



WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Coverage of

17 Oct. - 23 Oct., 2025

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**UPSC ESE, PSUs,
RRB, SSC, Banking &
State Services Exams**



SANAE TAKAICHI

The first woman Prime Minister of Japan

17th OCTOBER 2025

Sri Lankan PM's State Visit to India

- **Context:** Recently, the Sri Lankan Prime Minister was on a state visit to India.

India and Sri Lanka Relations

- **Diplomatic Ties:** Diplomatic relations established in 1948 after Sri Lanka's independence.
- **Trade Relations:** India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (ISFTA) in 2000 contributed significantly towards the expansion of trade between the two countries.
 - India has traditionally been among Sri Lanka's largest trade partners and Sri Lanka remains among the largest trade partners of India in the SAARC.
 - India is also one of the largest contributors to Foreign Direct Investment in Sri Lanka.
- **Cultural relations:** The Cultural Cooperation Agreement signed in 1977 forms the basis for periodic Cultural Exchange Programmes between the two countries.
- **Tourism:** India has traditionally been Sri Lanka's top inbound tourism market, followed by China. As per latest data from the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, India is the largest source for tourists in 2023.
- **Maritime Security and Defence Cooperation:** In 2011, a decision was taken to establish the Colombo Security Conclave which aims to further promote maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region. India and Sri Lanka conduct a joint Military exercise named 'Mitra Shakti', Trilateral Maritime Exercise "Dosti", and a Naval exercise named SLINEX.
- **Connectivity Projects:** Recently, the two sides adopted a vision document to enhance maritime, energy and people to people connectivity. There are plans to develop a land bridge between the two countries to provide India with land access

to the ports of Trincomalee and Colombo to boost economic growth.

- **Multilateral Forum Collaboration:** India and Sri Lanka are member nations of several regional and multilateral organizations such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, South Asian Economic Union and BIMSTEC, working to enhance cultural and commercial ties.

Motion 042

- **Context:** The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has adopted Motion 042.

About Motion 042

- It was passed at the IUCN World Conservation Congress.
- It calls for a global phase-out of coal, oil, and gas, a halt to new extraction projects, and a just transition for affected workers and communities.
- It is backed by civil society, Indigenous groups, and organisations like WWF and BirdLife International.
- It urges the exploration of international mechanisms such as a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.
- IUCN became the first multilateral body to explicitly recognise fossil fuel production as a threat to nature.
- It signals a unified call ahead of COP30 to integrate climate and biodiversity goals by confronting fossil fuels as a root cause of environmental degradation. Indigenous leaders and environmentalists hailed the move as long-overdue recognition of their realities, positioning the IUCN's stance as a turning point for global conservation and climate justice.

UN-GGIM Asia-Pacific Committee

- **Context:** India has been elected as Co-Chair of the Regional Committee of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific (UN-GGIM-AP) for a three-year term till 2028.

About UN-GGIM-AP

- It is a representative body of the National Geospatial Information Authorities of 56 countries and economies in Asia and the Pacific region. It was established in 1995 and rebranded in 2012.
- It is one of the five regional committees of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM).
- It aims to promote the use of geospatial information for identifying problems and finding solutions, so that the economic, social and environmental benefits of geospatial information will be maximized in Asia and the Pacific region.

18th OCTOBER 2025

Commonwealth Games, 2030

- **Context:** Ahmedabad has been recommended as the “proposed host” by the executive board of Commonwealth Sport for Commonwealth Games, 2030.

About Commonwealth Games

- Started in 1930 (inaugural event in Hamilton, Canada) as the British Empire Games, the present-day Commonwealth Games is a multi-sport international event, modeled on the Olympics, involving athletes from the Commonwealth of Nations and their associated territories.
- The Commonwealth of Nations, or simply the Commonwealth, is a voluntary association of 54 sovereign countries, most of which were former colonies of the British Empire.
- The membership has evolved over time due to political changes and voluntary withdrawals or additions.
- Today, the Commonwealth Games is the world's second-largest multi-sport event and the fourth most-watched global broadcast sports event, featuring athletes from 71 nations and territories.
- India last hosted the CWG in Delhi in 2010.

PUNCH Space Mission

- **Context:** The PUNCH Space Mission, launched by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has observed the solar winds.

About PUNCH Mission

- PUNCH stands for Polarimeter to Unify the Corona and Heliosphere.
- **Aim:** To study the Sun's corona (outer atmosphere) and the solar wind as a unified system.
- **Features:**
 - PUNCH consists of four small satellites in low Earth orbit.
 - It will make 3D global observations of the inner heliosphere to understand how the Sun's corona becomes the solar wind.
 - The satellites will map the transition zone where the Sun's corona turns into solar wind.
- **Key Achievement:** The mission is “making the invisible visible” by imaging the solar wind, which is normally hard to detect.
- **Scientific Significance:** Understanding and forecasting space weather is critical because solar events like solar wind and coronal mass ejections (CMEs) can affect Earth and other parts of the solar system.

About Solar Wind and the Corona

- The corona is the Sun's outermost atmosphere, extremely hot and tenuous.
- Solar wind is a continuous flow of charged particles released from the corona, spreading throughout the solar system.
- Both the corona and solar wind influence space weather, which can impact satellites, communication systems, power grids, and astronauts.

Cape Verde

- **Context:** Cape Verde made history by becoming the second-smallest country (after Iceland in 2018) to qualify for the FIFA World Cup.

About Cape Verde

- It is an archipelago of 10 islands in the Atlantic Ocean.
- It is an island nation located about 620 km off the west coast of Africa, named after the nearby Cape Verde in Senegal.
- It has a service-driven economy focused on trade, transport, tourism, and remittances, transitioning toward a market economy since the mid-1990s.
- Culturally, it blends Portuguese and African influences, evident in its arts and music. Mindelo, on São Vicente, hosts the largest port with a historic deepwater harbor.

19th OCTOBER 2025

State of Finance for Forests (SFF) Report

- **Context:** The first State of Finance for Forests (SFF) report was recently released by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

About State of Finance for Forests (SFF)

- It provides a global overview of public and private forest finance in 2023, comparing current flows with the investments needed to realize forests' potential to address climate change, biodiversity loss, and land degradation.
- It integrates key private finance channels and nature-related asset classes such as certified commodity supply chains, impact investing, carbon and biodiversity markets, philanthropic funding, and private capital mobilized through public finance

Key Findings

- It highlights a critical underinvestment in forests, which are essential for combating climate change, biodiversity loss, and land degradation.
- In 2023, global forest finance stood at US\$84 billion, far below the US\$300 billion needed annually by 2030 and US\$498 billion by 2050, leaving a US\$216 billion yearly gap.

- Private forest finance was just US\$7.5 billion, mostly targeting low-risk markets rather than tropical commodities linked to deforestation.
- Meanwhile, environmentally harmful subsidies totaled US\$406 billion, and private institutions had US\$8.9 trillion in active financing tied to high deforestation-risk companies, underscoring the urgent need to redirect capital toward sustainable forest investments.

We Rise Initiative

- **Context:** 'We Rise (Women Entrepreneurs Reimagining Inclusive and Sustainable Enterprises) initiative was launched recently.

Key Highlights

- The 'We Rise' initiative has been launched to empower women entrepreneurs to expand globally through trade facilitation, mentorship, and strategic partnerships.
- It is a joint programme by NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) under its Award to Reward (ATR) initiative and DP World, aligning with the government's focus on women-led development.

About Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP)

- WEP incubated in NITI Aayog in 2018 as an aggregator platform, transitioned into a public-private partnership in 2022. It serves as a national aggregator to strengthen India's women entrepreneurship ecosystem and make women-led development a reality.
- With over 47 partners from the public and private sectors, WEP functions as an enabler, addressing six key ecosystem needs — access to finance, market linkages, training and skilling, mentoring and networking, compliance and legal assistance, and business development services.

About Award to Reward (ATR) initiative

- It was launched in 2023 to institutionalize WEP's partnership framework by bringing together ecosystem stakeholders to address specific needs of women entrepreneurs while celebrating their success stories.
- It serves as a plug-and-play model fostering scalable collaborations and measurable impact.

20th OCTOBER 2025

Net Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

- **Context:** Net Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into India fell 159% in August 2025, this is the second time this financial year that outflows have exceeded inflows.

Key Highlights

- Gross investments into India stood at \$6,049 million in August 2025, 30.6% lower than their level in August last year.
- Net FDI in the April-August 2025 period was \$10,128 million, more than 121% higher than in the same period of last year.

About Net Foreign Direct Investment

- Net FDI is gross FDI, which is the total money coming in, minus the money being repatriated out by foreign companies doing business in India and the outward FDI by Indian companies.
- $\text{Net FDI} = \text{Gross FDI Inflows} - (\text{Repatriation by foreign firms} + \text{Outward FDI by Indian firms})$.
- **Key Components:**
 - **Gross FDI Inflows:** Total new investments made by foreign entities into the country. It includes setting up factories, acquiring local companies, or expanding operations.
 - **Repatriation & Disinvestment:** Profits or capital that foreign companies send back to their home countries. Includes sale of assets or shares in domestic firms.

- **Outward FDI:** Investments made by domestic companies in foreign countries (e.g., acquisitions, setting up subsidiaries).
- **Positive Net FDI:** Indicates more foreign investment is coming in than going out, often seen as a sign of economic attractiveness.
- **Low or Negative Net FDI:** May suggest capital is being withdrawn or domestic firms are investing more abroad than foreigners are investing locally.

India's Kabul Mission

- **Context:** India has upgraded its Technical Mission in Kabul to a full-fledged Embassy with immediate effect, following the recent visit of the Taliban administration's acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi to India.

Key Facts

- India had shut its embassy in Kabul and withdrew the existing staff in August 2021 when law and order had broken down as the Taliban overthrew the government of President Ashraf Ghani.
- The Indian consulates in Mazaar-i-Sharif, Jalalabad, Kandahar and Herat had also been closed as the conflict intensified in early 2021.
- India had sent a technical team to Kabul to run the mission on June 23, 2022 which was meant to facilitate humanitarian assistance and provide consular assistance.
- Multiple major powers such as Iran, China, Russia, Gulf countries and Central Asian republics have engaged the Taliban but Russia alone has granted recognition to the Taliban as the de jure ruler of Afghanistan.

Latest Developments

- The upgraded Embassy will enhance India's support for Afghanistan's development, humanitarian aid, and capacity-building efforts in line with the Afghan people's priorities.
- A chargé d'affaires will be appointed to head the embassy until a formal ambassador is named.

21st OCTOBER 2025

Sanae Takaichi: The first woman Prime Minister of Japan

- **Context:** Sanae Takaichi has been appointed as the first woman Prime Minister of Japan.

India-Japan Relations

- **Establishment of Relations:** After WWII, India opted for a separate Peace Treaty with Japan, signed in 1952, marking the start of formal diplomatic relations.
- **Growth in Bilateral Ties:** India-Japan bilateral relations were elevated to Global Partnership in 2000, Strategic and Global Partnership in 2006, and Special Strategic and Global Partnership in 2014.
- **Strategic Synergy:** India's Act East Policy and Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) align closely with Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) policy.
- **Collaboration on Global Initiatives:** Japan and India cooperate in initiatives like the International Solar Alliance (ISA), Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), and Leadership Group for Industry Transition (LeadIT).
- **Defence and Security:** Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation (2008), Defence Cooperation and Exchanges MoU (2014), Information Protection Agreement (2015), Reciprocal Provision of Supplies and Services Agreement (2020), and co-development of the UNICORN naval mast (2024).
 - **Exercises:** Malabar (with the US and Australia), Milan (multilateral naval), JIMEX (bilateral maritime), Dharma Guardian (Army), and Coast Guard cooperation are held regularly.
 - **2024-25** saw the participation of service chiefs in India and Japan, strengthening interoperability.
- **Bilateral Trade:** Bilateral trade reached \$22.8 billion in 2023-24. Imports from Japan continue to outweigh exports. India's main exports are chemicals, vehicles, aluminium, and seafood; imports include machinery, steel, copper, and reactors.
- **Investment:** Japan is India's fifth-largest source of FDI, with \$43.2 billion cumulative investment up to 2024. Japan has consistently ranked India as the most promising long-term investment destination.
- **Space Collaboration:** ISRO and JAXA collaborate in X-ray astronomy, satellite navigation, lunar exploration, and the Asia Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF). In 2016, they signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) for peaceful space exploration and use.
- **Emerging Focus Areas:** Digital cooperation (semiconductors, startups), clean energy, supply chain resilience, industrial competitiveness, and skill development.
- **Development and Infrastructure Cooperation:** Japan has been India's largest ODA donor since 1958, supporting critical infrastructure and human development projects.
 - ODA disbursement stood at about JPY 580 billion (\$4.5 billion) in 2023-24.
 - The flagship Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail is the flagship project symbolising advanced technology transfer and skill development.
- **Tourism:** 2023-24 was celebrated as the Year of Tourism Exchange, with the theme "Connecting Himalayas with Mount Fuji".
- **Diaspora:** About 54,000 Indians live in Japan, mainly IT professionals and engineers.

UDAN Scheme

- **Context:** Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) scheme has completed 9 Years.

Key Facts

- It is a regional connectivity scheme launched in 2016.

- The first UDAN flight operated between Shimla and Delhi in 2017.
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Civil Aviation.
- **Aim:** To make air travel affordable and accessible to the common citizen by connecting unserved and underserved Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities to major hubs.
- **Implementation:**
 - **Viability Gap Funding (VGF):** Financial support to airlines to ensure affordable fares.
 - **Airfare Cap** to ensure affordability.
 - **Collaborative Governance** between Centre, States, Airport Authority of India (AAI), and private airport operators.

Achievements

- It has facilitated over 1.56 crore passengers through 3.23 lakh flights in nine years.
- 649 routes have been operationalised connecting 93 unserved and underserved airports, including 15 heliports and 2 water aerodromes.
- The government has also introduced Comprehensive Guidelines for Seaplane Operations last year and launched UDAN 5.5, a special bidding round for seaplanes and helicopters.

Gallantry Awards

- **Context:** President Droupadi Murmu approved 127 Gallantry awards and 40 Distinguished Service awards to the Armed Forces.

About Gallantry Awards

- Gallantry Awards are given by the Government of India to honour acts of bravery, sacrifice, and exceptional courage by members of the armed forces, paramilitary forces, and civilians.
- They are classified as wartime (gallantry in the face of enemy) and peacetime awards.
- **Administered by:** Ministry of Defence (for armed forces) and Ministry of Home Affairs (for police and civilians).

- **Awarded by:** President of India.
- These gallantry awards are announced twice in a year – first on the occasion of the Republic Day and then on the occasion of the Independence Day.
- **Wartime Gallantry Awards:** Param Vir Chakra (PVC), Mahavir Chakra (MVC) and Vir Chakra. These were instituted on 26 January 1950, and were deemed to have effect from 15 August 1947, the date of India's independence.
- **Peacetime Gallantry Awards:** Ashok Chakra, Kirti Chakra, Shaurya Chakra.
 - The Government instituted three more gallantry awards on 4 January 1952, also with retrospective effect from 15 August 1947.
 - Originally, they were named as: Ashoka Chakra Class-I, Ashoka Chakra Class-II and Ashoka Chakra Class-III.
- **Order of Precedence:** Param Vir Chakra (PVC), Ashoka Chakra (AC), Maha Vir Chakra (MVC), Kirti Chakra (KC), Vir Chakra (VrC), Shaurya Chakra (SC).
- All six awards can be conferred posthumously.

22nd OCTOBER 2025

Global Forest Resources Assessment (GFRA), 2025

- **Context:** India has moved up to the 9th position in terms of total forest area globally, as per the Global Forest Resources Assessment (GFRA) 2025, released by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Bali.

Key Findings

- Globally, forests cover 4.14 billion hectares, accounting for about 32% of total land area, translating to 0.5 hectares of forest per person.
- Russia has the largest forest cover followed by Brazil, Canada, the USA, China, Congo, Australia, Indonesia, India and Peru.

- The report highlights that global deforestation has slowed in the past decade. However, the world continues to lose 10.9 million hectares of forest every year (2015–2025), a rate still considered alarmingly high.
- **India's Forest Cover Status:**
 - India's forest cover stands at 72.7 million hectares, representing about 2% of global forest area.
 - India has maintained its third position worldwide after China and Russia in terms of annual forest gain.
 - India and Indonesia together represent over 70% of global agroforestry areas, indicating strong integration of trees in farmlands.
- The GFRA is published every five years.
- **National Mission for a Green India (GIM):** A mission under the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) that aims to increase forest cover and improve existing forest quality to combat climate change.
- **Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act (2016):** An act that ensures funds for afforestation and related activities by requiring users of forest land for non-forest purposes to pay compensatory levies.
- **Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs):** Areas designated around Protected Areas (National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries) to act as a buffer and minimize the negative impact of certain human activities on fragile ecosystems.
- **Joint Forest Management (JFM):** A program that fosters partnerships between state forest departments and local communities to protect, and regenerate forest resources.

Significance of India's Achievement

- **Climate Change Mitigation:** Expanding forest area enhances carbon sequestration, aiding India's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement.
- **Biodiversity Conservation:** Forests serve as habitats for a wide range of flora and fauna, supporting India's rich biodiversity.
- **Livelihood Support:** Over 275 million people in India depend on forests for livelihood, making their sustainable management socio-economically crucial.
- **Land and Water Security:** Forests prevent soil erosion, regulate water cycles, and help maintain ecological balance in fragile ecosystems.
- **International Commitments:** Aligns with India's targets under the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030) and SDG 15 (Life on Land).

Government Initiatives toward forest conservation

- The 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign has been instrumental in encouraging citizens to plant trees and enhance environmental consciousness.

United Nations International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (CFT)

- **Context:** Iran has ratified a law to join the United Nations International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (CFT) in a bid to align with global financial norms.

Key Facts

- **FATF status:** As of October 2025, Iran remains on the FATF blacklist for its failure to adopt sufficient anti-money laundering (AML) and counter-terrorist financing (CFT) standards.
- The ratification is seen as a first step toward potential re-evaluation by the FATF.

About CFT

- The CFT was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 9 December 1999 (Resolution 54/109).
- **Objective:** To criminalize the financing of terrorism and establish international cooperation mechanisms to prevent, investigate, and prosecute such offences.

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- It requires countries to strengthen financial oversight, share intelligence, and cooperate in law enforcement.
- International Legal Framework: Complements other UN instruments such as the UN Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001) and the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000).
- India has ratified the CFT and has incorporated its provisions through:
 - Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967
 - Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.

About Financial Action Task Force (FATF)

- The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an intergovernmental organization which leads global action to tackle money laundering, terrorist and proliferation financing.
- FATF was established in 1989 by the G7 to examine and develop measures to combat money laundering. It originally included the G7 countries, the European Commission and eight other countries.
- In 2001, the FATF expanded its mandate to also combat terrorist financing.
- **Members:** FATF has 40 members including India.
- FATF has the authority to issue warnings and sanctions against countries that fail to comply with its standards, such as suspension of membership and blacklisting.
- **FATF 'Grey list' and 'Blacklist'**
 - **Black List:** Countries known as Non-Cooperative Countries or Territories (NCCTs) are put on the Blacklist. These countries support terror funding and money laundering activities.
 - **Grey List:** Countries that are considered a safe haven for supporting terror funding and money laundering are put in the FATF Grey list.

Kafala System

- **Context:** In a historic reform, Saudi Arabia has abolished the kafala system, a long-criticised labour framework that governed millions of foreign workers, including a large Indian diaspora.

Key Facts

- The Kafala System, often compared to modern-day slavery, restricted workers' mobility, job flexibility, and legal protection.
- This move, announced in June 2025 and implemented in October, is a major milestone in the Kingdom's push under Vision 2030 to modernise its economy and human rights record.
- For Indian workers, who make up a significant portion of Saudi Arabia's migrant labour force, this change offers long-overdue dignity, freedom, and protection from systemic abuse.

About Kafala System

- The Kafala (sponsorship) system was introduced in the 1950s across most Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.
- It allowed employers (kafeels) to exercise near-total control over foreign workers, particularly those in domestic work, construction, hospitality, and sanitation.
- **Key restrictions under kafala included:**
 - Seizure of passports by employers
 - No freedom to change jobs without employer consent
 - No right to exit the country without written approval
 - Limited access to legal or labour protections
 - No minimum wage or union rights for many sectors

2025 PN7: A new quasi-moon orbiting Earth

- **Context:** NASA has confirmed the presence of a new quasi-moon orbiting Earth. The object, officially named 2025 PN7, is a small asteroid that has been accompanying Earth on its journey around the Sun since the 1960s.

Key Facts

- Discovered by the Pan-STARRS observatory in Hawaii, this cosmic neighbour is expected to stay in Earth's orbit until around 2038, before drifting away into space.
- The quasi-moon, roughly 19 metres (62 feet) wide, is one of the smallest and least stable companions to Earth ever detected. Unlike the natural Moon, 2025 PN7 is not gravitationally bound to our planet. Instead, it follows a parallel orbit around the Sun, occasionally appearing to loop around Earth due to its unique trajectory. The object's faintness makes it invisible to the naked eye and observable only through advanced telescopes.

About Quasi-Moon

- A quasi-moon differs from a natural satellite as it does not orbit Earth directly. Earth's orbital path around the Sun in a synchronised pattern.
- Scientists classify such objects as part of the Arjuna asteroids, which mirror Earth's space.
- Over time, gravitational interactions cause these bodies to drift away, making them visitors rather than permanent moons.

The first quasi-satellite, 1991 VG, was discovered in 1991 and initially thought to be an artificial object.

