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(CONSOLIDATION)

## HARYANA

**DECEMBER  
2024**

**Drishti, 641 First Floor,  
Dr. Mukharjee Nagar, Delhi-110009**

**Inquiry: +91-87501-87501**

**Website: [www.drishtias.com](http://www.drishtias.com)**

**Email: [care@groupdrishti.in](mailto:care@groupdrishti.in)**

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## COP-16 Conference

### Why in News?

Recently, the **Haryana Environment, Forest, and Wildlife Minister** led a delegation from New Delhi to attend the **United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) – COP 16** in **Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**, from 2nd to 13th December 2024.

### Key Points

- **Platform for Collaboration:**
  - The event will serve as an effective platform for **Green Zone businesses**, scientists, financial institutions, **Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs)**, and affected communities.
  - It aims to facilitate collaboration and develop sustainable solutions for **land restoration** and **drought management**.
- **International Participation:**
  - COP-16 will bring together representatives from various countries across the globe.
  - The conference is expected to foster global discussions on combating desertification and addressing related challenges.

#### United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

- **Established in 1994**, it is the sole **legally binding international agreement** linking environment and development to sustainable land management.
- It addresses specifically the arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, known as the drylands, where some of the most vulnerable ecosystems and peoples can be found.
- The Convention's 197 parties work together to improve the living **conditions for people in drylands**, to maintain and restore land and soil productivity, and to mitigate the effects of drought.
- The UNCCD works with the other two Rio Conventions to address the interlinked challenges of land, climate and biodiversity:
  - **The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**
  - **The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**

## Polio Immunisation Drive

### Why in News?

The **Indian Expert Advisory Group (IEAG)** has decided to include six Haryana districts in the **Sub-National Immunisation Day (SNID)** round for **polio**, scheduled to begin on 8th December 2024. These districts are **Kaithal, Jhajjar, Gurugram, Faridabad, Sonapat, and Nuh**.

- The IEAG is a group of experts that advises the Government of India on **polio eradication** and provides **strategic guidance**.

### Key Points

- **Polio SNID Round:**
  - The Director of **Maternal and Child Health (MCH)**, chaired the State Task Force meeting to review the preparations for the upcoming **SNID round**.
  - Attendees included the State Immunisation Officer, officers from the state headquarters, District Immunisation Officers, and representatives from key stakeholder departments such as **Women and Child Development**, **Education**, **Labour**, **Urban Local Bodies**, **Panchayati Raj**, **Public Relations**, **Ayush**, **Medical Education and Research**, **Indian Medical Association**, and **Indian Academy of Paediatrics**.
- **Polio-Free Status and the Need for Vigilance:**
  - It was highlighted that Haryana and India have remained polio-free since 2011, a significant achievement due to consistent efforts.
  - He emphasized the importance of **covering all eligible children aged 0-5 years** in the upcoming SNID round, especially in light of **polio virus cases** reported in Malawi and Mozambique with links to Pakistan.
- **Focus on High-Risk Areas:**
  - Officials were directed to ensure comprehensive enlisting and micro-planning to achieve 100% coverage of vulnerable populations in high-risk areas such as:
    - Urban slums
    - Nomadic sites
    - Construction sites
    - Brick kilns
    - Poultry farms

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Note:

- Factories
  - Sugarcane crushers
  - Stone-crushing zones
- **Training and Supervision:**
- All vaccinators will undergo training to ensure **effective immunisation** delivery.
  - State headquarters officials will supervise and monitor activities at the district level.
    - A district-level supervision plan will be prepared for real-time feedback and to implement multi-tier supervision across all districts.

### Polio

- **About:**
- Polio is a **crippling and potentially deadly viral infectious disease** that affects the nervous system.
  - There are three individual and immunologically distinct wild poliovirus strains:
    - Wild Poliovirus type 1 (WPV1)
    - Wild Poliovirus type 2 (WPV2)
    - Wild Poliovirus type 3 (WPV3)
  - Symptomatically, all three strains are identical, in that they cause irreversible paralysis or even death. However, there are genetic and virological differences, which make these three strains separate viruses which must each be eradicated individually.
- **Spread:**
- The virus is **transmitted person-to-person mainly through the faecal-oral route** or, less frequently, by a common vehicle (for example, through contaminated water or food).
  - It **largely affects children under 5 years of age**. The virus multiplies in the intestine, from where it can invade the nervous system and can cause paralysis.
- **Symptoms:**
- Most people with polio do not feel sick. Some people have only minor symptoms, such as fever, tiredness, nausea, headache, pain in the arms and legs, etc.
  - In rare cases, polio infection causes permanent loss of muscle function (paralysis).

- Polio can be fatal if the muscles used for breathing are paralysed or if there is an infection of the brain.
- **Prevention and Cure:**
- There is no cure, but it can be prevented through **Immunisation**.
- **Vaccines:**
- **Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV)** is given orally as a birth dose for institutional deliveries, then primary three doses at 6, 10 and 14 weeks and one booster dose at 16-24 months of age.
  - **Injectable Polio Vaccine (IPV)** is introduced as an additional dose along with the 3rd dose of **DPT (Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus)** under the **Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP)**.

## Aravali Green Wall Project

### Why in News?

At a **United Nations** climate event held as part of **the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Data (UNCCD) CoP16**, India highlighted its ambitious **'Aravali Green Wall' project**, emphasizing the importance of adopting innovative approaches to restore degraded forest lands on a global scale.

### Key Points

- **About the Aravali Green Wall Project Presentation:**
- Inspired by **Africa's Great Green Wall initiative**, the Aravali Green Wall project aims to-
    - Restore over **1.1 million hectares of degraded landscapes** by 2027.
    - Focus on **afforestation** with native species, soil health improvement, and **groundwater replenishment**.
    - Develop an "ecological wall" to mitigate urban heat islands and act as a carbon sink for NCR.
- **Significance of the Aravali Hills:**
- The Aravali range acts as a natural barrier preventing the eastward spread of the **Thar Desert**.
  - It serves as a "repository of unique flora and fauna" but is facing severe challenges, including **land degradation and desertification, encroachment, mining, and urbanisation**.
- **Need for Restoration:**

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Note:

- Urgent action is required to address these threats and reverse the degradation.
- The restoration effort involves **collaboration among Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan, and Gujarat.**
- **Implementation Strategy:**
  - **State governments will plant millions of native trees and shrubs** and promote **soil conservation.**
  - The **first phase in Haryana will involve the revival of 66 water bodies** in key districts, including Gurgaon, Faridabad, and Bhiwani.
    - Haryana's plan covers the restoration of 35,000 hectares, with 18,000 hectares in Gurgaon alone.
- **Global Appeal and Vision:**
  - **Global partnerships** involving governments, international organisations, and private entities are called to **support the initiative with technical and financial resources.**
  - The project **aims to serve as a "blueprint" for global efforts** to restore degraded landscapes.
- **Innovative Approaches:**
  - The project incorporates **nature-based solutions**, focusing on afforestation with indigenous species, Soil health and moisture rejuvenation, Community participation in conservation.

### Aravali Mountain Range



- The Aravallis, is the **oldest fold mountains on Earth.** Geological studies indicate that it is three billion years old.
- It spans over **800 km from Gujarat to Delhi** (through Rajasthan and Haryana).
- The **highest peak** in the Aravalli Range is **Guru Peak on Mount Abu.**
- **Influences Climate:**
  - The Aravallis have an impact upon the climate of northwest India and beyond.
  - During monsoons, the mountain range gently guides the monsoon clouds eastwards towards Shimla and Nainital, thus **helping nurture the sub-Himalayan rivers and feeding the north Indian plains.**
  - During the winter months, it **shields the fertile alluvial river valleys of the Indus and Ganga** from the harsh **cold westerly winds blowing in from Central Asia.**

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Note:

## Groundwater Extraction in Haryana

### Why in News?

The **Stage of Groundwater Extraction (SoE)** in Haryana has reached **135.74%**, signifying that the rate of groundwater extraction exceeds the sustainable utilization limit.

### Key Points

- **Current State of Groundwater Extraction:**
  - **Haryana**
    - **Annual Groundwater Recharge:** 9.55 billion cubic metres (bcm)
    - **Annual Extractable Groundwater:** 8.69 bcm
    - **Total Groundwater Extraction (2023):** 11.8 bcm
    - **SoE:** 135.74%, indicating that extraction exceeds sustainable levels.
  - **Punjab**
    - **Annual Groundwater Recharge:** 18.84 bcm
    - **Annual Extractable Groundwater:** 16.98 bcm
    - **Total Groundwater Extraction (2023):** 27.8 bcm
    - **SoE:** Exceeds sustainable levels, with extraction higher than what can be sustainably used.
  - **Rajasthan**
    - **Annual Groundwater Recharge:** 12.45 bcm
    - **Annual Extractable Groundwater:** 11.25 bcm
    - **Total Groundwater Extraction (2023):** 16.74 bcm
    - **SoE:** 148.77%, indicating a significant over-extraction compared to recharge.
- **Groundwater Depletion Concerns:**
  - **Environmental Degradation:** When groundwater levels drop, saltwater can intrude into coastal areas, contaminating freshwater resources.
  - **Groundwater Contamination:** Human activities like agriculture, sewage, and industries can introduce pollutants like **arsenic, fluoride, nitrate, and iron** into groundwater.
  - **Land Subsidence:** When groundwater is overused, the soil can collapse, compact, and drop, causing land subsidence.

### Policy Recommendations:

- The **Ministry of Jal Shakti (MoJS)** has urged states to reassess policies on providing **free or subsidised electricity to farmers**.
  - Introduce water pricing mechanisms to encourage sustainable use.
  - Implement crop rotation, diversification, and other measures to reduce dependency on groundwater.

### Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA) Efforts:

- Since 2019, the **Jal Shakti Abhiyan** has been a mission-driven program focusing on rainwater harvesting and water conservation.
- JSA 2024 is focused on 151 water-stressed districts across India.

## HC Grants Pension to 1965 War Widow After 58 Years

### Why in News?

In a landmark decision, the **Punjab and Haryana High Court** has granted **pension** benefits to Anguri Devi, an 87-year-old widow of a soldier who died in the **Indo-Pak war 1965**.

- This ruling marks the end of a **58-year** struggle for justice and financial support.

### Key Points

- Anguri Devi's husband, Nater Pal Singh, served in the **Rajput Regiment** and was killed in a mine blast on the western front during the **1965 war**.
  - She received a special family pension from the Army after her husband's death.
- In 1972, the **government introduced the "Liberalised Family Pension" policy** with retrospective effect for operations from 1947 onwards, granting higher pensions.
  - The policy included financial effect and arrears starting 1<sup>st</sup> February, 1972.
- Despite her husband dying in 1965, the authorities did not apply the policy to Anguri Devi.
- A new policy was introduced on 31<sup>st</sup> **January, 2001**, with financial effect from 1<sup>st</sup> **January, 1996**.

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Note:

- The policy included the “**Liberalised Family Pension**” but applied only to **deaths/disabilities** after **1<sup>st</sup> January, 1996**.
- The Supreme Court later struck down the **cut-off date of 1996**.
  - However, Anguri Devi’s claim was initially **denied due to cut-off dates** that excluded her case.
- Despite a **Supreme Court ruling** that struck down these cut-off dates, her claim remained unresolved.
- After years of legal battles, the **Armed Forces Tribunal (AFT)** provided partial relief, limiting her arrears to three years before her filing date.
  - However, the Punjab and Haryana High Court overturned this decision, ruling that **she is entitled to arrears from the effective date of the 2001 policy**.

## Shyamal Misra Appointed CEO of FMDA and GMDA

### Why in News?

In a significant administrative reshuffle, **Shyamal Misra**, a 1996-batch IAS officer of the Haryana cadre, has been appointed as the **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** of both the **Faridabad Metropolitan Development Authority (FMDA)** and the **Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA)**.

### Key Points

- Shyamal Misra is currently serving as the **Chief Administrator of the Trade Fair Authority of Haryana** in New Delhi, will also take on the role of **Principal Secretary for the Civil Aviation Department of Haryana**.
- Despite his expanded portfolio, Shyamal Misra will continue his duties with the **Trade Fair Authority**, balancing a pivotal role in advancing Haryana’s urban and aviation infrastructure.
- These appointments mark a **strategic realignment** in the bureaucratic leadership of both Haryana, reflecting the state’s ongoing efforts to streamline and strengthen their administrative machinery.
- The reshuffle **aims to enhance governance and ensure effective implementation** of development projects.

## Tussle Over Haryana Excise Policy

### Why in News?

The **Punjab and Haryana High Court** has issued a stern warning to the **Haryana government** regarding the **sale of liquor** over midnight in bars and pubs located in **Gurugram and Faridabad**.

- However, the court refrained from issuing any formal directions to the state on this matter.

### Key Points

- The issue arose after the **Haryana Excise Policy 2024-25**, introduced in June, removed provisions from the previous policy that allowed bars and pubs to operate throughout the night upon payment of an additional fee.
- Under the revised policy, all **bars and pubs** across Haryana are required to **close by midnight**, except in **Gurugram and Faridabad**, where the older rules continue to apply.
- Following the **promulgation of the new policy**, bar and pub owners in **Panchkula** filed a petition in the high court, seeking **parity with their counterparts** in **Gurugram and Faridabad**.
  - However, a bench of Justices dismissed their plea, ruling that the excise policy applies different criteria to different districts, and the petitioners cannot demand uniformity.
- The court underscored the **importance of cultural sensitivity** in framing excise policies.
  - It noted that allowing all-night liquor sales could lead to **social decay** and **undermine the cultural values** of Indian society.
- The bench stressed that responsible drinking is still a distant goal in the country, and policymakers must consider the broader social implications of their decisions.

### Haryana Excise Policy 2024-25

- There will be a slight increase in the **excise duty** on **IMFL (Indian Made Foreign Liquor)** and country liquor in the new policy starting from **12<sup>th</sup> June**.
- The maximum basic quota of IMFL will be **700 lakh proof liters (Measurement Unit)** and **1,200 lakh proof liters** for the country liquor for the year **2024-25**.

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Note:

- The **QR code-based track** and trace system that was introduced in **2023-24** for IMFL and country liquor will be extended to imported foreign liquor as well.

## Farmers 'Delhi Chalo' March

### Why in News?

Recently, farmers began their foot march to Delhi from their protest site at Shambhu border, but was stopped by a multilayered barricading of Haryana Police.

- Under **Section 163** of the **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS)** Haryana Police cited a prohibitory order to the farmers.

### Key Points

- **Farmers' Demand:**
  - Farmers are marching to demand a legal guarantee for **Minimum Support Price (MSP)** for crops from the Central government.
  - The protest is being led by farmers under the banners of **Samyukta Kisan Morcha (non-political)** and **Kisan Mazdoor Morcha**.
- **Protest Actions:**
  - Farmers camping at Shambhu and Khanauri border points between Punjab and Haryana since 13th February 2024, were stopped by security forces on the way to Delhi.
  - Some protesters pushed down an iron mesh barricade set up by security personnel on the bridge over the **Ghaggar River**.
- **Government Response in Haryana:**
  - The **Haryana government suspended mobile internet and bulk SMS services** in 11 villages of Ambala district from 6th to 9th December 2024.
- **Heightened Security Measures:**
  - Delhi Police has increased security at the city's border points in response to the ongoing farmer agitation.

## MINIMUM SUPPORT PRICE (MSP)

The rate at which the govt. purchases crops from farmers; based on a calculation of at least 1.5x the cost of production incurred by the farmers

**RECOMMENDED BY**

Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP) (recommends MSPs for 22 mandated crops and Fair and Remunerative Price for Sugarcane)

**22 MANDATED CROPS**

(14 Kharif, 6 Rabi and 2 Other Commercial crops)

<b>CEREALS</b>	Paddy, Wheat, Barley, Jowar, Bajra, Maize And Ragi
<b>PULSES</b>	Gram, Arhar/tur, Moong, Urad And Lentil
<b>OLESEEDS</b>	Groundnut, Rapeseed-mustard, Soyabean, Sunflower, Sesamum, Safflower And Niger Seed
<b>RAW COTTON</b>	
<b>RAW JUTE</b>	
<b>COPRA</b>	

MSP is the price at which the govt. is supposed to procure the mandated crops from farmers if the market price falls below it

**FACTORS FOR RECOMMENDING MSP**

- Cost of cultivation
- Demand-Supply situation for the crop
- Market price trends
- Inter-crop price parity
- Implications for consumers (inflation)
- Environment (soil and water use)
- Terms of trade b/w agri and non-agri sectors (ratio of farm inputs and outputs)

Considers both A2+FL and C2 costs

Actual expenses on seeds, fertilizers, irrigation and the like

A2


Unpaid family labour

FL

Rentals or interest foregone on owned land and fixed capital assets

C2

MSP has no statutory backing – a farmer cannot demand MSP as a matter of right



## Bima Sakhi Yojana

### Why in News?

Recently, the Prime Minister launched the '**Bima Sakhi Yojana**' of **Life Insurance Corporation** in Panipat, Haryana. During the occasion, he also laid the foundation stone of the Main campus of **Maharana Pratap Horticultural University, Karnal**.

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## Key Points

- **Bima Sakhi Yojana:**
  - It is designed for **women aged 18-70 years**, focusing on **financial literacy and insurance awareness**.
  - It includes training and a stipend for three years, with opportunities to become LIC agents or Development Officers and create employment for 2 lakh women.
  - It will strengthen the mission of **"Insurance for All"** promoting **social security and eradicating poverty**.
- **Maharana Pratap Horticulture University:**
  - It is spread over 495 acres, featuring research stations, a College of Horticulture, and five schools.
  - It aims to **diversify crops and promote world-class horticulture technologies**.
- **During the event the PM also highlighted:**
  - **Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao campaign** launched from Panipat, contributed to saving the lives of thousands of daughters in the last decade.
  - Highlighted various initiatives for women, including:
    - Training women as **Bank Sakhis, Insurance Sakhis, and Krishi Sakhis**.
    - Increasing maternity leave to 26 weeks.
    - Introducing programs like **Jan Dhan Yojana** for **financial inclusion**, with 30 crore women benefitting.
  - He emphasized **Self Help Groups (SHGs)** as a cornerstone of rural economic transformation, with over 10 crore women associated.
  - Highlighted achievements like the **Lakhpati Didi Campaign** which has enabled 1.15 crore women to earn over Rs 1 lakh annually.
  - He highlighted the transformation brought by Jan Dhan Yojana, ensuring direct transfer of benefits from schemes like:
    - **Kisan Kalyan Nidhi**.
    - **Sukanya Samridhi Yojana**.
    - **Funds for housing and small businesses**.

### Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao Scheme

- **About:**
  - The Scheme was **launched by the Prime Minister on January 22, 2015** to address the declining **Child Sex Ratio (CSR)** and related issues of women's empowerment over a life-cycle continuum.

- It is a **Tri-ministerial effort** of the Ministries of Women and Child Development (MW&CD), Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (**MH&FW**), and Ministry of Education.

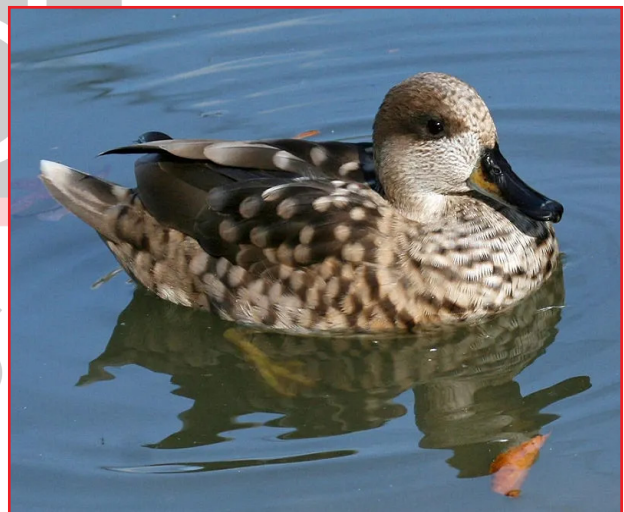
### ➤ Main Objectives:

- Prevention of gender-biased sex-selective elimination.
- Ensuring survival & protection of the girl child.
- Ensuring education and participation of the girl child.
- Protecting rights of Girl children.

## Marbled Duck

### Why in News?

Recently, bird enthusiasts were thrilled to spot a **marbled duck**, a rare winter migrant, at **Sultanpur National Park**. Last recorded sighting of this species in Sultanpur was in 1990.



### Key Points

- **Physical Characteristics:**
  - **Medium-sized duck with grey-white plumage.**
  - Distinguished by a **large head and light eye patches**.
  - **Feeds on fish and aquatic plants.**
- **Global Conservation Status:**
  - Classified as **"vulnerable"** globally by the **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**.

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Note:

- Population decline attributed to habitat destruction and hunting.
- **Geographic Range and Habits:**
  - Native to Europe, where it breeds during the summer months.
  - Known to breed in three distinct regions: the **eastern Mediterranean, western Mediterranean, and Iran**.
  - Prefers lowland, shallow freshwater habitats for breeding.
- **Occurrence in India:**
  - Rarely spotted in Delhi-NCR; last recorded at **Bhindawas wetland in 2022**.
  - Limited sightings in Haryana, with records in Gurgaon during the 2000s.
  - Previous observations include Gujarat and Rajasthan.

### Sultanpur National Park

- **About:**
  - Sultanpur National Park is a bird paradise for bird watchers. It is famous for its **migratory as well as resident birds**.
    - Migratory birds start arriving in the park in September. Birds use the park as a resting place till the following March-April.
    - During **summer** and **monsoon** months the park is inhabited by many local bird species.
  - In April 1971, the **Sultanpur Jheel** inside the park (an area of 1.21 sq. Km.) was accorded **Sanctuary status** under section 8 of the **Punjab Wildlife Preservation Act, 1959**.
  - The status of the park was upgraded to **National Park** under the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972** in July 1991.
- **Location:**
  - It is **situated in Gurgaon district of Haryana**. The distance of the park is around 50 Km from Delhi and 15km from Gurgaon.
- **Important Fauna at the Park:**
  - **Mammals:** **Blackbuck, Nilgai**, Hog deer, Sambar, **Leopard** etc.
  - **Birds:** **Siberian Cranes, Greater Flamingo, Demoiselle Crane** etc.

## Increase of Female Labour Force Participation Rate

### Why in News?

Recently, the **Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM)** reported that the **female labour force participation rate (LFPR)** increased in almost all states in India between 2017-18 and 2022-23, with rural areas experiencing larger gains than urban areas.

### Key Points

- **Key Findings on Female LFPR:**
  - **Regional Variations:**
    - **Bihar, Punjab, and Haryana** consistently reported **very low female LFPR**.
    - Despite being among the richest states, Punjab and Haryana have low female LFPR, while Bihar, the poorest state, also lags.
  - **Growth:**
    - In **Rural areas Female LFPR rose to 41.5%** from 24.6% during 2017-18 to 2022-23.
    - In **Urban areas Female LFPR increased to 25.4%** from 20.4% during the same period.
    - Overall Trend is that growth remained consistent even after excluding unpaid family workers or household helpers.
- **Other Trends:**
  - **Marital Status:**
    - Married men exhibit higher LFPR across states and age groups.
    - Marriage significantly reduces female LFPR, especially in urban areas.
  - **Age Dynamics:**
    - Female LFPR forms a bell curve, peaking at ages 30-40 and declining sharply after.
    - Male LFPR remains nearly 100% between ages 30-50 and declines gradually thereafter.
  - **State-wise Observations:**
    - **Northern States:** Punjab and Haryana recorded low female LFPR.
    - **Eastern States:** Rural Bihar had the lowest LFPR but showed improvement, particularly among married women.

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Note:

- **Northeastern States:** Rural areas showed progress, with Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh leading.
- **Impact of Government Schemes:**
  - **Mudra Loans**
  - **Drone Didi Scheme**
  - **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana**
    - These schemes **emphasize women-led development**, reflecting the government's intention to **promote female participation in the workforce**.
- The rise in female LFPR, especially in rural areas, underscores a notable shift in employment trends. Further analysis and government support will be essential to sustain and amplify this growth.

#### Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM)

- It is an **non-constitutional, non-statutory, independent body** constituted to give advice on economic and related issues to the Government of India, specifically to the Prime Minister.
- The council serves to **highlight key economic issues** to the government of India from a neutral viewpoint.
  - It advises the Prime Minister on economic issues like **inflation, microfinance, and industrial output**.
- For administrative, logistic, planning and budgeting purposes, the **NITI Aayog** serves as the **Nodal Agency for the EAC-PM**.
- Periodic Reports:
  - Annual Economic Outlook.
  - Review of the Economy.

## Illegal Construction Near Sultanpur National Park

### Why in News?

Recently, The **Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) of Forest and Wildlife** directed the district administration to submit a report to the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF & CC)** regarding **illegal constructions** near **Sultanpur National Park** and their current status.

### Key Points

- **Committee to Monitor Illegal Construction:**
  - In March 2024, a committee was formed to **monitor illegal construction activities in the restricted zone** surrounding the **national park**.
  - It was found that several illegal colonies are being developed in the Farukhnagar areas near Sultanpur National Park.
    - Construction activities within the **sensitive zones** violate the provisions of the zonal master plan for **eco-sensitive zones**.
- **Compliance with Regulations:**
  - Officials were instructed to ensure **strict compliance with structural construction regulations** in the areas surrounding the national park.
  - Action should be taken against those who fail to comply with these regulations.

#### Sultanpur National Park

- **About:**
  - Sultanpur National Park is a bird paradise for bird watchers. It is famous for its **migratory as well as resident birds**.
    - Migratory birds start arriving in the park in September. Birds use the park as a resting place till the following March-April.
    - During **summer and monsoon** months the park is inhabited by many local bird species.
  - In April 1971, the **Sultanpur Jheel** inside the park (an area of 1.21 sq. Km.) was accorded **Sanctuary status** under section 8 of the **Punjab Wildlife Preservation Act, 1959**.
  - The status of the park was upgraded to **National Park** under the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972** in July 1991.
- **Location:**
  - It is situated in Gurgaon district of Haryana. The distance of the park is around 50 Km from Delhi and 15km from Gurgaon.
- **Important Fauna at the Park:**
  - **Mammals:** **Blackbuck, Nilgai**, Hog deer, Sambar, **Leopard** etc.
  - **Birds:** **Siberian Cranes, Greater Flamingo, Demoiselle Crane** etc.

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## NGT Forms Panel in Faridabad

### Why in News?

**The National Green Tribunal** has formed a panel to investigate the alleged illegal felling of several **Pipal (Sacred Fig) trees** on the premises of the animal husbandry and dairying's office in **Haryana's Faridabad**.

# NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL

*The National Green Tribunal (NGT) is a specialised body for swift resolution of environmental and natural resource cases.*

### About

- 🕒 **Establishment:** By National Green Tribunal Act 2010
- 🎯 **Objective:** Quick resolution of environmental & natural resource cases
- 🕒 **Case Resolution:** Within 6 months
- 📍 **Places of Sitting:** New Delhi (Principal), Bhopal, Pune, Kolkata, and Chennai

### Structure

- 👤 **Composition:** Chairperson, Judicial Members, and Expert Members
- 🕒 **Tenure:** Up to 5 years/until age 65 (no reappointment)
- 👤 **Appointments:** Chairperson - Central Government (with the CJI's consultation)
  - 👤 10-20 judicial members & 10-20 expert members - Selection Committee

*India is the third country globally (after Australia and New Zealand) and the first developing nation to establish a specialised environmental tribunal like NGT.*

### Powers & Jurisdiction

- 👤 **Jurisdiction:** Civil cases on environmental issues and rights
- 👤 **Suo Motu Powers:** Granted since 2021
- 👤 **Roles:** Adjudicatory, preventative, and remedial
- 👤 **Procedures:** Follows Principles of natural justice
  - 👤 Not bound by the CPC, 1908 or Indian Evidence Act, 1872
- 👤 **Principles:** Sustainable Development; Precautionary; Polluter pays
- 👤 **Orders:** Executable as civil court decrees; offers relief and compensation (**decisions are binding**)
- 👤 **Appeals:** Tribunal can review its decisions.
  - 👤 If decision fails - Appeal to the SC to be filed within 90 days

### NGT deals with Civil Cases under

- 👤 Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974
- 👤 Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Cess Act, 1977
- 👤 Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980
- 👤 Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981
- 👤 Environment (Protection) Act, 1986
- 👤 Public Liability Insurance Act, 1991
- 👤 Biological Diversity Act, 2002



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### Key Points

- **Destruction of Heritage Pipal Trees:**
  - The plea stated that **heritage Pipal trees had been destroyed**, but their **roots still existed**.

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Note:

- Despite complaints to the concerned authorities, **no action was taken.**
- **NGT's Observations:**
  - According to the application permission was granted to cut **Shisham (Indian Rosewood) and miscellaneous trees**, but **no permission** was given for felling Pipal trees.
  - The plea alleged illegal felling of trees by the deputy director, range officer, and contractor.
  - The tribunal issued notices to Faridabad's Divisional Forest Officer and Haryana's Department of Forest and Animal Husbandry.
  - A joint committee was appointed to verify the allegations and **submit the report to the tribunal within eight weeks.**
  - **Members** include representatives from:
    - Member Secretary, **Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).**
    - Regional Office of the **Union Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** in Chandigarh.

## Surajkund Fair 2025

### Why in News?

The **Surajkund International Craft Fair** is scheduled between **7<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2025** in Faridabad. The authorities are likely to spend around Rs. 1.50 crore on repair work.

### Key Points

- **About the Fair:**
  - It is an effective **platform to connect our craftsmen with art lovers.** This fair is both an **art exhibition and a business centre.**
  - The fair showcases the richness and diversity of the **handicrafts, handlooms, and the cultural heritage** of India.
  - The department is focusing on **expanding the fair area in 2025**, with an emphasis on **increasing huts for artisans and participants.**
    - The number of additional huts is yet to be finalized and depends on the availability of open space.

- Additional huts, designed to be weather-proof, are expected to meet the growing demand due to the fair's increasing popularity and participation.
- In 2024, authorities provided around 1,150 huts, accommodating over 1,500 indigenous and 250 foreign craftspeople.
  - Authorities have signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with the **Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC)** for ticketing and parking facilities.
  - **Partner Nations and Theme:**
    - **BIMSTEC countries** (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Thailand, Nepal, and Sri Lanka) remain **partner nations** for the event.
    - The **theme state for the upcoming fair is yet to be announced**, though Northeastern states like Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Tripura, and Mizoram will be given special focus for showcasing art and craft.

### BIMSTEC

- BIMSTEC is a **regional organisation** comprising **7 member states - Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.**
- It was formed in **1997** with the aim of promoting multifaceted technical and economic cooperation among the countries of the **Bay of Bengal region.**
- The region covered by BIMSTEC is home to around **1.5 billion people**, with a combined GDP of over **USD 3.8 trillion.**

## Low Water Supply in Haryana and UP

### Why in News?

The water level of the **Yamuna** has significantly decreased due to **lack of rain in the upper hills of Himachal Pradesh**, causing a severe **shortfall in water supply** in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

### Key Points

- **Water Level at Hathnikund Barrage:**
  - The **water level at Hathnikund Barrage** rose but despite the rise, the current supply remains far below demand, **impacting irrigation, drinking water supply, and hydropower generation.**

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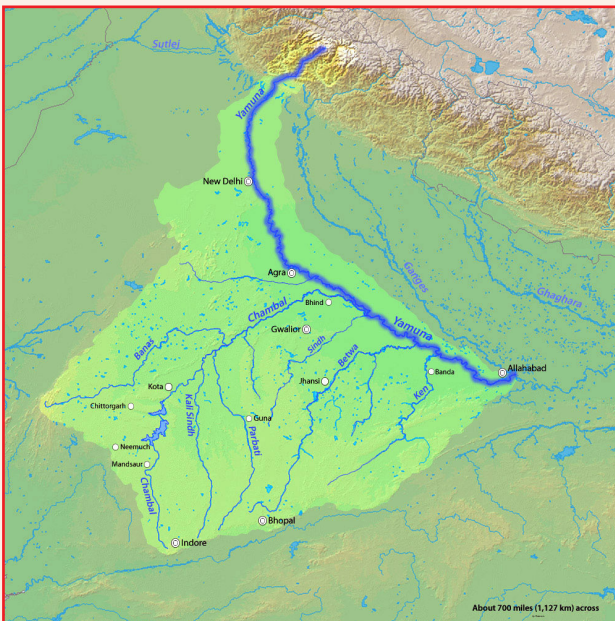
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- **Western Jamuna Canal (WJC) Shortfall:**
  - The WJC has a water demand of 9,000 cusecs, but only 1,756 cusecs were released.
  - The canal provides drinking water to Delhi and irrigates crops in southern Haryana, both of which have been severely affected by the shortfall.
- **Eastern Jamuna Canal (EJC) Shortfall:**
  - The EJC, which caters to Uttar Pradesh, requires 1,500 cusecs but received only 182 cusecs.
  - Water supply to the EJC was stopped due to low flow in the river, which dropped to 1,142 cusecs.
- **Impact on Hydropower Projects:**
  - Hydropower projects in Naino Wali, Bhudkalan, Begampur, and Dadupur villages have been impacted by the Yamuna's water shortage.

### Yamuna River

- **About:**
  - The Yamuna River is one of the major tributaries of the Ganges in Northern India.
  - It forms an integral part of the **Yamuna-Ganga Plain**, one of the world's most extensive **alluvial plains**.



- **Source:**
  - It has its source in the **Yamunotri Glacier** at an elevation of **6,387 meters** on the southwestern sides of **Banderpooch crests** in the lower **Himalayan ranges**.

- **Basin:**
  - It meets the **Ganges at the Sangam (where Kumbh mela is held)** in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh after flowing through **Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Delhi**.
- **Important Dam:**
  - Lakhwar-Vyasi Dam (Uttarakhand), Tajewala Barrage Dam (Haryana) etc.
- **Important Tributaries:** **Chambal, Sindh, Betwa and Ken.**

## Urea-Efficient Wheat Varieties

### Why in News?

Indian and Japanese institutions are collaborating to develop India's first wheat varieties using **Biological Nitrification Inhibition (BNI) technology**, marking a significant step towards sustainable agriculture.

- **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)**-Central Soil Salinity Research Institute(CSSRI), Karnal is involved in this project.

### Key Points

- **Aim:**
  - These varieties aim to reduce urea dependency, addressing challenges such as **environmental sustainability, agricultural productivity, and the financial burden of urea subsidies**.
- **Collaborative Effort:**
  - The project is also a joint initiative by **Indian Institute of Wheat and Barley Research (IIWBR), Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), and Borlaug Institute for South Asia (BISA)**.
  - It is carried out in collaboration with the **Japan International Research Centre for Agricultural Sciences (JIRCAS)** and funded by the **Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)**.
- **Transformative Potential of BNI:**
  - According to Scientists at CSSRI, **BNI technology** can reduce **nitrogen fertiliser** demand without compromising yield or quality.
  - He added that BNI supports **sustainable agriculture by minimizing nitrogen leaching into groundwater**, thereby preserving **soil fertility and water resources**.

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- **Promising Results:**
  - Senior Scientist at IIWBR, reported a **15-20% reduction in urea usage in initial experiments** without affecting yield or quality.
  - The breeding strategy for developing BNI-enabled wheat varieties is progressing well.
- **Future Implications:**
  - This breakthrough collaboration between India and Japan is set to revolutionize **wheat cultivation**, reduce urea dependency, and address global agricultural challenges.

#### Biological Nitrification Inhibition (BNI)

- It is a **natural plant process** that can help regulate **nitrification in agricultural systems**, and improve **nitrogen-use efficiency**.
- It can help **develop sustainable agricultural systems** that are productive but least damaging to the environment.
- High levels of nitrification can lead to **NO leaching, denitrification, and greenhouse gas emissions**.

#### Subsidy on Urea

- In India, **urea is the most produced, imported, consumed and physically regulated fertiliser** of all. It is subsidised only for agricultural uses.
- The Centre **pays a subsidy** on urea to fertiliser manufacturers on the basis of cost of production at each plant and the units are required to sell the **fertiliser at the government-set Maximum Retail Price (MRP)**.

## International Conference on Data Science

### Why in News?

The **Department of Statistics and Operational Research, Kurukshetra University**, is going to organise an international conference on **“Innovative trends in statistics, optimisation, and data science”**.

- It is in conjunction with the **44th annual convention of Indian Society for Probability and Statistics (ISPS)** and the **eighth convention of the Indian Association for Reliability and Statistics**.

### Key Points

- **Details of the International Conference:**
  - The three-day international conference is **scheduled to be held from 21st to 23rd December 2024**.
- **Objective and Topics of Discussion:**
  - According to **Kurukshetra University Vice-Chancellor** the conference will serve as a platform to discuss:
    - Responsible **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**
    - Data-centric AI
    - Edge intelligence
    - Automation of data cleaning
    - Industry-specific data applications
    - Data privacy
    - Other relevant AI-related topics

#### Artificial Intelligence (AI)

- **About:**
  - AI is the ability of a computer, or a robot **controlled by a computer to do tasks that are usually done by humans** because they require human intelligence and discernment.
    - Although there is **no AI that can perform the wide variety of tasks an ordinary human can do**, some AI can match humans in specific tasks.
- **Characteristics & Components:**
  - The ideal characteristic of artificial intelligence is its **ability to rationalize and take actions** that have the best chance of achieving a specific goal. A subset of AI is **Machine Learning (ML)**.
  - Deep Learning (DL) techniques **enable this automatic learning** through the absorption of huge amounts of unstructured data such as text, images, or video.

## Development Initiatives in Haryana

### Why in News?

Haryana Chief Minister announced **developmental initiatives for the Pundri Assembly segment** and assured the public that it would soon be granted **subdivision status**.

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### Key Points

- **New Subdivision Proposals:**
  - The state government has **constituted a committee to evaluate proposals for new subdivisions and districts.**
  - A proposal for granting subdivision status to **Pundri (Kaithal district)** has been submitted and will be approved after the committee's report is received.
- **Infrastructure Development Initiatives:**
  - Education and Health Projects:
    - Rs 5 crore allocated for **renovating old school buildings.**
    - Plans to **construct health centres in Fatehpur and Badnara villages**, subject to land availability.
  - Road Infrastructure:
    - Rs 5 crore earmarked for **repairing marketing board roads.**
    - Rs 10 crore allocated for **strengthening and repairing Public Works Department (PWD) roads.**
- **Inauguration:**
  - Projects worth Rs 15 crore were inaugurated or had their foundation stones laid, including:
    - Construction of a link road from Pundri to Segra.
    - Strengthening the Nilokheri-Karsa-Dhand Road.
    - Improvements to six other roads.

## Haryana Govt's Notification on MSP Procurement

### Why in News?

Recently, the **Haryana government** has notified the procurement of **24 crops** at **Minimum Support Price (MSP)**, expanding the list from 14 crops to 24.

### Key Points

- In addition to the crops that were already being procured, including paddy, bajra, kharif moong, urd, arhar, wheat and mustard, **10 more crops** approved for MSP are **ragi, soybean, nigerseed, safflower, barley, maize, jowar, jute, copra, and summer moong.**
- **Existing crops** under MSP include: **paddy, bajra, kharif moong, urd, arhar, wheat, and mustard.**

### Minimum Support Price

- **MSP** is the **minimum price** at which the government guarantees to purchase certain crops from farmers to prevent distress sales and ensure fair prices.
- **MSP** is based on the recommendations of the **Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP)**, which considers various factors such as cost of production, demand and supply, market price trends, inter-crop price parity, etc.
  - CACP is an attached office of the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**. It came into existence in January 1965.
- The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)** chaired by the Prime Minister of India takes the final decision (approve) on the level of MSPs.
- The MSP is aimed at ensuring remunerative prices to growers for their produce and encouraging **Crop Diversification**.

## Blackbuck Killed in Sirsa

### Why in News?

Recently, a **blackbuck poaching** incident in **Jandwala Bishnoiyan village, Sirsa district**, has outraged **the Bishnoi community**.

- The community, known for its commitment to **wildlife conservation**, is demanding **stronger action to safeguard endangered species** and prevent further poaching.

### Key Points

- **About the Incident:**
  - On 23rd December 2024, the **carcass of a five-year-old male blackbuck was found** with cut marks, indicating poaching.
  - Veterinary surgeon conducted the post-mortem, identifying a punctured wound as evidence of poaching.
    - Other animals, such as a **nilgai** and calves, might have also been poached in the area.
- **Conservation Concerns:**
  - Local conservationists are alarmed by the declining blackbuck population in the region.
  - **The Akhil Bhartiya Jeev Raksha Bishnoi Sabha,**

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Note:



highlighted the **impact of de-notification of sanctuaries in 2017** on wildlife in villages like **Jandwala Bishnoiyan, Ganga, and Bhaukhera**.

- **Blackbucks and chinkara deer** populations have significantly decreased since de-notification.
- A case has been registered under **Sections 9, 39, 49, 51, and 54** of **the Wildlife Protection Act 1972**.

### Blackbucks



#### ➤ About:

- The Blackbuck (*Antilope cervicapra*), or the **Indian Antelope**, is a species of antelope native to India and Nepal.
  - It is widespread in **Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Odisha**, and other areas throughout peninsular India.
- It is considered as the **epitome of grassland**.
- The **blackbuck is a diurnal antelope** (active mainly during the day).

#### ➤ Recognition:

- It has been **declared as the State Animal of Punjab, Haryana, and Andhra Pradesh**.

#### ➤ Cultural Importance:

- It is a **symbol of purity for Hinduism** as its skin and horns are regarded as sacred objects. For **Buddhism**, it is a symbol of good luck.

#### ➤ Protection Status:

- **Wildlife Protection Act 1972**: Schedule I
- **IUCN Status**: Least Concern
- **CITES**: Appendix III

#### ➤ Threat:

- Habitat Fragmentation, **Deforestation**, **Natural Calamities**, Illegal Hunting.

#### ➤ Related Protected Areas:

- Velavadar Blackbuck Sanctuary - Gujarat
- Point Calimere Wildlife Sanctuary - Tamil Nadu
- In 2017, the Uttar Pradesh State Government approved the plan of setting up the **Blackbuck Conservation Reserve** in the trans-Yamuna belt near Prayagraj. It would be the first conservation reserve dedicated to the blackbuck.
- **Tal Chhapar Sanctuary**- Rajasthan

## Geospatial Survey to Combat Illegal Mining

### Why in News?

Recently, **Haryana** has ordered a **geospatial survey** of **the Aravallis** near the **Rajasthan border**. The survey will **demarkate banned mining** areas in Haryana and identify licensed mines in Rajasthan to **curb illegal mining**.

### Key Points

#### ➤ About the Survey:

- Conducted by **Haryana Space Applications Centre (HARSAC)**, the survey aims to **define the jurisdiction of Haryana and Rajasthan over various hills** and update revenue records.

#### ➤ Addressing Jurisdictional Issues:

- **Illegal mining** mafias exploit the jurisdictional ambiguity over the Aravalli hills.
- The **Enforcement Bureau** registered an **First Information Report (FIR)** for the illegal mining of 6,000 metric tonnes of hill in Rava village.

#### ➤ Illegal Mining:

##### ○ About:

- Illegal mining is the extraction of minerals, ores, or other valuable resources from land or water bodies **without the necessary permits, licenses, or regulatory approvals** from government authorities.
- It can also involve the violation of environmental, labor, and safety standards.

##### ○ Issues:

##### ● Environmental Degradation:

- It can lead to deforestation, soil erosion, and water pollution and can result in the **destruction of habitats for wildlife**, which can have serious ecological consequences.

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- **Hazards:**
  - Illegal mining often involves the **use of hazardous chemicals such as mercury and cyanide**, which can pose serious **health risks to miners** and nearby **communities**.
- **Loss of Revenue:**
  - It can lead to a **loss of revenue** for governments as miners may not pay appropriate taxes and royalties.
  - This can have significant economic impacts, particularly in countries where natural resources are a major source of revenue.
- **Human Rights Violations:**
  - Illegal mining can also result in **human rights violations**, including forced labor, child labor, and exploitation of vulnerable populations.

### The Aravallis

#### ➤ About:

- The Aravalli Range extends from Gujarat to Delhi through Rajasthan, 692 km in length and varies between 10 to 120 km in width.
  - The range acts as a natural green wall, **with 80% located in Rajasthan and 20% in Haryana, Delhi, and Gujarat.**
- The Aravalli mountains are divided into two main ranges – **the Sambhar Sirohi Range and the Sambhar Khetri Range in Rajasthan**, where their extension is about 560 km.
- It serves as an **ecotone** between the **Thar Desert and the Gangetic Plain**.
  - Ecotones are areas where **two or more ecosystems, biological communities, or biotic regions meet.**
- **Gurusikhar (Rajasthan)**, the highest peak in the range, reaches an elevation of 1,722 meters.

#### ➤ Significance of Aravallis:

- The Aravallis **prevent the Thar Desert from encroaching** on the Indo-Gangetic plains, historically serving as a catchment for rivers and plains.
- The range **supports 300 native plant species**, 120 bird species, and exclusive animals like jackals and mongooses.

- During **monsoons**, the Aravallis **direct monsoon clouds eastward**, benefiting sub-Himalayan rivers and North Indian plains. In winter, they **shield fertile valleys from cold westerly winds**.
- The range **aids in groundwater replenishment** by absorbing rainwater, thus reviving groundwater levels.
- The Aravallis act as the **“lungs” for Delhi-NCR**, mitigating some effects of the **region’s severe air pollution**.

## State Level Awards on Good Governance Day

### Why In News?

Recently, **state-level awards** were organised on **Good Governance Day** in Gurugram district of Haryana.

### Key Points

- **Top Performing Districts in Haryana:**
  - **Kaithal secured the first position** among top-performing districts in Haryana.
  - **Fatehabad and Jhajjar** were placed **second and third**.
- **State Flagship Scheme Awards:**
  - **Mukhya Mantri Shehri Awas Yojana:**
    - **Mukhya Mantri Shehri Awas Yojana** secured top honours in the category.
    - It was launched to fulfill the **housing aspirations of poor families**, to provide housing for every impoverished individual.
    - Under the state scheme, **15,250 beneficiaries were given land plot allotment certificates**.
  - **Tohana Paddy Stubble Management Project:**
    - **The Crop Residue Management scheme** was placed second in the category.
    - This is aimed at making the **collection and storage of crop residues more convenient**. Additionally, officials are working on establishing partnerships with industries to purchase these crop residues.
  - **Haryana Project Monitoring System (HPMS) Portal:**
    - **HPMS Portal** secured the third prize.

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Note:

- It is a **web-based information Dashboard** which will help to **monitor and evaluate the implementation progress** of infrastructure-based projects
- **Ambala Municipal Corporation's Initiatives:**
  - **Monthly Pass System** and awarded fourth prize.
- **Special Departmental Awards:**
  - **Uttar Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam:**
    - Recognized for its **waiver of monthly minimum charges scheme.**
  - **NIPUN Haryana Mission Monitoring System:**
    - Awarded second prize under **Haryana Shoksha Paroyojna Parishad.**

### Good Governance Day

- It is celebrated on **25th December** to raise awareness among citizens about **government accountability and effective administration.**
  - The **theme** for 2024 is **"India's Path to a Viksit Bharat: Empowering Citizens through Good Governance and Digitalisation."**
- It was started in the year **2014** to honor the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister **Atal Bihari Vajpayee.**
- The birth anniversary of **Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya** is also observed on 25th December.

## Sub-Division Status in Haryana

### Why in News?

Recently, **Haryana Chief Minister** announced that **Dahina block** will be granted the **status of a sub-division.**

### Key Points

- **Key Announcements:**
  - **Water Infrastructure** will be constructed in Motalkalan village.
  - A **college** will be established in **Jatusana.**
  - **Bhurthala Distributary** will be renovated and a bridge will be constructed on the JLN Canal linking Luhana village to Khaleta.

- Addressing **waterlogging** issues in Bas, Pahrajvas, Summa Kheda, Ratnathal, and Lilodh villages.
- The CM **inaugurated and laid the foundation stones** for **six major development projects** worth over Rs. 23 crore.
  - He also declared plans to construct sub-health centres in Natheda and Surkhpur villages, along with primary health centres in Gudiani and Ratnathal villages.

## Uttam Seva Medal

### Why in News?

On the occasion of **Good Governance Day**, a ceremony to honour police personnel was organised at the **State Emergency Response Centre** in Haryana.

### Key Points

- **Highlights of the Ceremony:**
  - **Directors General of Police (DGP)** honoured the police personnel who had performed commendable work in various fields with the **Uttam Seva Medal.**
- **Individual Contributions Recognized For:**
  - Enhancing SWAN bandwidth and digitizing wireless communication for the **'SWAN' project.**
  - Contributions to the implementation and monitoring of CCTNS and ICJS projects.
  - Effectively defending cases in higher and lower courts.
  - Commendable work in the **Special Task Force (STF) Rohtak.**
  - Advancing the **e-challaning application.**
  - Reuniting 845 missing children with their families nationwide.
  - Bravery in arresting major criminals during his STF tenure and was recognized for his efforts.

### State Wide Area Network (SWAN)

- SWAN is a central scheme to **establish a converged backbone network for data, voice, and video communications across the country.**
- It was **approved in March 2005** and is one of the core infrastructure components of the **National e-Governance Plan (NeGP).**

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Note:

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## New Hub for India's Champion Women Shuttlers

### Why in News?

Haryana boasts a significant contribution to **India’s Olympians and Olympic medalists**. At **Paris 2024**, nearly **one-fourth of the country’s Olympians** hailed from the state, along with four out of five individual medalists.

# OLYMPICS

### Ancient History

- Originated - Olympia, Greece (776 BC)
- Connected to Greek culture and religion
- Events - Running, wrestling, and chariot racing
- Abolished - 393 AD by Emperor Theodosius I

### Modern History

- Revived - Late 19<sup>th</sup> century by Pierre de Coubertin (Founding member of IOC)
- First modern Olympics - Athens, Greece (1896)

### Upcoming Events

- **Winter Olympics 2026:** Milan-Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy
- **Summer Olympics 2028:** Los Angeles, USA
- **Summer Olympics 2032:** Brisbane, Australia
- India intends to host Olympic Games 2036

### Logo and Motto

- **Logo:** 5 interlocking rings of blue, yellow, black, green, and red colors on a white background (**represents union of 5 continents and meeting of world athletes**)
- **Motto:** *Citius, Altius, Fortius – Communiter* (Faster, Higher, Stronger – Together) ('Communiter' was added in 2021)



### International Olympic Committee (IOC)

- Estd - 1894
- Guardian of the Olympic Games
- HQ - Lausanne, Switzerland

**5 new sports added in Tokyo 2020 Olympics:**  
Surfing, Skateboarding, Sport Climbing, Karate and Baseball/Softball

### PARIS OLYMPICS 2024

**India at 7<sup>th</sup> place in the medal tally; a decline from 48<sup>th</sup> place in Tokyo 2020)**

Indian Sportspersons / Team	Medal	Event
Neeraj Chopra	Silver	Men's Javelin Throw
Manu Bhaker and Sarabjot Singh	Bronze	10m air pistol mixed team event
Swapnil Kusale	Bronze	Men's 50m rifle 3 positions
Indian Hockey team	Bronze	Men's hockey
Manu Bhaker	Bronze	Women's 10m air pistol event
Aman Sehrawat	Bronze	Wrestling Men's 57kg freestyle event

### Indian Olympic Association (IOA)

- Founded - **1927**

- Selects athletes to represent India at Olympics, Asian Games and CWG



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Note:

### Key Points

- **Growth of Badminton:**
  - Haryana has witnessed **increasing grassroots participation in various sports**, with badminton becoming the latest discipline to gain significant traction.
- **Rising Badminton Stars:**
  - **Saina Nehwal**, a **London Olympics 2012** bronze medalist, **hails from Haryana** but trained in Hyderabad.
  - Players like **Anmol Kharb**, who helped India clinch their first **Badminton Asia title in 2024** at just 17, and **Unnati Hooda** have honed their skills in Haryana.
  - Haryana's women's team won their first-ever **Senior National badminton championship** gold, with Devika Sihag claiming the women's singles title, marking a hat-trick after Anmol (2023) and Anupama Upadhyaya (2022).
- **Shifting Focus from Traditional Sports:**
  - Areas like Rohtak and Sonapat, traditionally known for **kabaddi** and **wrestling**, are now seeing parents encourage badminton due to its non-contact nature and compatibility with education.
  - **Increased ranking tournaments in North India** have **provided more opportunities** for local players.
- **Future Goals:**
  - Coaches emphasized the need to **translate national-level victories into international success**.
  - Haryana continues to prioritize performance over commercial interests, **aiming to replicate its wrestling dominance in badminton**.

## Demise of O.P. Chautala

### Why in News?

Recently, the **Haryana government** declared a **three-day state mourning** as a mark of respect to **former Chief Minister Om Prakash Chautala** who passed away in Gurugram.

### Key Points

- **State Mourning:**
  - During this period, the **national flag** will be flown at half-mast on all government buildings where it is regularly displayed.

- All state government functions and official entertainment activities have been cancelled.



### Public Holiday and State Funeral:

- Saturday has been declared a public holiday in all state government offices as a mark of respect.
  - A state funeral was held on 28th December 2024 at Teja Khera farm in Sirsa district, the Chautala family's native village.
- ### Passing of Former CM:
- Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) president and five-time Haryana Chief Minister Chautala passed away at the age of 89.

## Harappan-Era Water Management Techniques

### Why in News?

The ongoing **excavation at the Harappan-era site in Rakhigarhi** has revealed significant **evidence of water management**, including the discovery of a water body between mounds one and two in Rakhigarhi village, Hisar district.

### Key Points

- **Discovery of Water Storage Area:**
  - Excavation revealed a **water storage area with a depth of 3.5 to 4 feet**, highlighting advanced water management techniques from 5,000 years ago.
  - **The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**, described this as **evidence of sophisticated engineering** by the Harappan people.

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- **Elite Habitation Zone Identified:**
  - Mounds one, two, and three were identified as an “elite zone,” likely inhabited by the upper class of the **Harappan civilisation**.
  - Massive structures found in this area indicate its importance as a habitation site for elites.
- **Presence of the Drishavati River:**
  - A **dried-up riverbed**, identified as the **Chautang or Drishavati river**, was located about 300 metres from the site.
    - The river likely **served as a lifeline for the region**, with archaeological evidence suggesting the Harappans stored water from this river as their primary water source.
  - Core drilling at the site, conducted by **the Zoological Survey of India**, confirmed the presence of the Drishavati riverbed.
- **Impact of River Drying on Civilisation:**
  - Archaeologists believe the **Drishavati river began drying up around 5,000 years ago**, leading to a water crisis in cities like Rakhigarhi.
  - The **gradual disappearance of the Drishavati and Sarasvati rivers** likely contributed to the decline of the Harappan civilisation in this region.

- **Legacy of Harappan Engineering:**
  - The findings demonstrate the **advanced techniques of water storage and conservation** employed by the Harappan people, underscoring their ingenuity in managing natural resources.

#### Harappan Civilization

- The **Harappan Civilization**, also known as the **Indus Valley Civilization (IVC)**, flourished around **2500 BCE** along **the Indus River**.
- It was the **largest of the four ancient urban civilizations** alongside **Egypt, Mesopotamia, and China**.
- The IVC is classified as a **Bronze-age civilization** due to the discovery of numerous artefacts made from **copper-based alloys**.
- **Daya Ram Sahni** first excavated **Harappa in 1921-22**, and **Rakhal Das Banerji** began excavating **Mohenjo-daro in 1922**.
  - **Sir John Marshall**, **DG of ASI**, was responsible for the excavations that led to the discovery of **Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro** sites of IVC.

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Note:



