



# STATE PCS CA

(CONSOLIDATION)

RAJASTHAN

**JANUARY  
2025**

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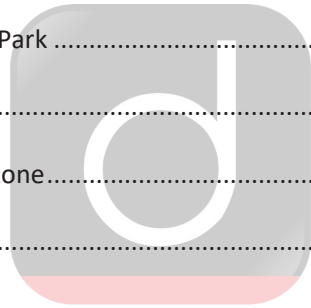
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## New Solar Project in Rajasthan

### Why in News?

Jakson Green (India) and Blueleaf Energy (Singapore) have partnered to develop **1 GW** of **solar projects** in Rajasthan, with an investment of **USD 400 million (Rs 3,400 crore)**.

### Key Points

- **Project Scope & Timeline:**
  - The **1 GW portfolio** consists of **three solar projects** funded through **debt and equity**.
  - Projects include **Intra State (InSTS) and Inter State (ISTS) Transmission System** projects.
  - **25-year Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs)** secured through bidding from **Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Ltd (RUVNL), Solar Energy Corporation of India Limited (SECI), and National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) Limited**.
  - The three solar projects are expected to be progressively commissioned in 2025-2026.
- **Renewable Energy Expansion Goals:**
  - The partnership targets adding more than **5 GW of renewable energy** to the Indian grid by 2030.
  - The Rajasthan projects will generate **1,800 GWh (Gigawatt hours) of green energy annually**, enough to power **1.5 million households**.
- **Environmental Impact:**
  - The project will **prevent 22 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions** over 25 years.
  - Equivalent to removing **5 million cars** from roads.
- **Job Creation & Economic Benefits:**
  - The initiative will create jobs during the **construction and operational phases**.
- **Financial & Banking Support:**
  - **Ernst & Young (EY)** was engaged as the investment banker for the transaction.
  - **Jakson Green secured credit facilities:**
    - Rs 2.96 billion from First Abu Dhabi Bank (Mumbai).
    - Rs 600 million from HSBC (Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation).

- Funds will support **domestic & international EPC (Engineering, Procurement, and Construction)** operations.

### Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs)

- These are **long-term agreements** (typically 25 years) between electricity generators and buyers (usually public utilities).
- It involves committing generators to supply power at fixed rates, locking in significant generating capacity.
- They are inflexible and unable to adapt to dynamic market conditions.

### Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) Model

- Under this model, the **cost is completely borne by the government**.
- Government invites bids for engineering knowledge from the private players.
- Procurement of raw material and construction costs are met by the government.
- The **private sector's participation is minimal** and is limited to the provision of engineering expertise.
- A challenge of the model is the **significant financial burden** it places on the government.

## Web Portal for Registering Live-in Relationships

### Why in News?

The **Rajasthan High Court** has directed the **state government** to launch a **web portal** for registering live-in relationships.

### Key Points

- **Reason for the Order:** Several live-in couples face threats from family and society, leading them to file petitions under **Article 226** seeking protection under **Article 21**.
  - **Article 226** provides the **High Courts** the authority to bring a lawsuit against a **government entity** if any **citizen's rights and freedoms** are violated.
  - The High Court has **broad powers to issue orders and writs** to any person or authority under Article 226 of the Indian Constitution.

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Note:

- The court noted that while **live-in relationships** are not explicitly addressed in Indian law, SC has ruled in several cases such as ***Khushboo vs Kannaiammal (2010)***, ***Lata Singh vs State of UP (2006)*** and ***Indira Sarma vs V.K. Sarma (2013)*** that such relationships are **not criminal** and fall under the **right to life and personal liberty** guaranteed by **Article 21**.
- **Necessity to Regulate:** The court highlighted the need to regulate **live-in relationships**, noting that they **lack social approval** and may create legal complications, especially for women and children.
- **Establishment of Authority:** Until a law is enacted, the court ordered the creation of a competent authority in each district to register and address grievances of live-in couples.
  - The government must submit a compliance report by **1<sup>st</sup> March, 2025**, outlining the steps taken.
- **Legal Clarification on Married Persons:** The court referred to a larger bench the issue of whether married individuals in live-in relationships, without divorce, can seek protection.
- **New Legal Format for Live-in Couples:**
  - The court's order also included the preparation of a formal registration format that all couples entering into live-in relationships must complete. The document would require couples to agree to specific terms before entering such relationships. Key provisions in the format would include the following:
    - **Child Support:** Both partners would be obligated to agree on a **"child plan"** outlining their respective responsibilities for the **education, healthcare, and general upbringing** of any children born from the relationship.
    - **Maintenance:** The male partner would be held responsible for financially supporting the non-earning female partner and any children resulting from the relationship, ensuring their economic security.

#### Landmark Judgments Upholding Constitutional Morality

- ***Lata Singh vs State of UP (2006):***
  - Directed protection for inter-caste and inter-religious couples from harassment and violence.

- ***S. Khushboo vs Kanniammal & Anr. (2010):***
  - Declared sexual relations between **consenting adults outside marriage** as legal and within the right to privacy.
- ***Naz Foundation vs Government of NCT of Delhi (2009):***
  - Decriminalized consensual homosexual acts between adults, declaring **Section 377** of the Indian Penal Code as a violation of rights.
- ***Joseph Shine vs Union of India (2018):***
  - Decriminalized **adultery** and declared it a violation of the rights to equality, dignity, privacy, and autonomy.
- ***Navtej Singh Johar vs Union of India (2018):***
  - Affirmed the **rights of LGBTQ+** individuals to express their sexual orientation and identity with dignity.
- ***Shafin Jahan vs Asokan K.M. (2018):***
  - Upheld the right to marry a person of one's choice regardless of religion or caste, nullifying the annulment of a Hindu-Muslim marriage.
- ***Shakti Vahini vs Union of India (2018):***
  - Condemned honour killings and violence against inter-caste and inter-religious couples, issuing guidelines for prevention and protection.

## Rajasthan Govt to Introduce Suicide Prevention Bill for Coaching Students

### Why in News?

The **Rajasthan government**, has informed the **Rajasthan High Court** that it has announced plans to introduce a bill aimed at **suicide prevention** among coaching students. The Rajasthan HC took *suo motu* cognizance of the issue.

- This move comes in response to the **alarming increase** in **student suicides**, particularly in **Kota**, known as **India's coaching hub**.

### Key Points

- **Rising Suicides in Kota:** Since the start of 2025, six coaching students have died by suicide, adding to

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Note:

the long-standing crisis. Over the past decade, **127 suicide cases** have been recorded, with 26 cases in 2023 and 17 in 2024.

- **Impact on Kota's Reputation:** The ongoing crisis has negatively affected Kota's status as a coaching hub, leading to declining student enrollments.
- **Need for Mental Health Support:** The rising cases of student suicides highlight the inadequacy of current measures, emphasizing the need for **stronger mental health support and stress management strategies**.

#### Suo Moto Cognizance

- A **Suo Moto cognizance** is a Latin term which means an action taken by a government agency, court or other central authority on their own apprehension.
- A court takes a **Suo Moto Cognizance** of a legal matter when it receives information about the **violation of rights** or breach of duty through media or a third party's notification.
- **Article 32** of the **Indian Constitution** and **Article 226** of the Indian Constitution lay down the provisions for filing **Public Interest Litigation (PIL)** in **Supreme Court** and **High Courts** respectively.
  - This has given rise to the court's power to initiate legal action on their cognizance of a matter.
  - **Suo Moto's** actions by Indian courts are a reflection of **judicial activism**.

#### Other Initiatives Related to Suicide Prevention in India

- **National Mental Health Programme (NMHP):**
  - **District Mental Health Programme (DMHP)** is implemented in 738 districts, offering outpatient services, counselling, continuing care, and a 10-bedded inpatient facility at the district level.
- **National Tele Mental Health Programme:** Launched in **2022** to improve access to quality mental health counselling and care services across the country.
  - As of December 2023, 34 States/UTs have established 46 Tele **MANAS Cells**, handling over 500,000 calls on the helpline.
  - The **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** has launched a **24/7 toll-free helpline "KIRAN"** to provide mental health support.

## Nahargarh Wildlife Sanctuary

### Why in News?

The Forest Department has begun revising the boundaries of **Nahargarh Wildlife Sanctuary** to address existing legal complications. This initiative originated during a meeting held in Jaipur led by **Rajasthan's Principal Chief Conservator of Forests** and **Chief Wildlife Warden**.

### Key Points

- **Discussion in the meeting:**
  - The meeting focused on resolving disparities between:
    - The **sanctuary's original notification** issued on **September 22, 1980**.
    - The **eco-sensitive zone (ESZ)** notification issued on **March 8, 2019**.
  - The Deputy Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), Jaipur Zoo, presented the sanctuary's original boundary details.
    - The 1980 notification defined the sanctuary's boundaries using only 11 GPS coordinates.
    - The ESZ map from 2019 marked 100 reference points leading to significant boundary differences.
  - These inconsistencies have resulted in multiple legal cases and court challenges.
- **Decision on Revising Sanctuary Map:**
  - Authorities decided to create a revised **sanctuary map based on the Revenue records** and the **1980 notification**.
  - The Deputy Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), Jaipur Zoo, was assigned the task of drafting the new map.
  - The **draft map will be reviewed by a committee and subsequently submitted to the state government** for approval.
- **Opposition from Environmental Activists:**
  - Environmental advocates have highlighted discrepancies in the sanctuary and ESZ maps, accusing the Forest Department of preparing a false map.
  - A complaint was filed with **the Lokayukta**, which noted the issue.

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Note:

- **Response from Forest Authorities:**
  - The Office of the **Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF), Rajasthan**, responded to the Lokayukta stating:
    - Questioning the maps after seven years was inappropriate.
    - The sanctuary and ESZ maps were approved and accurate.

#### Nahargarh Wildlife Sanctuary

- **About:**
  - Situated in **the Aravalli hills**, approximately **20 kilometres from Jaipur**, Rajasthan.
  - Named after **Nahargarh Fort**, an **18th-century fort built by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II**, the founder of Jaipur.
  - Covers an area of **720 hectares**.
  - Includes **Nahargarh Biological Park**, renowned for its **lion safaris**.
- **Flora:** Comprises **dry deciduous forests, scrublands, and grasslands.**
- **Fauna:**
  - **Mammals:**
    - Common species include **leopards, wild boars, deer, lions, tigers, sloth bears**, and various small mammals.
  - **Birds:**
    - A paradise for bird watchers, featuring species such as **peacocks, owls, and eagles.**
  - **Reptiles and Amphibians:**
    - Home to reptiles like **Indian rock pythons and monitor lizards.**
    - Amphibians such as **frogs and toads** are also found here.

## Rajasthan HC Issues Notice on Transgender OBC Reservation

### Why in News?

The **Rajasthan High Court** has issued a notice to the state government in response to a petition. A transwoman, challenging the **government's classification of transgender**

people as **Other Backward Classes (OBC)** for reservation in **public education and employment.**

### Key Points

- **Petitioner:** **Ganga Kumari**, the **first transwoman** to join Rajasthan police as a constable, filed the petition.
- **About the Issue:** The Rajasthan government's January 2023 circular categorises transgender people under **OBC for reservation**, which petitioner argues could lead to exclusion from both **OBC** and **transgender-related benefits.**
- **Legal Basis:** Petitioner contends that this classification violates the **Supreme Court's National Legal Services Authority Vs. Union of India (2014) judgment**, which calls for treating transgender people as a **distinct group eligible for reservations**, but not necessarily within the **OBC category.**
- **NALSA Judgment:** The **2014 Supreme Court** decision instructed governments to offer reservations to transgender people, considering them **"socially and educationally backward."**
  - However, there is ambiguity on whether this implies inclusion within **existing socio-economic categories** like **OBCs** or **horizontal reservation for transpeople.**
- **Court Interpretations:** Other states, such as **Madhya Pradesh**, have interpreted the **NALSA judgment** as placing transpeople within the **OBC category**, while states like **Karnataka, Madras, and Calcutta** have upheld **horizontal reservation.**

#### Transgender

- Transgender person means someone whose gender does not match with the gender assigned to that person at birth.
- It clarifies terms like 'person with intersex variation' and 'transgender person' to include trans men and women, regardless of surgery or therapy.

#### Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019

- **Non-discrimination:** Prohibits discrimination in **education, employment, healthcare, and public facilities**, and affirms rights to **movement, property, and office.**

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Note:

- **Certificate of Identity:** Grants the **right to self-perceived gender identity** and requires district magistrates to issue certificates without medical exams.
- **Medical Care:** Ensures **HIV surveillance**, access to **medical care, sex reassignment surgeries**, and **therapy** with insurance coverage.
- **National Council for Transgender Persons:** Established to advise the government and address grievances.
- **Offences and Penalties:** Punishes offences like forced labor, abuse, and denial of rights with imprisonment (6 months to 2 years) and fines.

## UGC Halts PhD Admissions in Three Rajasthan Universities

### Why in News?

The **University Grants Commission (UGC)** has prohibited three universities in Rajasthan from enrolling new **Ph.D. students**. This action follows investigations into **allegations of issuing fake and backdated degrees**.

### Key Points

- **Universities Affected:** The institutions barred from enrolling new Ph.D. scholars are **OPJS University, Churu, Sunrise University, Alwar and Singhania University, Jhunjhunu**.
- **Allegations:** A Standing Committee appointed by UGC has found that the three Universities did not follow the **provisions of the UGC PhD Regulations** and the **academic norms** for awarding of PhD degrees.
- **UGC's Action:** The **Standing Committee** has recommended that the **UGC** may debar these Universities from **enrolling PhD students** for the **next five years**.
- **Implications:** This incidence raises concerns about the quality and credibility of higher education institutions in Rajasthan.
  - It underscores the need for stringent oversight to maintain academic standards and protect students' interests.

### University Grants Commission (UGC)

- UGC came into existence on **28<sup>th</sup> December, 1953** and became a **statutory Organisation** of the Government of India under the **University Grants Commission Act, 1956** for the **coordination, determination** and maintenance of standards of **teaching, examination** and **research** in university education.
- The UGC operates under the **Ministry of Education**, the Central Government appoints a **Chairman, a Vice-Chairman**, and **ten other members to the UGC**.
  - The Chairman is chosen from people who are not officers of the Central Government or any State Government.
- Apart from **providing grants** to eligible universities and colleges, the Commission also advises the Central and State Governments on the measures that are necessary for the development of Higher Education.
- It functions from New Delhi as well as its six Regional offices located in Bangalore, Bhopal, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Pune.
- It also **regulates the recognition of fake universities**, autonomous colleges, deemed to be universities and distance education institutions.

## Mount Abu Records Lowest Temperature at 2.4°C

### Why in News?

**Mount Abu**, Rajasthan's only hill station, recorded a **temperature of 2.4 degrees Celsius**, marking the **state's lowest temperature**.

**Note:** The highest peak in the **Aravalli Range** is **Guru Shikhar**, located on **Mount Abu**.

### Key Points

- **Other Regions:** In the plains, **Sangaria of Hanumangarh** recorded a minimum of 5.8°C followed by 6.8°C in Lunkaransar, 7.3°C each in Sirohi and Fatehpur.
  - According to the **Indian Meteorological Department (IMD)**, Piani recorded 7.6°C followed by 7.8°C in Churu, 8.2°C each in Sikar and Sriganganagar and 8.8°C in Nagaur.

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Note:

- **Weather Conditions:** The cold conditions have affected various parts of Rajasthan, with temperatures significantly lower than usual for this time of year.
- **Impact:** The unusual cold has prompted discussions about its effects on daily life, agriculture, and **tourism** in the region.

### India Meteorological Department (IMD)

- **About:**
  - IMD was established in **1875**. It is the **National Meteorological Service** of the country and the principal government agency in all matters relating to meteorology and allied subjects.
    - It works as an agency of the **Ministry of Earth Sciences** of the **Government of India**.
  - It is headquartered in **New Delhi**.
  - IMD is also one of the **six Regional Specialized Meteorological Centres** of the **World Meteorological Organization**.
- **Roles and Responsibilities:**
  - To take meteorological observations and to provide current and forecast meteorological information for optimum operation of weather-sensitive activities like **agriculture, irrigation, shipping, aviation, offshore oil explorations**, etc.
  - To warn against severe weather phenomena like **tropical cyclones**, norwesters, **dust storms**, heavy rains and snow, cold and **heat waves**, etc., which cause destruction of life and property.
  - To provide meteorological statistics required for agriculture, water resource management, industries, oil exploration and other nation-building activities.
  - To conduct and promote research in meteorology and allied disciplines.

## Centre Extends Deadline to Procure Soybean

### Why in News?

The Union Agriculture Ministry has decided to extend the deadline for procuring **soybeans** from **Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and Telangana**.

### Key Points

- **Extension of Soybean Procurement Deadline:**
  - Total soybean procurement across all States has **reached 13.68 lakh tonnes**, compared to the target of 33.60 lakh tonnes.
  - The Ministry attributed the decrease in procurement to the State governments, stating they are responsible for making procurement arrangements.
- **Review Meeting on Agricultural Issues:**
  - The Agriculture Minister chaired a review meeting with senior officials to **discuss key agriculture-related issues**.
  - Topics included **farm produce management, marketing of agri-products, import-export dynamics, and weather conditions**.
  - He emphasized holding **periodic meetings with State Agriculture Ministers to address agricultural challenges**.

### Soyabean Crop

- Soyabean is a **Kharif crop** in India.
- Soybean (Glycine max) is the world's most important seed legumes which contributes **25% to the global edible oil**, about two third of the world protein concentrate for livestock feeding and is a **valuable ingredient in formulated feeds for poultry and fish**.
- It is predominantly grown as a rainfed crop in Vertisols and associated soils with an average crop season rainfall of 900 mm.
- **Major Producing States in India:** Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

## Western Disturbance in Rajasthan

### Why in News?

The **India Meteorological Department (IMD)** has forecasted that a **Western Disturbance** will become active over Rajasthan on **21<sup>st</sup> January, 2025**.

### Key Points

- This weather system is expected to bring light rainfall to the **north-western and north-eastern regions** of the state.

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Note:



○ Consequently, the IMD has issued a warning for these areas.

➤ **Western Disturbances:**

- Western disturbances are storms that **originate in the Caspian or Mediterranean Sea**, and bring non-monsoonal rainfall to northwest India, according to the IMD.
- They are labelled as an **extra-tropical storm** originating in the Mediterranean, is an area of low pressure that brings sudden showers, snow and fog in northwest India.

○ **The meaning of WD lies in its name.**

- The disturbance travels from the “western” to the eastern direction.
  - These travel eastwards on high-altitude **westerly jet streams** - massive ribbons of fast winds traversing the earth from west to east.
- **Disturbance means an area of “disturbed” or reduced air pressure.**
  - Equilibrium exists in nature due to which the air in a region tries to normalise its pressure.

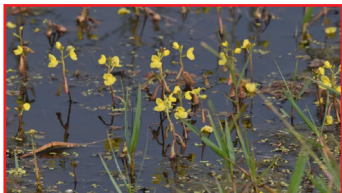


## Utricularia Found in Keoladeo National Park

### Why in News?

Recently, a rare and unique carnivorous plant, ‘Utricularia,’ has been discovered in Rajasthan’s **Keoladeo National Park**.

- Commonly known as bladderworts, this plant is typically found in regions like Meghalaya and Darjeeling.



### Key Points

➤ **Role in Biodiversity:**

- Experts believe the **presence of bladderworts in the park enhances biodiversity** and positively contributes to the ecosystem of Keoladeo.
- Utricularia **plays a vital role in maintaining environmental balance** by capturing small insects.
  - It was **last discovered in India in 2021 in the Mandal Valley of Chamoli, Uttarakhand**, after a 36-year gap.

➤ **Feeding Mechanism:**

- The plant entraps creatures such as **protozoa, insects, larvae, mosquitoes**, and tadpoles in its bladder-like traps.

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Note:

- Once trapped, the organism dies inside the bladder.
- Terrestrial species of Utricularia thrive in soil filled with water, where they capture small swimming creatures.
- **Ideal Growth Conditions:**
  - The growth of Utricularia is due to the abundant water supply from the Panchana Dam, which creates ideal conditions for the plant's growth.

### Keoladeo National Park

- **About:**
  - It is a **wetland** and bird sanctuary and a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** located in **Bharatpur, Rajasthan**.
    - **Chilika Lake (Orissa)** and Keoladeo National Park (Rajasthan) were recognized as the first **Ramsar Sites** of India in **1981**.
    - Currently, Keoladeo National Park and **Loktak Lake (Manipur)** are in the **Montreux Record**.
  - It is known for its **rich avian diversity** and abundance of **waterbirds** and is home to over **365 species of birds**, including several **rare and threatened species**, such as the **Siberian crane**.
- **Fauna:**
  - Animals such as **jackals, sambar, nilgai, wild cats, hyenas, wild boar, porcupine and mongoose** can be found in the region.
- **Flora:**
  - The principal vegetation types are tropical dry deciduous forest dominated by **Acacia nilotica** intermixed with dry grassland.
- **River:**
  - Gambhir and **Banganga** are two rivers that flow through this National Park.

## Great Indian Bustards

### Why in News?

Researchers spotted 12 **Great Indian Bustards (GIBs)** at **Desert National Park (DNP)** in Rajasthan. This provides a **major boost to efforts to conserve** one of India's most critically endangered species.

### Key Points

- **GIB Population Status:**
  - The GIB is **critically endangered**, with **only 173 birds remaining**.
  - Of these, 128 are found in the wild, and the remaining birds are bred in captivity.
  - Besides Rajasthan, the species is **also found in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka**.
- **Conservation Efforts:**
  - The GIB was listed as "**critically endangered**" by the **IUCN Red List** in 2011 due to hunting, habitat loss, and fragmentation.
  - In response, **Rajasthan launched a Rs 12.90 crore project in 2013 to conserve the species**, focusing on protecting its habitat and improving breeding conditions.
    - The project has led to the **successful breeding of 45 chicks** in two locations, Sam and Ramdevra.
- **Habitat Protection and Breeding:**
  - The birds spotted were born in the wild, mostly females aged three to four years, with some males up to one year old.
  - Efforts to protect their habitat include **improving grasslands and fencing areas to shield the birds from predators** such as **desert foxes, cats, and mongooses**.
- **Milestone in Conservation:**
  - In 2018, **the Wildlife Institute of India**, along with the Rajasthan government and the Forest Department, established **the National Conservation Breeding Centre in Jaisalmer**.
    - In **October 2024**, Rajasthan achieved a milestone when a GIB chick successfully hatched through artificial insemination.

### Great Indian Bustard



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Note:

- **About:**
  - The **Great Indian Bustard (*Ardeotis nigriceps*)**, the **State bird of Rajasthan**, is considered India's most critically endangered bird.
  - It is **considered the flagship grassland species**, representing the health of the grassland ecology.
- **Protection Status:**
  - **IUCN Red List:** Critically Endangered
  - **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES):** Appendix 1
  - **Convention on Migratory Species (CMS):** Appendix I
  - **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972:** Schedule I

### Desert National Park

- It is situated in **Jaisalmer & Barmer Districts of Rajasthan**.
- Great Indian Bustards, **Rajasthan State animal-Chinkara** and **State tree- khejri** and **State flower-Rohida** are found naturally at this park.
- It was declared a **UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1980** and **National Park in 1992**.

## Rajasthan CM Approves Land for Petrozone

### Why in News?

In a significant move to bolster the industrial landscape of Rajasthan, Chief minister Bhajan Lal Sharma has **approved the allocation of land** for the establishment of a dedicated **petrozone**.

- This strategic decision aims to attract substantial investments and foster economic growth in the region.

### Key Points

- **Approval for Land Allotment:**
  - Approvals have been granted for **land allotments to the Rajasthan State Industrial Development and Investment Corporation (RIICO)** for establishing the **Rajasthan Petrozone** and new industrial areas, to **Rajasthan Solar Park Development Company**

**Limited** for a solar energy project, and for a large-scale **Chambal River-based drinking water scheme**.

- The **proposed petrozone** is expected to house various **petrochemical industries**, creating a hub for **manufacturing and processing activities**.
- **Conducive Environment and Manufacturing:**
  - This initiative aligns with the state's vision to enhance its **industrial infrastructure** and provide a **conducive environment** for businesses to thrive.
  - The development of the petrozone is anticipated to **generate numerous employment opportunities**, contributing to the **socio-economic upliftment** of the **local population**.
  - Additionally, it will pave the way for **technological advancements** and **innovation in the petrochemical sector**.
  - This move is likely to attract **both domestic and international investors**, further boosting the state's economic prospects.
- **Hydrocarbon Sector of the State:**
  - Rajasthan has significant resource potential of hydrocarbons under **4 Petroliferous Basins**.
  - These **4 basins (Jaisalmer Basin, Barmer – Sanchore Basin, Bikaner – Nagaur Basin, Vindhyan Basin)** fall in the **14 Districts** of the State namely Barmer, Jaisalmer, Bikaner, Ganganagar, Hanumangarh, Jalore, Jodhpur, Kota, Jhalawar, Baran, Bundi, Bhilwara, Churu and Chittorgarh spread over an area of 1,50,000 sq km.
  - **Mangla Oil discovery of Barmer-Sanchore Basin** has been rated as **one of the biggest** on-land discoveries of the country in over three decades.

## Rajasthan's River-Link Project

### Why in News?

The proposed **river-linking project** in Rajasthan, which aims to address the state's growing **water scarcity**, has sparked significant debate over its potential environmental impact.

- The **canal project** is expected to **channel surplus water of the Chambal river basin** for **irrigation, drinking and industrial use** to **23 districts of Rajasthan**, benefitting **3.45 crore people**.

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Note:

### Key Points

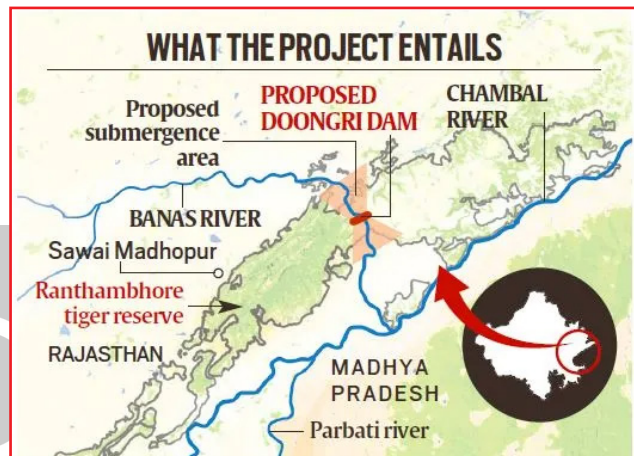
- This river linking project is mounting over the possible submergence of approximately **37 square kilometers** within the **Ranthambore Tiger Reserve**.
- The submergence will be caused by the largest dam proposed under the **Parbati-Kalisindh-Chambal-Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project (PK-ERCP)**, which is part of the ambitious **Interlinking of Rivers (ILR) program**.
  - The **PK-ERCP project** in Rajasthan involves a total submergence area of **408.86 sq km**. Of this, **227 sq km** will be submerged under the reservoir of a proposed dam across the **Banas River**, a **Chambal tributary**.
    - The dam, planned to be **39 meters high** and **1.6 km long**, will be located near **Doongri village**, about 30 km from **Sawai Madhopur**.
  - The project details show, **37.03 sq km** belong to **Ranthambore National Park (392 sq km)** and **Keladevi Wildlife Sanctuary (674 sq km)**, both part of the **Ranthambore tiger reserve (1,113 sq km)**, currently home to **57 tigers**.
    - Ranthambore is the **third tiger reserve** facing loss of land to upcoming reservoirs.
- The environmental cost of the project has become a contentious issue. Conservationists warn that

submerging parts of the **Ranthambore Tiger Reserve** could threaten the biodiversity of one of India's most celebrated wildlife sanctuaries.

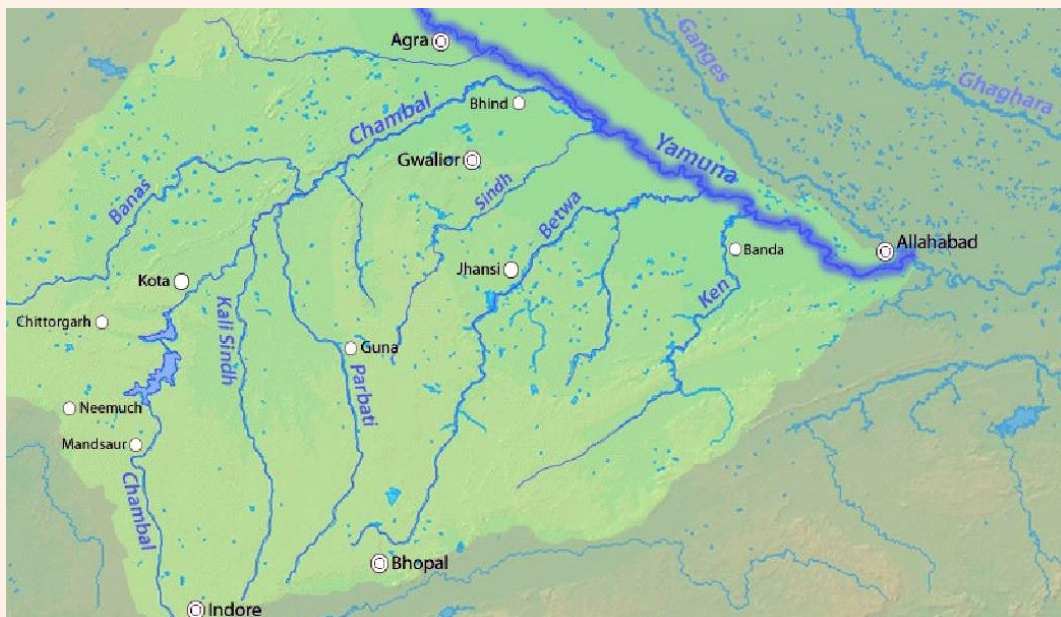
- Ranthambore, home to a stable population of **tigers** and other species, plays a crucial role in the nation's conservation efforts.

#### Note:

- **Other projects that are facing land loss include:**  
The **North Koel Reservoir Project** will submerge 10.07 sq km of **Palamu tiger reserve** in Jharkhand, the **Ken-Betwa river link project** is expected to drown **41.41 sq km** of **Panna tiger reserve** in Madhya Pradesh.



### Chambal River



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- Chambal River originates at the Singar Chouri peak in the northern slopes of the **Vindhya mountains** (Indore, Madhya Pradesh). From there, it flows in the North direction in Madhya Pradesh for a length of about **346 km** and then follows a north-easterly direction for a length of **225 km** through Rajasthan.
- It enters Uttar Pradesh and flows for about 32 km before joining the **Yamuna River** in Etawah District.
- It is a rainfed river and its basin is bounded by the **Vindhyan mountain ranges** and the **Aravallis**. The Chambal and its tributaries drain the Malwa region of northwestern Madhya Pradesh.
- The **Hadauti plateau** in Rajasthan occurs in the upper catchment of the Chambal River to the southeast of the **Mewar Plains**.
- **Tributaries:** Banas, Kali Sindh, **Sipra**, **Parbati**, etc.
- **Main Power Projects/ Dam:** **Gandhi Sagar Dam**, **Rana Pratap Sagar Dam**, Jawahar Sagar Dam, and Kota Barrage.
- The **National Chambal Sanctuary** is located along river Chambal on the tri-junction of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.
  - It is known for critically endangered **gharial**, the **red-crowned roof turtle**, and the endangered **Ganges river dolphin**.

## Chintan Shivir

### Why in News?

**The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD)** is organizing a Chintan Shivir from 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2025, in Udaipur, Rajasthan. This three-day event will discuss **challenges hindering the development and welfare of women and children** across the nation and devise optimal solutions.

### Key Points

- **Focused Sessions:**
  - **Mission Vatsalya:** Enhancing **child welfare through improved childcare institutions**, foster care, adoption, and aftercare.
  - **Mission Shakti:** Addressing women's safety, child marriage, and empowering women through technology, including **the SHe-Box portal**.
  - **Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0:** Strengthening Anganwadi Centres as hubs for nutrition, education, health, and awareness services.
- **Open Discussions and Collaborative Problem-Solving:**
  - The Shivir will facilitate dialogue with State/UT representatives to address challenges and share innovative solutions.

- Key topics include improving **Anganwadi Centres**, intensifying child welfare programs, and leveraging technology for women's empowerment.

### SHe-Box portal

- It was **launched in 2024 by the Ministry of Women and Child Development** to enhance the implementation of **the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013**.
  - The portal is designed to mask the details of the **complainant, ensuring confidentiality, with only the Chairperson of the Internal Committee (IC) or Local Committee (LC)** having access to this information.
- Complaints can be filed by the aggrieved woman or a **representative on her behalf**. The process requires basic details such as **work status, name, phone number, and email**.
  - If the workplace's IC or LC is registered on the portal, complaints are automatically forwarded for action.
- The portal includes a **monitoring dashboard for nodal officers** at various administrative levels to track the number of complaints filed, resolved, and pending.
  - Time prescribed under the Act for inquiry is **90 days**.

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## Water Storage Caution by Bhakra Beas Management Board

### Why in News?

Recently, [the Bhakra Beas Management Board \(BBMB\)](#) advised its member states to project their water demands cautiously, citing **low water storage levels** and forecasts of below-normal rainfall.

- [The India Meteorological Department \(IMD\)](#) predicts that North India will receive 86% below the long-period average **rainfall** from January to March 2025.

### Key Points

- **Bhakra and Pong Dam Levels:**
  - **Bhakra Dam** on [the Sutlej](#) is at 43% of its total capacity.
  - **Pong Dam** on [the Beas](#) is at 30% of its total capacity.
  - According to [the Central Water Commission \(CWC\)](#), both levels are below the 10-year average.
- **Advisory to Member States:**
  - The **Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB)** informed **Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, and Rajasthan** about the low water availability.
  - BBMB advised these states to adjust their water demands accordingly to address the situation.

### Bhakra Nangal Dam



- Bhakra Dam is a **concrete gravity dam** across the **Sutlej River** and is near the border between **Punjab and Himachal Pradesh** in northern India.

- It is India's second tallest at 225.55 m high next to the 261m Tehri Dam.
- Its reservoir, known as the "Gobind Sagar", stores up to 9.34 billion cubic meters of water.
- **Nangal dam is another dam** downstream of Bhakra dam. Sometimes both the dams together are called Bhakra-Nangal dam though they are two separate dams.

### Pong Dam



- In 1975, Pong dam was built across the **Beas River**. It is also called the Pong reservoir or the **Maharana Pratap Sagar**.
- In 1983, the entire reservoir was declared as a **Wildlife Sanctuary** by the Himachal Pradesh government.
- In 1994, the Government of India declared it a "Wetland of National Importance". Pong Dam Lake was declared as **Ramsar Site** in November 2002.

## PM offering to Ajmer Sharif Dargah

### Why in News?

Recently, the Prime Minister presented a 'chadar' to Minorities Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju to offer at the **Ajmer Sharif Dargah** of [Sufi Saint Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti](#) on the occasion of 'Urs'.

- The Urs festival is an **annual festival** held at Ajmer in Rajasthan which commemorates the death anniversary of Sufi saint Moinuddin Chishti.

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### Key Points

- **Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti:**
  - Moinuddin Hasan Chishti was **born in Sijistan (modern-day Sistan) in Iran** in 1141-42 CE.
  - After Muizuddin Muhammad bin Sam of Ghor had already defeated **Prithviraj Chauhan** in the **Second Battle of Tarain (1192)** and established his rule in Delhi, **Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti started living and preaching in Ajmer.**
  - His instructive discourses, full of spiritual insights, soon drew the local populace as well as kings and nobles and peasants and the poor from far and wide.
  - **His shrine in Ajmer** has been visited by rulers like **Muhammad bin Tughlaq, Sher Shah Suri, Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan, Dara Shukoh and Aurangzeb.**
- **Chishti Order (Chishtiya):**
  - Chishtiya Order was **founded in India by Khwaja Moin-Uddin Chishti.**
  - It emphasised the **doctrine of the unity of being with God** (waḥdat al-wujūd) and members of the order were also pacifists.
  - They **rejected all material goods** as distractions from the contemplation of God.
  - They abstained from connection with the **secular state.**
  - **Recitation of the names of God, both aloud and silently (dhikr jahrī, dhikr khafī),** formed the cornerstone of Chishtī practice.

- The Chishti teachings were carried forward and popularized by **disciples** of Khwaja Moin-Uddin Chishti like **Khwaja Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki, Fareduddin Ganj-e-Shakar, Nizam uddin Auliya and Naseeruddin Charagh.**

### Sufism

- Sufism is a **mystical form of Islam**, a school of practice that focuses on the spiritual search for God and shuns materialism.
- It is a form of Islamic mysticism which **stresses on asceticism.** There is a lot of emphasis on devotion towards God.
- In Sufism, **self discipline** is considered an essential condition to gain knowledge of God by sense of perception.
- Unlike orthodox Muslims which emphasise on external conduct, the Sufis **lay stress on inner purity.**
- Sufis believe **service to humanity** is tantamount to service to God.

## Rajasthan to Promote Indigenous Trees

### Why in News?

**Agricultural centres of excellence in Rajasthan** will study **Tamil Nadu's nursery model to promote planting indigenous trees** suited to the State's climate.

- These centres **actively train farmers in modern farming practices** and advanced horticulture production techniques.

### Key Points

- **Tamil Nadu's Nursery Model:**
  - Tamil Nadu's nursery model, part of the **Green Tamil Nadu Mission**, promotes **planting native trees and saplings.**
    - The initiative enables individuals to **purchase high-quality seedlings** from nearby nurseries via an online platform.
  - The model supports environmental sustainability and enhances afforestation efforts across the State.

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Note:

- **Visit by Agriculture & Horticulture Secretary:**
  - Agriculture & Horticulture Secretary visited **the Rajasthan State Seed Corporation's field centre, olive cultivation centre, and pomegranate excellence centre at Dhindhol**, Jaipur district.
  - He highlighted that the centres of excellence have increased farmers' income and are operating at high capacity.
- **Recommendations:**
  - The need for the centres to initiate **rainwater harvesting for crop irrigation** was emphasized.
  - The training module for farmers was reviewed, focusing on **water conservation techniques like micro-irrigation and mulching**.
- **Modern Infrastructure at Dhindhol:**
  - The centre of excellence at Dhindhol includes modern vegetative propagation structures such as **greenhouses, shade houses, nursery blocks, mother tree blocks, and automation units**.
  - The centre engages in intensive gardening, grading, and packing for farmers, along with agricultural technology transfer.
  - The activities assist horticulturists in **water management, fertigation**, and technical upgrades in cultivation.

### The Green Tamil Nadu Mission

- It aims to **increase the state's forest and tree cover**. The mission's objectives include:
  - **Tree planting:**
    - The mission has **raised and handed over 73 lakh seedlings** to the Department of Agriculture. The mission has also proposed to **plant over 47 lakh saplings across Tamil Nadu**.
  - **Nurseries:**
    - The mission has **established 260 nurseries in 43 forest divisions** across the state. The mission also has a **mobile app to collect daily nursery activity updates**.
  - **Green committees:**
    - The mission has **established State Green Committees and District Green Committees** to protect and manage trees.
  - **E-nursery portal:**
    - The mission **launched an e-nursery portal** to provide free native tree saplings in Chennai. The mission plans to expand this service to other cities in the future.

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