboard and seal the gold.

- Germany's Julian Weber closely followed with a best throw of 87.88m, while Brazil's Luiz Mauricio da Silva secured third place with 86.62m, setting a new South American record. The tight competition pushed Chopra to maintain his composure and assert his world-class stature.

Key Points:-

(i) This was Chopra's first Diamond League win since Lausanne 2023. Earlier in the 2025 season, he had finished second at both the Doha Diamond League, where he recorded a season-best 90.23m, and another event in Poland. His win in Paris signals a strong comeback and renewed form ahead of global championships.

(ii) The event also marked Chopra's return to Paris after eight years, with his last appearance in 2017 yielding a fifth-place finish.

(iii) With this win, Chopra builds significant momentum ahead of the Paris Olympics, reinforcing his position as a top medal contender and a consistent performer in the international javelin circuit.

AWARDS

1. The Hindu Crowned Champion at WAN-IFRA Digital Media Awards South Asia 2025.



The Hindu has been named the ‘Champion Publisher of the Year’ at the WAN-IFRA Digital Media Awards South Asia 2025, emerging as the top performer among 105+ entries from leading news organizations across the region. The Hindu won a total of 10 awards across video, AI, podcast, audience engagement, and data journalism, highlighting its dominance in digital innovation and content excellence.

- The Hindu secured 4 Gold awards, including ‘Best Use of Video’ and ‘Best Native Advertising Campaign’ for its celebrated “Made of Chennai” series. It also won Gold in ‘Best Podcast’ for its flagship current affairs show “In Focus”, and in ‘Best Use of AI in Revenue Strategy’ for its innovative approach to digital subscriptions and monetization.

- In addition to the Golds, The Hindu bagged 3 Silver awards. These included ‘Best Data Visualization’ for the election retrospective “How India Voted: 1952–2024”, a second Silver for AI use in revenue generation, and another for ‘Best Digital Subscription’ strategy. These wins underline the paper’s commitment to combining editorial depth with technical innovation.

- The publication also earned 3 Bronze awards — for ‘Best Audience Engagement’ via its Quiz & Quest platform, for impactful data storytelling on the Kallakurichi hooch tragedy, and again in the ‘Best Digital Subscription’ category. These awards reflect the paper’s consistent efforts to reach diverse audiences using digital-first tools and formats.

Key Points:-

(i) The awards were presented at the WAN-IFRA South Asia Conference held in Chennai, with leadership from WAN-IFRA including Mariam Mammen Mathew (Vice-President) and Magdoom Mohamed (Managing Director, South Asia). The Hindu’s CEO L.V. Navaneeth and Editor Suresh Nambath accepted the award and credited the success to cross-team collaboration and content

excellence.

(ii) As a result of these wins, The Hindu’s Gold-awarded entries now qualify for the WAN-IFRA World Digital Media Awards 2025, to be held globally later this year. The Hindu is now positioned to represent South Asia’s best digital journalism at the international level, reinforcing its reputation as one of India’s most forward-thinking and impactful media houses.

(iii) This success underscores The Hindu’s strong focus on leveraging technology—like AI and data tools—for journalism, while maintaining deep editorial integrity. With this performance, The Hindu has set a new regional benchmark in digital media excellence, ahead of competitors like BBC, The Quint, and HT Media.

INDEX

1. WEF Energy Transition Index 2025: India Ranks 71st and Sweden Leads Globally.



In June 2025, the World Economic Forum (WEF) released its Energy Transition Index (ETI) for 2025. India ranked 71st out of 118 countries, while Sweden topped the list, highlighting India’s progress in efficiency and investment amid challenges from energy security and coal dependence.

- Compiled annually by the World Economic Forum in collaboration with Accenture, the ETI evaluates countries on energy system performance (security, sustainability, equity) and transition readiness (regulation, infrastructure, innovation).
- India ranked 71st among 118 countries, falling from 63rd in 2024. Its overall score is 53.3, driven by gains in system performance (60.4) and transition readiness (42.7).
- Recent developments in India's energy sector include improved energy efficiency, reduced energy intensity, and increased clean energy investments. Access to clean cooking fuels and rural electrification has also advanced, promoting inclusive energy growth. However, India still heavily relies on coal and fossil fuels, with ongoing challenges in grid modernization and reliability. Significant regional disparities persist in infrastructure and energy access, particularly between urban centers and underserved rural or remote areas.

Key Points:-

- (i) Sweden leads the ranking, followed by Finland, Denmark, Norway, and Switzerland in the top five.
- (ii) Other key rankings: China 12th, US 17th, Pakistan 101st, while Congo ranked last.
- (iii) Global ETI scores rose by 1.1% in 2025, indicating regained momentum. However, only 28% of countries advanced in all three dimensions (security, equity, sustainability). India must accelerate grid upgrades, renewable deployment, and regulatory reforms to climb higher.

IMPORTANT DAYS

1. World Music Day celebrated annually on June 21.



World Music Day, also known as Fête de la Musique, is celebrated annually on June 21, coinciding with the summer solstice. First initiated in France in 1982 by Minister of Culture Jack Lang and composer Maurice Fleuret, the event now spans over 1,000 cities across 120+ countries, including India.

- The official theme for 2025 is “Healing Through Harmony”, emphasizing music’s role in emotional well-being, stress relief, and social unity.
- As a universal platform, World Music Day encourages free, open-air performances by both amateurs and professionals. It aims to promote cultural diversity and unite communities through music.
- Events include street concerts, public jam sessions, online collaborations, school festivals, and community karaoke. All performances are typically free and inclusive.

Key Points:-

- (i) In India, Kolkata's Science City Auditorium hosts concerts on June 21–22, while globally, Georgetown, Washington DC features 40+ acts across multiple stages.
- (ii) Rooted in summer solstice celebrations, World Music Day parallels seasonal renewal and begins from its Parisian origins in 1982, now acting as a

cultural bridge across nations.

(iii) World Music Day serves not just as entertainment but also as a celebration of music's healing and unifying power, resonating deeply with 2025's theme. It's an opportunity to embrace creativity, community, and musical diversity in everyday spaces.

2. International Yoga Day was celebrated on 21st June.



International Yoga Day is celebrated globally every June 21, marking the longest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere. This year marks the 11th anniversary since its adoption by the UN in 2014, following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's proposal.

- The 2025 theme is "Yoga for One Earth, One Health", highlighting the synergy between personal wellness, planetary health, and sustainability.
- Chosen for the summer solstice, June 21 symbolizes renewal, energy, and balance, reflecting yoga's core principles of harmony between mind, body, and nature.
- The Ministry of AYUSH is organizing 10 signature events nationwide, including the flagship "Yoga Sangam"—a mass yoga demonstration at 100,000 locations. These include Yoga Connect, Harit Yoga,

Yoga Samavesh for the differently-abled, Yoga Mahakumbh, and more.

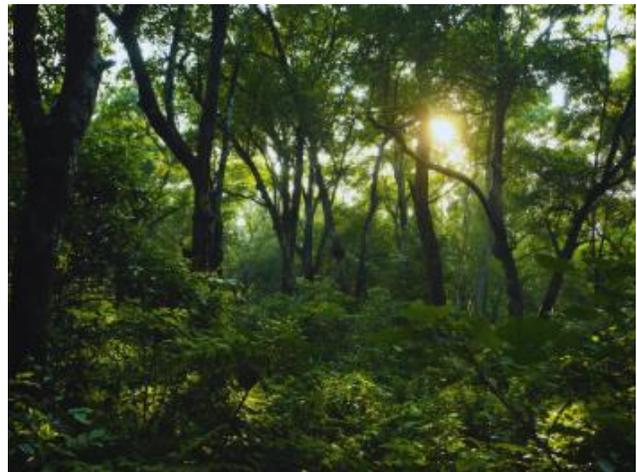
Key Points:-

(i) PM Modi will lead the main national event at RK Beach, Visakhapatnam, with early morning sessions kicking off at 6:30 AM, aligned with the Common Yoga Protocol.

(ii) Celebrated globally, the day saw tens of thousands participating across parks, beaches, schools, and even naval and high-altitude bases like Siachen. Indian embassies also hosted events in locations like the Lincoln Memorial (USA), Batu Caves (Malaysia), and Bali.

(iii) The event serves as a platform to promote physical fitness, mental clarity, emotional resilience, and environmental consciousness. It also strengthens India's cultural diplomacy, projecting yoga as a global wellness movement.

3. World Rainforest Day is observed on 22 June 2025.



World Rainforest Day, observed annually on June 22, was established in 2017 by the Rainforest Partnership to highlight the vital importance of rainforests in sustaining life on Earth.

- Launched six years ago, this day aims to raise global awareness about rainforests' critical role in climate

regulation, biodiversity conservation, and supporting indigenous communities.

- Rainforests cover just 6% of Earth's surface, yet are home to around half of all terrestrial species, provide essential freshwater, and absorb vast amounts of carbon dioxide.
- The focus this year is on action and restoration, urging countries, communities, and companies to protect, restore, and regenerate rainforest ecosystems to combat ongoing deforestation.

Key Points:-

- Activities include tree planting drives, educational campaigns, online webinars, fundraising for conservation groups, and adopting sustainable consumption habits like choosing Rainforest Alliance certified products
- Rapid deforestation—nearly 78 million hectares lost annually—threatens global climate stability, species extinction, and human well-being. World Rainforest Day mobilizes collective efforts to protect these invaluable ecosystems for future generations
- World Rainforest Day was first celebrated on June 22, 2017, when it was launched by the Rainforest Partnership to raise global awareness about the importance of tropical rainforests and to inspire collective action toward their protection and restoration.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. Honda R&D Successfully Tests Reusable Rocket Prototype in Japan.



Honda, through its R&D division, achieved a historic milestone by launching and safely landing a reusable rocket prototype in Taiki—Japan's "space town"—marking a major leap in its space ambitions.

- The 6.3-meter, 2,800-pound rocket reached ~890 ft (271 m) altitude, stayed airborne for ~56.6 s, and landed within 14.6 in (37 cm) of its target using four retractable legs.
- Honda becomes the first company outside the US and China to test-launch and recover a reusable rocket prototype—a feat previously seen only in SpaceX and Chinese programs.
- The rocket project, rooted in engine testing efforts started in 2021, reflects six years of systematic development at Honda R&D.

Key Points:-

- The combined efforts of JAXA and private entities have transformed Taiki Town into a space-testing hub—providing advanced facilities and regulatory support.
- Honda confirmed that, while commercialization isn't decided yet, it plans a suborbital launch (~62 mi altitude) by 2029, laying groundwork for lightweight satellite missions.
- Honda's progress dovetails with Japan's wider

strategy—including multibillion-dollar aerospace venture funds—to slash launch costs, spur private-sector innovation, and rival global leaders like SpaceX and Blue Origin.

Static GK

World Economic Forum (WEF)	President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO): Børge Brende	Headquarters : Geneva, Switzerland
Cyprus	President: Mr Nikos Christodoulides	Capital: Nicosia
Skechers U.S.A., Inc.	CEO : Robert Greenberg	Headquarters : California, United States
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Odisha	Chief minister: Mohan Charan Majhi	Governor: Hari Babu Kambhampati
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UNCTAD	Head: Rebeca Grynspan	Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland