



WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Coverage of

12th Dec. - 18th Dec., 2025

★★ Useful for ★★

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

**Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar
and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) Bill**

VB G RAM G Bill to replace MGNREGA



 www.madeeasy.in

12th DECEMBER 2025

India's 1st Hydrogen Fuel Cell Passenger Vessel

- **Context:** India launched its first fully indigenous hydrogen fuel cell passenger vessel at Varanasi, marking a major step in green maritime transport.



Key Highlights

- It is built by Cochin Shipyard Ltd and owned by the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI).
- Hydrogen fuel-cell systems based on Proton Exchange Membrane (PEM) technology represent a key frontier in India's clean energy and green mobility transition.
- A Proton Exchange Membrane Fuel Cell (PEMFC) generates electricity through an electrochemical reaction between hydrogen and oxygen without combustion, making it a clean and efficient power source.

Importance

- The launch supports India's net-zero by 2070 target and aligns with Maritime India Vision 2030 and Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047, promoting clean, sustainable waterways.
- The vessel offers noise-free, pollution-free travel, reduces road congestion, boosts tourism, and showcases fully indigenous green technology.

Champions of the Earth Award

- **Context:** Supriya Sahu, a Tamil Nadu IAS officer honoured with the UN Environment Programme's 2025 Champions of the Earth Award.

Key Facts

- Launched in 2005, Champions of the Earth is the UN's highest environmental honor. It recognizes outstanding figures from the public and private sectors as well as civil society, whose actions have brought about a positive impact and a transformation on the environment.
- It is awarded across five categories: Policy Leadership, Entrepreneurial Vision, Science and Innovation, Lifetime Achievement, and Inspiration and Action (Supriya Sahu has been honored in this category).
- Past Indian recipients include: Madhav Gadgil (2024), Narendra Modi (2018), Cochin International Airport (2018) and Afroz Shah (2016).

Do you Know?

- In 2000, she launched a campaign called Operation Blue Mountain to eliminate single-use plastic in the Nilgiris.
- She introduced low-cost climate solutions, from painting school roofs white under the Cool Roof Project to restoring mangroves, wetlands, and creating 65 new reserve forests.
- Her nature-first approach has created 2.5 million green jobs and contributed significantly to India's national emissions-reduction goals.

13th DECEMBER 2025

SHANTI Bill

- **Context:** The Union Cabinet has approved the Atomic Energy Bill, 2025, titled SHANTI (Sustainable Harnessing of Advancement of Nuclear Technology for India).

Key Facts

- The Bill seeks to create a unified and modern legal framework for India's nuclear sector.

- Traditionally, nuclear power plants in India have been owned and operated only by state-owned Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL) and its fully-owned subsidiary Bharatiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam (BHAVINI).
- To allow private sector participation government has to amend key legislations;
 - Atomic Energy Act, 1962, a framework for nuclear energy development and regulation.
 - Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010, ensuring compensation mechanisms for nuclear incidents.

Key Provisions of the Bill

- The Bill allows private and global companies to participate in atomic mineral exploration, nuclear fuel fabrication and manufacturing of nuclear equipment and components. Core and strategic areas such as reactor operation and weapons-related activities will continue to remain under government control.
- The Bill proposes a redesigned liability framework to address long-standing investor concerns by:
 - Clearly defining liability responsibilities among operators, suppliers, and the government.
 - Introducing insurance-backed liability caps to limit financial uncertainty.
 - Providing government support beyond a fixed liability threshold.
- The legislation proposes the establishment of an independent nuclear safety authority. This body will strengthen regulatory oversight, separate safety regulation from promotional roles, and enhance credibility and transparency.
- It calls for a dedicated tribunal to handle nuclear-related disputes, intended to streamline resolution and enhance transparency in the sector.

Project Suncatcher

- **Context:** Google CEO Sundar Pichai has announced Project Suncatcher, a long-term research initiative to deploy solar-powered data centres in space by 2027.

Key Facts

- Under this project, Google is exploring constellations of satellites hosting high-performance AI hardware, similar to Starlink's satellite network but focused on space-based computing, not internet delivery.
- These satellites would run on solar energy, using free-space optical links to connect nodes and transfer data at terabit speeds. In space, solar panels can generate up to 8 times more energy than on Earth and almost continuously.
- AI-driven data centres on Earth are consuming massive electricity and water. Their power demand could rise by 165% by 2030, worsening climate stress and remaining vulnerable to disasters and cable disruptions.

14th DECEMBER 2025

Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhikshan Bill

- **Context:** The Union Cabinet has approved the Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhikshan Bill.

Key Facts

- The bill proposes a unified regulator for higher education, replacing existing statutory bodies such as the University Grants Commission (UGC), the All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE).
- UGC oversees non-technical higher education, the AICTE oversees technical education and the NCTE is the regulatory body for teachers' education.
- It follows recommendations in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 for a single regulatory authority to streamline governance and oversight in India's higher education sector.
- The new regulator will have three major roles: regulation, accreditation and setting professional standards.
- The body will not have any role to play in funding. The autonomy for funding is proposed to be with the administrative ministry.

- The new regulatory body will not supervise medical and law colleges. Medical and legal education will continue to be regulated by their respective councils, remaining outside HECI's regulatory purview.

Bridge Summit 2025

- **Context:** Bridge Summit 2025, the world's largest debut media event, concluded at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre after a three-day programme.

Key Facts

- BRIDGE Summit is a first-of-its-kind event that acts as both a conference and exhibition for the entire scope of media and entertainment related industries.
- It gathers 1000s of creators, communicators, brands, leaders, and decision-makers in one space to collectively align towards a more valuable, connected, and prosperous future.
- BRIDGE Alliance is a global organization that unites leaders across media, technology, politics, finance and the creative industries to build a more connected, resilient, and forward-looking framework for the world's media, entertainment and content ecosystem.

15th DECEMBER 2025

Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin): VB G RAM G Bill, 2025

- **Context:** The Union Minister of Rural Development and Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare introduced the Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin): VB G RAM G Bill, 2025 in Lok Sabha.

Key Highlights

- It will replace the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (MGNREGA).
- The move will mark a shift from a "demand-driven framework" to a "supply-driven scheme".

Key Statutory Provisions

- **Enhanced Livelihood Guarantee:** It will enhance the statutory wage employment guarantee to 125 from 100 days per rural household in every financial year, for adults who volunteer to undertake unskilled manual work.



- **Centrally Sponsored Scheme:** The scheme will be implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme with shared responsibilities between the Centre and States.
 - The fund sharing pattern will be 90:10 for North-Eastern and Himalayan States/UT and 60:40 for all other States.
- **Normative Allocation to States based:** States will ensure transparent and need-based intra-State distribution of funds across Districts and Gram Panchayats, taking into account the category of the Panchayats and local developmental needs.
- **Wage rate specification:** Wage rates for unskilled manual work will be specified by the Central Government; until separate rates are notified, existing MGNREGA wage rates will apply.
- **Securing peak agricultural seasons:** States will be empowered to notify in advance, a period aggregating to 60 days in a financial year covering peak sowing and harvesting during which works under the Bill will not be undertaken, facilitating sufficient farm labour at critical times.
- **Unemployment allowance:** If eligible applicants are not provided work within the stipulated period, State Governments will be obliged to pay unemployment allowance.

- **State schemes within six months:** Every State Government must notify its Scheme to operationalise the guarantee within six months of the Bill's commencement.
- **VGPP based planning:** Planning will be undertaken through Viksit Gram Panchayat Plans, prepared by Gram Panchayats and integrated with national spatial planning systems.
- **Institutional Oversight:** The Central Gramin Rozgar Guarantee Council and the State Gramin Rozgar Guarantee Councils shall be constituted for review, monitoring and effective implementation of the provisions of the legislation in their respective areas.

Concerns with the Bill

- **Excessive burden on States:** Unlike MGNREGA, where the Centre bears 100% wage cost and 75% of material cost, the VB-G RAM G Bill mandates a 60 : 40 Centre–State funding pattern, many states may struggle to mobilise their 40% share.
 - It increases the risk of uneven implementation across states, reinforcing regional disparities.
- **Lessons from PMFBY:** Similar cost-sharing under PM Fasal Bima Yojana led to delays due to states' inability to pay their 50% premium subsidy, causing poor coverage and credibility loss.
- Shift from demand-driven to supply-driven allocation: Earlier approach in MGNREGA was Bottom-up, demand-based estimation by states.
 - New Bill introduces Top-down "normative" allocation, with parameters decided unilaterally by the Centre.

Raj Kumar Goyal

- **Context:** The President of India administered the oath of office to Raj Kumar Goyal as the Chief Information Commissioner of the Central Information Commission.

About Central Information Commission

- The Central Information Commission (CIC) is a statutory body in India, established under the provisions of the Right to Information Act (2005).

- The Central Information Commission consists of a Chief Information Commissioner (CIC) and not more than ten Information Commissioners (IC).
- The members are appointed by the President on the recommendation of a committee consisting of:
 - The Prime Minister as the Chairperson,
 - The Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, and
 - A Union Cabinet Minister nominated by the Prime Minister.
- **Term of office:** The Chief Information Commissioner, or Information Commissioners, as the case may be, shall hold office for a period of three years from the date on which he enters upon his office.
- **Jurisdiction:** It extends over all Central Public Authorities.



New Ramsar Sites in India

- **Context:** India designated Siliserh Lake and Kopra Jalashay as its 95th and 96th Ramsar Sites, increasing the country's total to 96, up from 26 in 2014.

About Wetlands

- The Ramsar Convention's definition for wetlands includes: "Areas of marsh, fen, peatland or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six metres".
- Human-made wetlands: Fish and shrimp ponds, farm ponds, irrigated agricultural land, salt pans, reservoirs, gravel pits, sewage farms and canals.

About Ramsar Convention

- The Ramsar Convention is one of the oldest inter-governmental accords signed by member countries to preserve the ecological character of their wetlands of international importance.

- It was signed on February 2, 1971 in Ramsar, Iran and came into force in 1975.
- India became a signatory to the Ramsar Convention in 1982.

Newly Designated Ramsar Sites in Rajasthan

- **Siliserh Lake:** It is a man-made freshwater lake, constructed in 1845 by Maharaja Vinay Singh of Alwar.
 - It was originally built to meet the drinking water needs of Alwar city.
 - The lake is situated close to the Sariska Tiger Reserve, enhancing its ecological significance.
- **Kopra Jalashay:** Located near Bilaspur, this is the first-ever Ramsar site in Chhattisgarh.
 - It is a reservoir situated in the upper catchment of the Mahanadi River and serves as a freshwater source and biodiversity habitat.

- **Architecture:** 64-bit, dual-core
- **Clock Speed:** 1.0 GHz
- **Status:** Fully indigenous (design and development in India)
- **Function:** Acts as the “brain” of electronic devices such as computers, mobiles, embedded systems and control units.
- **Significance:** Suitable for 5G infrastructure, automotive, consumer electronics, industrial automation, IoT, and strategic uses, it reduces import dependence amid India’s 20% global microprocessor consumption.

The Great Honour Nishan of Ethiopia

- **Context:** PM Modi was conferred with Ethiopia’s highest award, ‘The Great Honour Nishan of Ethiopia’, by his Ethiopian counterpart Abiy Ahmed Ali.

16th DECEMBER 2025

DHRUV64

- **Context:** India has launched the DHRUV64 micro-processor.



Key Facts

- **Type:** General-purpose microprocessor
- **Developed By:** Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) under the Microprocessor Development Programme (MDP) of the Government of India.

About Ethiopia

- **Location:** Ethiopia is a landlocked country located in the Horn of Africa. It shares borders with Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya, South Sudan, and Sudan.
- **Geography:** The country has diverse topography, including the Ethiopian Highlands, the Great Rift Valley, and the Danakil Depression (one of the hottest places on Earth). The Blue Nile originates from Lake Tana in Ethiopia.
- **Demography:** Ethiopia is the second-most populous country in Africa.
- **Cultural Significance:** Ethiopia has its own calendar, which is seven years and around three months behind the Gregorian calendar. Ethiopia is widely recognised as the birthplace of coffee.
- **Archaeological Importance:** It is the Cradle of Humankind, with some of the oldest hominid fossils discovered here.
 - “Lucy” (Dinkinesh), a 3.2-million-year-old hominid fossil, was found in Ethiopia.
 - “Ardi”, a 4.4-million-year-old early hominid skeleton, was also discovered in the country.

ASPIRE Scheme

- **Context:** The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) is implementing the ASPIRE scheme to promote entrepreneurship and livelihood opportunities in rural areas.

About ASPIRE Scheme

- **Launch:** In 2015 by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.
- **Aim:** To create an enabling ecosystem for job creation through skill development, incubation and support to micro-enterprises.
 - As of now, 109 Livelihood Business Incubators (LBIs) have been approved across the country.

Key Components

- **Livelihood Business Incubators (LBIs):** Support agro-based ventures with grants up to ₹75 lakh (private) or ₹crore (government institutions) for training in food processing, handicrafts, and rural trades.
- **Technology Business Incubators (TBIs):** Focus on tech-driven rural innovation with similar funding.
- **Fund of Funds:** Managed by SIDBI with ₹200 crore corpus to back startups in agro-rural sectors.

17th DECEMBER 2025

India's First Dedicated Forest University

- **Context:** Uttar Pradesh is set to create history with the establishment of India's first dedicated forest university, marking a major step in strengthening education and research in forestry, wildlife, and environmental sciences.

Key Facts

- The forest university will be developed on a 125-acre campus in Gorakhpur.
- The site is strategically located near the Jatayu Conservation and Breeding Centre, an area already identified for wildlife and environmental conservation. The land approval process has been

completed, and the project is moving towards implementation following administrative clearances.

- The proposed university will function as a specialised institution focused exclusively on forest sciences. Academic programmes will cover forestry, agroforestry, social forestry, horticulture, wildlife studies, ecology, climate change, and environmental sustainability.
- Unlike conventional universities, the curriculum will place strong emphasis on field-based learning, practical exposure, and applied research in natural ecosystems.
- The state government allocated ₹50 crore in the 2024 budget for preliminary work. The draft Act for establishing the university is under final review, after which the Detailed Project Report will trigger the tendering and construction process.

World's First Wireless Rail Convoy

- **Context:** China has successfully tested a wireless rail convoy system by operating seven heavy freight trains (each carrying around 5,000 tonnes) as a single coordinated unit without any physical coupling.

Key Facts

- The trial was conducted on the Baoshen Railway in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region.
- In conventional rail operations, heavier and faster trains must maintain longer distances to ensure safe braking.
- This innovation enables:
 - Higher freight throughput on existing tracks.
 - Reduced need for building new railway infrastructure.
 - Better utilisation of existing rail corridors.
- The technology uses continuous train-to-train and train-to-ground wireless communication. Acceleration, cruising speed, and braking of all trains are synchronised in real time.
- The system employs a two-dimensional control mechanism that integrates relative speed between

trains maintaining absolute distance between them.

- The technology is conceptually similar to ADAS (Advanced Driver Assistance Systems) used in automobiles. Like adaptive cruise control in cars, the trains can dynamically adjust speed and braking based on the movement of the lead train.

18th DECEMBER 2025

First Class of the Order of Oman

- **Context:** Oman has conferred its highest civilian decoration on Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, marking a significant diplomatic moment in India–Gulf relations.

Key Facts

- PM Modi was awarded the First Class of the Order of Oman, the Sultanate's top national honour.
- The honour was bestowed during PM Modi's official visit to the Sultanate, underscoring the deepening strategic, economic and cultural partnership between the two nations.
- This recognition marks PM Modi's 29th international honour, placing him among a select group of globally respected leaders.
- The award has historically been reserved for world leaders and eminent personalities who have contributed to Oman's international relations.
- Past recipients include Queen Elizabeth II, former South African President Nelson Mandela, Japan's Emperor Akihito, and King Abdullah II of Jordan. The conferment reflects Oman's appreciation of PM Modi's role in strengthening bilateral ties and India's rising global stature.
- The honour coincided with the signing of a long-pending Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between India and Oman. The CEPA is expected to reduce tariffs, boost duty-free access for Indian exports such as textiles, chemicals and engineering goods, and encourage Indian investment in Oman's logistics and industrial sectors.

Exercise Desert Cyclone 2025

- **Context:** India-UAE Joint Military Exercise Desert Cyclone is going to begin in UAE.

Key Facts

- The first edition of Exercise Desert Cyclone was held in 2024 in Rajasthan, India.
- The aim of the exercise is to enhance interoperability and foster defence cooperation between the Indian Army and the UAE Land Forces through joint training in an urban environment, with a focus on sub-conventional operations under a United Nations mandate.

Seahawks Squadron

- **Context:** The Indian Navy commissioned its second MH 60R helicopter squadron, INAS 335, at INS Hansa in Goa.



Key Facts

- Twenty-four of these submarine-hunting helicopters have been acquired by India from the US. These are US-origin Seahawks, maritime versions of the Black Hawk.
- The squadron has been nicknamed 'Ospreys' after the fish-hunting bird of prey.
- The helicopter is designed for a wide range of operations: anti-submarine warfare (ASW), anti-surface warfare (ASuW), search and rescue (SAR) missions, and medical evacuation (MEDEVAC).
- These helicopters are replacing the ageing British-origin Sea King helicopters, which have been in service for long.