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1. Polity

1.1 eSanjeevani Crosses 50 Crore Teleconsultations

Context:

India's national telemedicine platform eSanjeevani has crossed 50 crore teleconsultations, reflecting the growing use of digital health services across all States and Union Territories.



Explanation:

- **eSanjeevani** is India's **National Telemedicine Service** under the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**.
- It enables **remote doctor consultations**, reducing barriers of distance, travel and limited healthcare access.
- It was developed by the **Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC)**, with C-DAC Mohali providing technological support.
- It evolved from a **hub-and-spoke model** linking peripheral health centres with doctors and specialists.
- The platform supports **Ayushman Arogya Mandirs, medical hubs and online OPDs** across India.
- It now incorporates **AI-powered Clinical Decision Support System (AI-CDSS)** to assist healthcare providers.
- Integration with **ERSS-112** strengthens emergency healthcare linkages.
- Specialist teleconsultations through institutions such as **AIIMS** are expanding its role beyond primary care.
- It supports India's goals of **Universal Health Coverage and Digital Public Infrastructure**.

1.2 153rd Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly in Tanzania

Context:

An Indian Parliamentary Delegation led by the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha is participating in the 153rd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) at Arusha, Tanzania. The meeting focuses on good governance, inclusivity, trust and empowerment of communities.

Explanation:



- The **Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)** is a global organisation of **national parliaments**, founded in **1889**.
- It promotes **parliamentary dialogue, democracy, peace, human rights and sustainable development**.
- Its headquarters is in **Geneva, Switzerland**.
- The **IPU Assembly** is its principal statutory body and brings together parliamentarians from member countries.
- The **Governing Council** oversees the administration and work programme of the IPU.
- IPU discussions cover issues such as **peace and security, democracy, women's participation, climate change, artificial intelligence and sustainable development**.
- India participates through parliamentary delegations from the **Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha**.
- Such participation forms part of **parliamentary diplomacy**, where legislatures engage internationally alongside conventional state-to-state diplomacy.

1.3 Draft Petroleum (Amendment) Bill, 2026 Released for Consultation

Context:

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has released the Draft Petroleum (Amendment) Bill, 2026 for public and stakeholder consultation. The draft proposes amendments to the **Petroleum Act, 1934**, with comments invited before the Bill is finalised.

Explanation:

The **Petroleum Act, 1934** regulates the import, transport, storage, production, refining and blending of petroleum and prescribes safety-related controls.



The Act empowers the **Central Government** to make rules regarding licensing, testing, storage and handling of petroleum.

The 2026 draft seeks to update the statutory framework governing petroleum-related activities and has been placed in the public domain before formal legislative introduction.

This process is called **pre-legislative consultation**, through which citizens, industry and other stakeholders can submit comments on a proposed law.

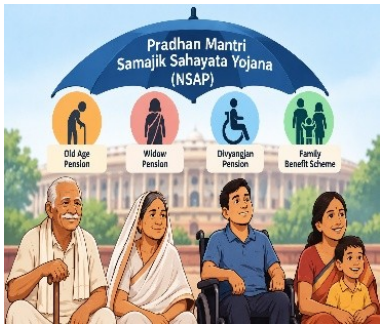
Such consultation improves **transparency, participatory law-making and regulatory clarity**, although public consultation itself is not a constitutional requirement.

1.4 Cabinet Approves Continuation of National Social Assistance Programme until 2030-31

Context:

The Union Cabinet approved the continuation of the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) from 2026–27 to 2030–31, with an outlay of ₹53,428 crore. The programme has been renamed Pradhan Mantri Samajik Sahayata Yojana, with revised disability pension benefits and eligibility criteria.

Explanation:



- **NSAP**, launched on **15 August 1995**, is a centrally sponsored social security programme administered by the **Ministry of Rural Development**.
- It provides financial assistance to poor households, reflecting **Article 41** of the Constitution under the **Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSPs).**
- The programme **covers old-age pensions, widow pensions, disability pensions and family benefits, with 100% central assistance.**
- The renamed schemes are **Pradhan Mantri Vridhavastha Pension Yojana, Vidhawa Pension Yojana, Divyangjan Pension Yojana and Parivar Labh Yojana.**
- The changes made under new schemes align with the Rights of Persons with **Disabilities Act, 2016.**
- The programme will benefit approximately 3.20 crore people across 36 States/UTs.

2. International Relations

2.1 Exercise VARUNA 2026: India–France Bilateral Maritime Exercise

- INS Trishul arrived at Toulon, France, to participate in the 24th edition of Exercise VARUNA, a bilateral maritime exercise between the Indian and French Navies.
- It includes harbour and sea engagements, cross-deck visits and operational interactions, aimed at enhancing interoperability, professional cooperation and maritime partnership.

2.2 Exercise Mountain Guardian 2026: India–UAE Joint Military Exercise

- MOUNTAIN GUARDIAN 2026 is a bilateral India–UAE Army exercise being held at Chaubatia, Uttarakhand, focusing on mountain warfare and interoperability.
- Training includes joint planning, firing, surveillance, drone operations, rock climbing and technology-enabled operations in difficult mountainous terrain.

3. Economy

3.1 Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses: India's Push for Self-Sufficiency

Context:

The government highlighted the progress of the Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses on its first anniversary, October 11, 2026. Launched in 2025 with an allocation of ₹11,440 crore, the six-year mission aims to achieve self-sufficiency in pulses by 2030–31, reduce imports and improve farmers' incomes.

Explanation:



- India is the **world's largest producer of pulses**, which contain approximately 20–25% protein and contribute to nutritional security.
- The Mission operates **from 2025–26 to 2030–31**, focusing on **Tur (Arhar), Urad and Masur (Lentil).**
- It targets **350 lakh tonnes of production**, productivity of **1,130 kg/hectare** and cultivation across **310 lakh hectares** by 2030–31.
- It promotes **climate-resilient seeds**, 87.5 lakh free seed kits, cluster-based cultivation across 489 districts and 1,000 dal-processing units.
- **National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (NAFED) and National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India Limited (NCCF)** will procure 100% of the produce offered by willing, registered farmers growing Tur, Urad and Masur at **Minimum Support Price (MSP)** for four years (2025–26 to 2028–29).
- **SATHI portal** enables seed traceability, while **e-Samriddhi** supports farmer registration and procurement.
- India's pulse production reached **274.09 lakh tonnes** in 2025–26, according to the Third Advance Estimates.

3.2 Integrated Transport and Logistics Authority (ITLA) Approved

Context:

The Government of India approved the establishment of the Integrated Transport and Logistics Authority (ITLA) on 6 October 2026 to strengthen coordinated transport planning, project appraisal and monitoring. It will complement the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan and National Logistics Policy (2022).

Explanation:



- **ITLA** will function as the national **apex institution** for integrated transport and logistics planning, research, project appraisal and monitoring.
- It will prepare a **National Transport Master Plan** covering a planning horizon of 10 years or more.
- The plan will **integrate roads, railways, ports, aviation, inland waterways, coastal shipping, urban mobility and logistics**.
- ITLA will align **five-year sectoral plans** and **annual ministerial plans** with the national master plan.
- It will undertake technical appraisal of Central Government infrastructure projects costing ₹500 crore or more; financial appraisal remains under existing mechanisms.
- It will monitor projects costing above ₹500 crore and assess their post-implementation performance.
- The **National Transport Data Repository (NTDR)** will integrate **GSTN e-way bills**, **FASTag, Vahan** and **GPS-based data**.
- ITLA will promote multimodal connectivity, inter-ministerial coordination, logistics efficiency and research.

3.3 Directorate of Revenue Intelligence Busts Pan-India Gold Smuggling Network

Context:

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) busted a pan-India syndicate allegedly smuggling foreign-origin gold through the India–Bangladesh border and distributing it through courier networks. The operation resulted in the seizure of 6.61 kg of gold and arrests across several cities.



Explanation:

- **DRI** is India's apex **anti-smuggling intelligence and enforcement agency** under the **Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)**, Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance.
- It investigates customs-duty evasion, commercial fraud and organised smuggling, including gold and narcotics.
- **CBIC** administers customs through the **Customs Act, 1962** and related laws.
- Smuggled goods can be **confiscated**, while persons involved may face penalties, prosecution and arrest subject to statutory provisions.
- Gold smuggling commonly seeks to circumvent **customs duties and import regulations**.
- DRI operates through intelligence gathering and **inter-agency coordination** across India.

3.4 Digital Insurance Push for Livestock and Aquaculture Farmers

Context:

The government has launched a Livestock Insurance Portal to digitise livestock insurance services and is promoting aquaculture insurance under PM-MKSSY. Both initiatives seek to reduce production risks and strengthen income security for livestock and fish farmers.

Explanation:

- **The Livestock Insurance Portal,** developed by the Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying (DAHD), provides integrated policy issuance, claim processing, monitoring and reporting.
- It supports animals insured under **DAHD's Livestock Insurance Scheme** and offers services in 11 regional languages plus Hindi and English.
- **PM-MKSSY, approved in 2024,** provides **aquaculture insurance support** under Component 1-B.
- Eligible farmers receive a one-time incentive of **up to 40% of insurance premium for one crop cycle,** subject to prescribed limits.
- Implementation occurs through th**e National Fisheries Digital Platform (NFDP)** with Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).



- Aquaculture coverage includes risks such as disease, floods, cyclones and other specified perils.
- SC, ST and women beneficiaries receive an additional incentive as prescribed under the scheme.

3.5 ICAR Develops Nutrient-Rich Purple Potato 'Kufri Jamunia'

Context:

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research–Central Potato Research Institute (ICAR-CPRI) has highlighted Kufri Jamunia, a biofortified purple potato variety released in 2024. Its enhanced vitamin, antioxidant and micronutrient content offers a potential solution to hidden hunger and nutritional deficiencies.

Explanation:

- **Hidden hunger** occurs when people consume sufficient calories but lack essential vitamins and minerals.
- **Biofortification** improves the nutritional content of crops through plant breeding, unlike food fortification, which adds nutrients during processing.
- **ICAR-CPRI,** headquartered in Shimla, develops improved potato varieties with higher nutritional value and productivity.
- Its coloured potato varieties include **Kufri Neelkanth (2018), Kufri Manik (2021) and Kufri Jamunia (2024).**



- **Kufri Jamunia** has purple skin and flesh containing **anthocyanins,** natural pigments with antioxidant properties.
- It also contains **Vitamin C (ascorbic acid), carotenoids, iron and zinc,** supporting nutritional security.
- The variety produces approximately **32–35** tonnes per hectare, with good storage quality and low rottage.
- Recommended for **the North Indian plains**, it combines improved nutrition with agricultural productivity.

3.6 Five Years of PM GatiShakti National Master Plan

Context:

The PM GatiShakti National Master Plan (PMGS-NMP) completed five years in October 2026, integrating over 1,800 geospatial data layers across 58 Central Ministries/Departments and 36 States/UTs. The government also approved the establishment of an Integrated Transport and Logistics Authority (ITLA) to strengthen multimodal connectivity.

Explanation:



- **PM GatiShakti**, launched in October 2021, is a national initiative for coordinated infrastructure planning and improved logistics efficiency.
- Before PM GatiShakti, infrastructure planning was fragmented into isolated departmental silos, leading to poor multimodal connectivity and project delays. A lack of integrated digital data and coordination caused frequent cost overruns and inefficient, high-cost logistics.
- PM Gati shakti follows a **Whole-of-Government approach**, integrating infrastructure planning across ministries and States/UTs.
- Its indigenous **Geographic Information System (GIS)**-based platform was developed by **BISAG-N** under Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- The **Network Planning Group (NPG)** evaluates infrastructure proposals for **multimodal connectivity, last-mile connectivity and logistics efficiency**.
- Planning has expanded to the **district and social sectors**, including schools, hospitals and water infrastructure.
- The **Unified Geospatial Interface (UGI)** provides selected planning data to private entities and the public.
- The proposed **ITLA** will strengthen transport planning, project appraisal, monitoring and logistics competitiveness.

4. Environment and Ecology

4.1 India–Japan Joint Crediting Mechanism Operationalised

Context:

India and Japan have launched the Operational Manual for the Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM), providing a procedural framework for projects from initial proposal to issuance and authorisation of carbon credits. It operationalises bilateral cooperation under **Article 6.2** of the Paris Agreement.

Explanation



- **The JCM is a bilateral carbon-market mechanism** through which Japan supports deployment of advanced low-carbon technologies and emission-reduction projects in partner countries.
- Projects can generate measurable emission reductions or removals, which may be converted into **internationally recognised carbon credits.**
- The mechanism seeks to mobilise climate finance, promote technology transfer and support sustainable development**.**
- Under **Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement,** countries can voluntarily cooperate using **Internationally Transferred Mitigation Outcomes (ITMOs).**
- Such transfers require authorisation, transparency, robust accounting and avoidance of double counting.
- India and Japan signed a **Memorandum of Cooperation in 2025** and adopted implementation rules in 2026.
- **The Operational Manual** now lays down the full project cycle, from Project Idea Note to credit issuance and authorisation**.**

4.2 PRAMAAN Certification for Sustainable Forest and Wood Products

Context:

The Union Environment Minister awarded India's first PRAMAAN certificates under the Indian Forest and Wood Certification Scheme (IFWCS) to the Andhra Pradesh Forest Development Corporation and an Odisha bamboo farmer, marking the scheme's transition to field-level implementation.

Explanation:

- **PRAMAAN** stands for Programme for Recognition and Accreditation of sustainable Management practices for Agroforestry And Natural forestry resources.
- It operates under the **Indian Forest and Wood Certification Scheme (IFWCS)**, launched by **MoEFCC in December 2023**.



- It certifies **forests, Trees Outside Forests (TOF), wood and Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs)** for sustainable management and market access.
- Certification includes Forest Management, Tree Outside Forest Management and Chain of Custody.
- Forest Management certification follows the Indian Forest Management Standard under the **National Working Plan Code, 2023**.
- Certification is based on **independent third-party audits**, not merely self-declaration.
- Certification bodies are accredited by **NABCB**, under the **Quality Council of India (QCI)**.
- **IIFM, Bhopal** is the scheme's operating agency.
- It facilitates **responsible, deforestation-free sourcing** and access to sustainability-conscious markets.

4.3 India's Forest and Landscape Restoration Initiatives at COFO 28

Context:



At the 28th Session of FAO's Committee on Forestry (COFO 28) in Rome, India highlighted its progress in forest and landscape restoration, carbon-sink creation and sustainable forest management. India also called for greater international support for finance, technology transfer and capacity development.

Explanation:

- **COFO** is an **FAO statutory body** dealing with global forestry issues; **COFO 28** is being held in **Rome**.
- India's forest and tree cover is 82.74 million ha, or 25.17% of its geographical area.
- FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment 2025: India ranks **9th in forest area** and **3rd in net annual forest-area gain**.
- Under the **Bonn Challenge**, India targets restoration of **26 million ha by 2030**; **21.76 million ha** is under restoration.
- **Aravalli Green Wall** targets restoration of degraded landscapes, while **MISHTI** focuses on **mangrove restoration**.
- India aims for an additional **3.5–4.0 billion tonnes** CO_2-equivalent carbon sink by 2035, compared with 2005.
- India supports the proposed UN Decade for Afforestation and Reforestation, 2027–2036.

4.4 India Reaffirms Commitment to Cetacean Conservation at IWC-70

Context:

At the 70th meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC-70) in Hobart, Australia, India called for science-based conservation and international cooperation to protect whales and other cetaceans. The meeting coincides with the 80th anniversary of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW).

Explanation:

- **Cetaceans** are aquatic mammals comprising **whales, dolphins and porpoises**.



- **IWC** was established under the **International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW), 1946**, signed in **Washington, D.C.**
- It is the global body concerned with whaling management and whale conservation; India joined in 1981.
- Cetaceans in Indian waters receive the highest level of legal protection under the **Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972**.
- **Project Dolphin** adopts an ecosystem-based approach for conserving dolphins, whales, porpoises and their aquatic habitats.
- India has notified **Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)** that also conserve marine biodiversity.
- India has identified the **Arabian Sea humpback whale** among species requiring focused conservation action.
- Major threats include bycatch, ship strikes, pollution, underwater noise and habitat degradation.

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