



Green Mahakumbh | Uttar Pradesh | 09 Jan 2025

Why in News?

On 31st January 2025, Prayagraj is going to host Green **Mahakumbh**, uniting over 1,000 **environmental and [water conservation](#) workers** from across the country.

- **Shiksha Sanskriti Utthan Nyas** has organized this unique event as part of the **Gyan [Mahakumbh](#)**, with **Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister acting as its chief patron**.

Key Points

- **National-Level Discussion on Environment:**
 - The discussion will **address issues related to nature, the environment, water, and cleanliness**.
 - Experts will share insights on **balancing the five elements of nature and tackling associated challenges**.
 - The event will **explore methods to raise awareness among Mahakumbh visitors** about environmental protection and cleanliness campaigns.
 - Government agencies, public representatives, and local citizens are working together to ensure the success of **[the Clean Mahakumbh initiative](#)**.
- **Swachhata Rath Yatra:**
 - **[The Swachhata Rath Yatra](#)** was also launched in Prayagraj to **promote cleanliness and raise public awareness**, attracting significant community participation.
 - **Objectives:**
 - It aims to **present Prayagraj as a symbol of cleanliness** for Mahakumbh devotees and tourists.
 - By maintaining a pristine environment along the Mahakumbh Nagar route, the **initiative ensures a welcoming atmosphere** for millions of expected visitors.
- **Awareness Campaign Through Performances:**
 - Street play artists carrying color-coded dustbins **demonstrated [proper waste segregation for wet and dry waste](#)**.
 - **A cleanliness-themed music band** performed alongside the chariot, reinforcing the message of maintaining a clean city.
 - **Safai Mitras (sanitation workers) and Municipal Corporation staff** played a vital role in promoting and implementing cleanliness measures.

Maha Kumbh

- Kumbh Mela comes under **[United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization \(UNESCO\)'s Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity](#)**.
- It is the largest peaceful congregation of pilgrims on earth, during which participants bathe or take a dip in a sacred river.
- It takes place on the banks of the **[Godavari river](#) in Nashik**, the **[Shipra river](#) in Ujjain**, the **Ganges in Haridwar**, and the confluence of the **Ganges, Yamuna, and the mythical [Saraswati river](#)** in Prayagraj. The confluence is referred to as the '**Sangam**'.

Caste Atrocity Complaint in UP | Uttar Pradesh | 09 Jan 2025

Why in News?

Recently, the [National Commission for Scheduled Castes \(NCSC\)](#) has acknowledged an atrocity complaint filed against a member of [Uttar Pradesh's Transgender Welfare Board](#).

- The movement for **horizontal reservation for transgender individuals in government jobs and education** is gaining momentum in northern India, inspired by activists in southern States.

Key Points

- **Horizontal and Vertical Reservations:**
 - **Vertical Reservations** create a **separate quota category under which all transgender individuals qualify**, regardless of their socio-economic background.
 - **Horizontal Reservations** allocate a **percentage of seats for transgender individuals within each socio-economic category**, addressing the layered discrimination faced by marginalized caste trans people.
 - Trans activists nationwide **advocate for horizontal reservations**, highlighting vertical quotas' failure to address caste-based discrimination within the transgender community.
- **NCSC Action on Complaint:**
 - NCSC issued notices to the Saharanpur district administration and police, based on a **complaint by a Dalit trans woman activist**.
 - She alleged that a **member of Uttar Pradesh's Transgender Welfare Board, harassed activists supporting horizontal reservations**.
 - She submitted a recording where the **member allegedly used casteist and transphobic slurs**, including deliberate misgendering.
 - The **member denied the allegations**, claiming the voice in the recording was not hers and questioning the legality of recording calls.
 - She accused the complainant of **misusing constitutional provisions** and plans to file complaints with the [National Human Rights Commission \(NHRC\)](#) and NCSC.
- **Debate on Reservation Policy:**
 - The 2014 Supreme Court judgment directed reservations for transgender individuals as "[Socially and educationally backward classes \(SEBC\)](#)," sparking differing interpretations.
 - In Madhya Pradesh, transgender individuals were added to the State OBC list in April 2023.
 - **High Courts**, including Karnataka, Madras, and Calcutta, have ruled in **favor of horizontal reservations**.
- **Diverging Opinions on Reservation:**
 - **One perspective supports vertical reservations**, asserting that discrimination against transgender individuals stems from gender, not caste.
 - It **challenges the idea that transgender individuals retain their caste identity after transitioning**, referencing the 2014 Supreme Court judgment.
 - The opposing view critiques this interpretation as overlooking the caste diversity within the transgender community, emphasizing that horizontal reservations address the layered discrimination faced by **marginalized caste transgender individuals**.
- **Broader Implications:**
 - The Supreme Court refused to clarify **the ambiguity in the 2014 judgment in March 2023**.
 - The debate underscores the need for nuanced policies to ensure equitable representation for transgender individuals across socio-economic categories.

National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSCs)

▪ About:

- The NCSC is a **Constitutional Body** established with a view to provide **safeguards against the exploitation of Scheduled Castes** and to promote and protect their social, educational, economic and cultural interests.

▪ Composition:

- The NCSC comprises a **Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, and three additional Members.**
- These positions are **filled through the President's appointment**, indicated by a warrant under his hand and seal.
- Their conditions of service and tenure of office are also determined by the President.

Sambhal Mosque Case | Uttar Pradesh | 09 Jan 2025

Why in News?

Recently, the Allahabad **High Court** sought **responses from the Central and State governments, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**, and local authorities regarding a plea filed by the **Shahi Jama Masjid committee in Sambhal**, challenging a trial court's order.

Key Points

▪ Supreme Court's Stay:

- The trial court had directed an Advocate Commissioner to **survey the Shahi Jama Masjid** while handling a suit claiming the mosque was built by destroying a temple.
- In November 2024, **the Supreme Court** stayed the trial court's proceedings and **instructed that the matter should not be heard until the petition against the survey order is addressed in the Allahabad High Court.**
- The Supreme Court also ordered that **no new suits seeking surveys of any place of worship should be entertained until further notice.**

▪ Survey and Clashes:

- In 2024, the local court ordered a **survey of the Mughal-era mosque** following a petition claiming the **mosque was built in 1526** after demolishing a temple dedicated to Kalki, Lord Vishnu's last incarnation.
- The eight plaintiffs in the suit demanded the right to access the mosque.
- **Violence erupted in Sambhal on 24th November 2024 after clashes between police and protesters** against the survey, resulting in five deaths and multiple injuries.

Historical Context of the Jama Masjid

- The Jama Masjid in Sambhal is one of three mosques **constructed during Babur's reign (1526-1530)**. The others include the mosque at Panipat and the now-demolished Babri Masjid.
 - **Historian Howard Crane** described the mosque's architectural features in his work, **The Patronage of Babur and the Origins of Mughal Architecture.**
 - Crane noted a **Persian inscription stating that Babur ordered the mosque's construction in December 1526** through his subedar, **Jahangir Quli Khan.**

Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)

- ASI, under **the Ministry of Culture**, is the premier organisation for the archaeological research and protection of the cultural heritage of the nation.
 - **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958** governs the functioning of ASI.
 - It administers more than 3650 ancient monuments, archaeological sites and remains of national importance.
 - Its activities include carrying out surveys of antiquarian remains, exploration and excavation of archaeological sites, conservation and maintenance of protected monuments etc.
 - It was **founded in 1861 by Alexander Cunningham- the first Director-General of ASI**. Alexander Cunningham is also known as the “Father of Indian Archaeology”.
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Technology to Combat Cyber Threats Across Border | Jammu & Kashmir | 09 Jan 2025

Why in News?

Recently, **Lieutenant Governor (LG) of Jammu and Kashmir** urged police officials to **adopt innovative tools** to strengthen their capabilities in **addressing cross-border cyber threats**.

Key Points

- **Addressing Disinformation and Modern Security Challenges:**
 - Speaking at the passing-out parade of **Probationer Deputy Superintendents of Police (DSPs)** at the **Police Academy in Udhampur**, the Lieutenant Governor stressed the **need to counter disinformation campaigns originating from across the border**, facilitated by advanced technology.
 - Highlighting the impact of modern tools like **artificial intelligence**, he noted that **deep fakes and disinformation are significant threats** to security.
 - He urged officers to **adopt technological tools for maintaining law and order**, staying vigilant, and responding swiftly.
 - He also emphasized the **importance of anticipating and analyzing changes in criminal behavior** to stay ahead.
- **Enhancing Coordination and Tackling Emerging Threats:**
 - The LG reaffirmed the **commitment to a terror-free and fear-free Jammu and Kashmir**, highlighting improved coordination between police and security agencies to **dismantle terrorist and separatist networks**.
 - He identified **narco-terrorism, weaponization of social media, and disinformation campaigns as major internal security threats**, urging officers to lead **efforts against drug trafficking, cybercrime, and radicalization** using innovative ideas and tools.
- **Strengthening Investigation and Prosecution:**
 - The L-G emphasized the need for robust **investigation and prosecution to ensure every crime reaches its logical conclusion**.
 - He urged the police force to focus on **neutralizing terrorists** and eliminating divisive elements threatening societal harmony.

Lieutenant Governor (LG)

- **About:**
 - The LG is the administrator of the Union Territory, appointed **under Article 239** of

the **Constitution of India (COI)**.

- Under **Article 239AA (4) COI**, the Lieutenant Governor is required to act on the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers, except in matters where he is required by law to act at his discretion.
- The Lieutenant Governor's powers and functions are derived from the Constitution, particularly Article 239AA of COI.
- The office of the Lieutenant Governor represents the Union government in the administration.

▪ **Seats of Lieutenant Governors in India:**

- Andaman and Nicobar Island
- Chandigarh
- Ladakh
- Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu
- Puducherry
- Lakshadweep
- Jammu and Kashmir
- Delhi

Governor	Lieutenant Governor
Governors are appointed for states	Lieutenant Governors are appointed for Union Territories.
Governors have authority over states with more autonomy	Lieutenant Governors oversee Union Territories under more central control.
Governors generally have more ceremonial roles	Lieutenant Governors, especially in Delhi, play a more active administrative role.
Governors act mostly on state cabinet advice	Lieutenant Governors have more extensive discretionary powers.
Governors' roles are defined under Articles 153 to Article 162 of the COI.	Lieutenant Governors roles under Articles 239 to Article 239AA of the COI.

Special HMPV ICU Ward Set Up in Jammu | Jammu & Kashmir | 09 Jan 2025

Why in News?

Recently, the **Jammu and Kashmir health department** has established a **specialized ICU ward** in Jammu to address concerns about a potential outbreak of **Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV) cases** detected in the country.

Key Points

▪ **Preparedness for Potential Outbreak:**

- The ward is centrally heated, equipped with eight ventilator-supported beds, and provides a 24x7 oxygen supply.
- Doctors have reassured the public that **HMPV is not a new pathogen** and is **not causing a widespread outbreak**.
- Describing it as a **mild upper respiratory disease**, Doctors highlighted that only six cases have been detected in the country so far, and there is no cause for panic.

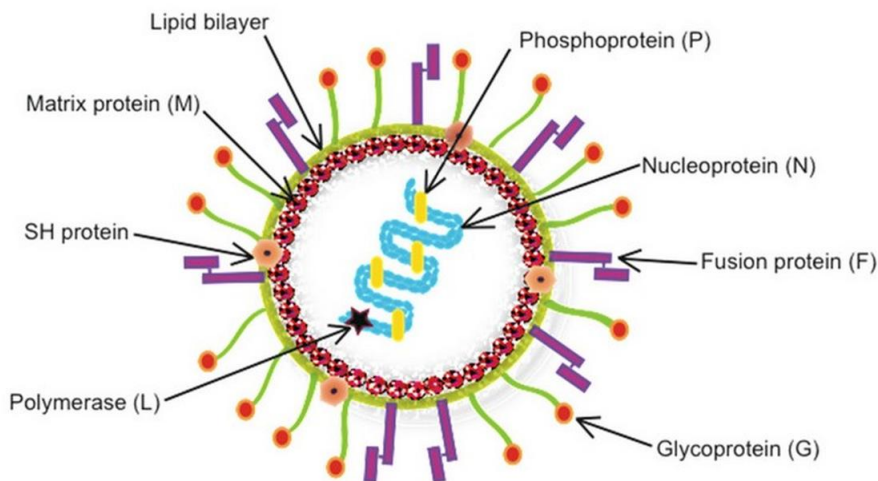
▪ **Enhanced Readiness Measures:**

- The administration has held meetings to review the situation and ensure sufficient facilities are in place.

- The Gandhinagar government hospital's **fully operational oxygen plant**, with a **capacity of 22,000 liters per minute**, supports preparedness.
 - In addition to the ICU ward, the hospital offers 100 oxygen-supported beds, sufficient concentrators, and various types of oxygen cylinders.

Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV)

- **Discovery:** It was **discovered in 2001** by researchers in **the Netherlands**. It causes acute respiratory infections, similar to **flu and Covid-19**.
- **Presence:** It is not limited to **China** and is found **all over the world**. It is clubbed as a **common respiratory pathogen**. It does **not have a vaccine**.
- **Symptoms:** **Cough, fever, sore throat, runny nose, and wheezing**, which typically resolve within **2-5 days**.
- **Vulnerable Groups:** **Children, the elderly, and those with weakened immune systems** are most at risk of complications like **pneumonia**.
- **Transmission:** HMPV spreads through **close contact** or by **touching contaminated surfaces**.
- **Seasonality:** It commonly circulates during **winter and spring**, along with other respiratory infections like **Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)** and **influenza**.
 - HMPV belongs to the **Pneumoviridae family**, which includes **RSV, measles, and mumps viruses**.
- **Severity:** While most HMPV cases are mild, a **small percentage (5-16%)** may develop into severe conditions like **bronchiolitis or pneumonia**.



Rise in Sex Ratio at Birth in Haryana | Haryana | 09 Jan 2025

Why in News?

According to officials, **Haryana has improved its sex ratio from 871 in 2014 to 910 in 2024**, marking a 39-point rise. This progress underscores Haryana's dedication and the success of the **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) initiative**.

Key Points

- **Combating Female Foeticide:**
 - Haryana has intensified its campaign against [female foeticide](#) and strengthened enforcement of [the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques \(PCPNDT\) Act 1994](#).
 - Since 2014, the state has filed 1,217 [First Information Report \(FIR\)](#) under the Act, including **397 through interstate raids**.
 - These actions have led to over 4,000 arrests, targeting doctors, quacks, and touts involved in **illegal sex determination** and female foeticide.
- **Focus on Maternal Healthcare and Education:**
 - Haryana has made significant strides in **maternal healthcare**, with institutional deliveries increasing from 35.7% in 2005-06 to 94.9% in recent years.
 - Secondary education enrollment has risen from 3,85,624 in 2015-16 to 4,00,736 in 2023-24.
- **Promoting Gender Equality and Support for Families:**
 - Over 5,23,056 families have benefited from a one-time payment of Rs 21,000 for the birth of a girl child.
 - The [Poshan Abhiyan](#), launched in 2018, has **targeted anaemia and improved nutrition**, benefiting 2,24,136 participants through [Anganwadi centres](#).
- **Empowering Adolescent Girls and Financial Support Initiatives:**
 - [The Adolescent Girls Scheme](#) in Mewat has supported 13,439 girls aged 14-18 in 2024-25 with self-development, skill-building, and health services.
 - [The Sukanya Samridhi Scheme](#) has facilitated the opening of 8,23,522 savings accounts for daughters under 10 years old.
 - Financial support has been provided to survivors of the [POCSO Act](#), with Rs 1.31 crore disbursed across 778 cases by October 2024.
- **Promoting Gender Awareness Through Media:**
 - In 2024, Haryana launched the “Mahri Lado” radio programme on [All India Radio](#) to reshape societal attitudes towards girls.
 - The programme, covering health, nutrition, financial independence, and leadership, has engaged over 1,60,000 participants.

Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act, 1994

- The PCPNDT Act, 1994 is an Act of the Parliament of India that was enacted to **stop female foeticides and arrest the declining sex ratio in India**. The act banned **prenatal sex determination**.
- The main objective of enacting the act is to **ban the use of sex selection techniques before or after conception** and prevent the **misuse of prenatal diagnostic techniques for sex-selective abortion**.

Poshan Abhiyan

- **POSHAN Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission)** was launched by the government on **8th March, 2018**.
- The Abhiyaan targets to **reduce stunting, undernutrition, anemia (among young children, women and adolescent girls)** and reduce low birth weight by 2%, 2%, 3% and 2% per annum respectively.

Sukanya Samridhi Account Scheme

- It aims to **promote the welfare of girl children in India**.
- Parents or legal guardians can open deposits for **up to two daughters aged below 10**, and **in the case of twin girls or three girl children**, the scheme allows three accounts to be opened.
- **Minimum initial deposit is Rs 250 and Maximum annual ceiling is Rs 150,000**.
- Deposits can be made for a maximum of 15 years. The account matures on completion of **21 years from the date of opening or on the marriage of the account holder**, whichever is earlier.

