



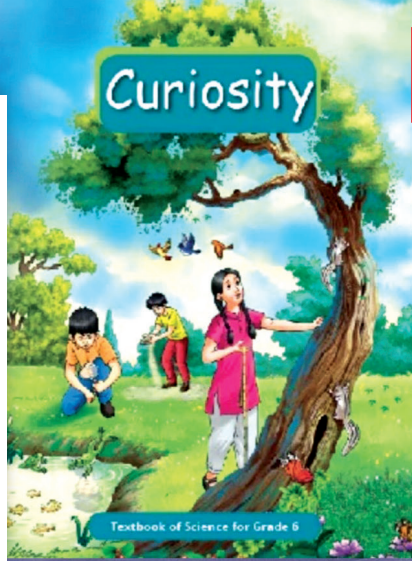
# WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Coverage of

3<sup>rd</sup> Apr. - 9<sup>th</sup> Apr., 2026

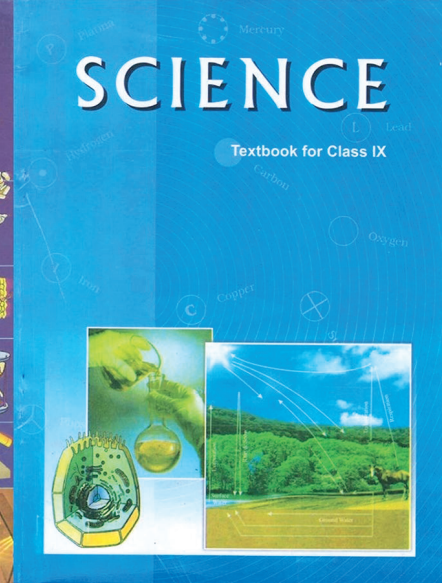
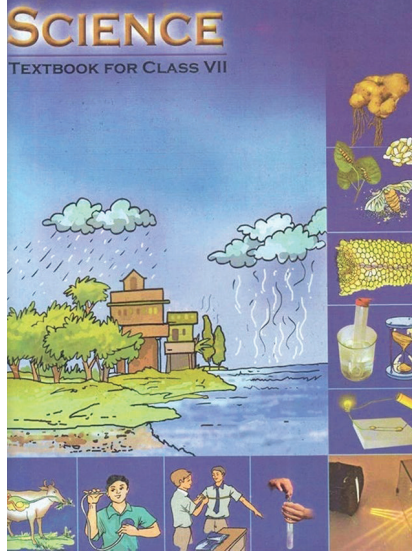
★★ Useful for ★★

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



NCERT : A Deemed  
University

The Union Ministry of  
Education declared  
**NCERT** an institution  
deemed to be a  
University.



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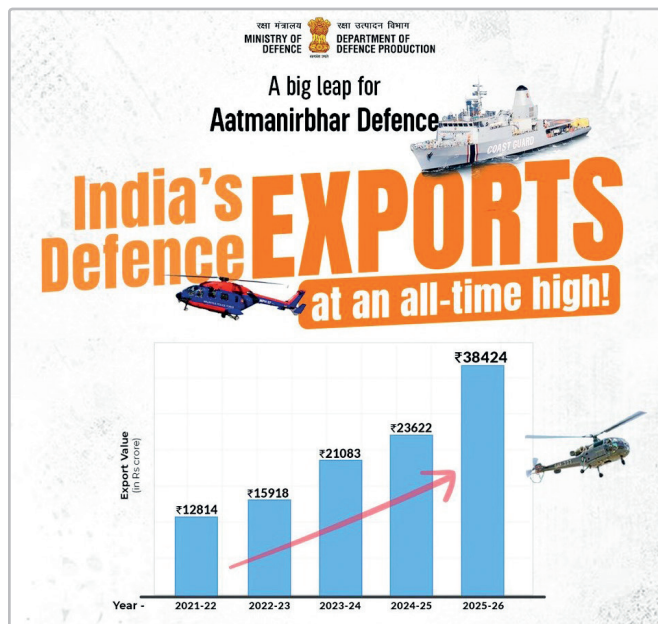
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3<sup>rd</sup> APRIL 2026

## India's Defence Exports

- **Context:** Defence exports have reached an all-time high of ₹38,424 crore in the financial year 2025-26, marking an increase of 62.66% over the previous fiscal year.



## Key Highlights

- The Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) and the private sector have contributed 54.84% and 45.16% respectively.
- The DPSUs' exports surged by 151% compared to the previous year while private firms recorded an increase of 14%.
- The sharp rise highlights the increasing global acceptance of Indian made defence products and the sector's growing integration with the international supply chains.
- India is exporting defence equipment to more than 80 countries as of FY 2025-26.
- Defence Budget: The defence budget has seen a steady rise, growing from ₹2.53 lakh crore in 2013-14 to ₹6.81 lakh crore in 2025-26.
- India targets ₹3 lakh crore in defence production by 2029, reinforcing its position as a global defence manufacturing hub.

## Defence Acquisition and Indigenisation Reforms

- **DAP 2020 with Focus on Indian-IDDMM:** It gives the highest priority to the 'Buy (Indian – Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured)' category to ensure that major defence purchases are made from Indian sources.
- **Simplified 'Make' Procedure:** Encourages Indian industry to design, develop, and manufacture defence products, reducing import dependence.
  - Under Make-I, the government funds up to 70% of development costs and reserves certain projects for MSMEs.
  - The Make-II category (industry-funded) offers relaxed eligibility, minimal paperwork, and accepts proposals from industry or individuals.
  - So far, 62 projects for the Army, Navy, and Air Force have received 'Approval in Principle'.
- **Liberalised FDI in Defence:** Foreign Direct Investment limit raised to 74% via automatic route for new defence industrial licences, and up to 100% by government approval in cases involving access to advanced technology.
- **Defence Industrial Corridors:** Two corridors, Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor (UPDIC) and Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor (TNDIC), are the lifelines of this transformation.
  - In 2025, they have attracted investments worth over ₹9,145 crore, with 289 MoUs signed.
- **Defence Testing Infrastructure Scheme (DTIS):** DTIS aims to boost indigenisation by providing financial assistance for setting up eight Greenfield testing and certification facilities in the aerospace and defence sector.
  - Seven test facilities are already approved in areas like unmanned aerial systems, electronic warfare, electro-optics, and communications.
- **Boosting Innovation:** iDEX and TDF Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX), launched in 2018, supports startups, MSMEs, academia, and innovators with grants and funding to develop technologies for defence and aerospace.
  - Technology Development Fund (TDF) Scheme also funds industries, especially Start-ups and MSMEs

upto an amount of ₹ 10 Crore, for innovation, research and development of defence technologies.

- **Strategic Partnership (SP) Model:** Introduced in 2017 to create long-term partnerships between Indian companies and global Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs).
  - These partnerships focus on technology transfer and setting up manufacturing infrastructure in India.
- **Indigenisation Portals:** SRIJAN Portal (launched 2020) lists defence items previously imported, inviting industry to develop them locally.
- **Ease of Doing Business in Defence:** Defence products requiring industrial licences have been rationalised, and most parts/components no longer need a licence.
  - Industrial licence validity has been extended from 3 years to 15 years, with a possible 3-year extension, making investment planning easier.

## Kar Saathi

- **Context:** An AI-enabled digital chatbot platform launched by the Income Tax Department to provide 24x7 guidance on direct tax matters under the new Income Tax Act, 2025 framework.



### Key Facts

- It provides round-the-clock assistance for queries related to ITR filing, tax provisions, forms, notices, deductions, refunds, and compliance.
- It brings all direct tax-related resources such as forms, challans, e-payment, e-verification, and FAQs under one platform.

- Supports taxpayer grievance resolution and compliance queries.

### Significance

- Part of India's broader push toward AI-driven digital governance.
- Facilitates smooth transition to the Income Tax Act, 2025.

## E20 Petrol

- **Context:** India has officially mandated the nationwide rollout of E20 petrol at all fuel stations from April 1, 2025.

### Key Facts

- It marks a significant milestone in India's Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme, which originally targeted 20% blending by 2030 but was advanced to 2025 under the revised National Biofuel Policy (2022).
- The mandate is being implemented jointly by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).
- Ethanol used in the blend is a biofuel derived from agricultural feedstocks primarily sugarcane, maize, damaged food grains, and surplus rice. It is produced through fermentation and distillation of these crops, making it a renewable and domestically sourced energy input.
- E20 petrol carries a higher-octane rating of approximately 95 RON compared to 91-92 RON of regular petrol, meaning smoother engine combustion and better anti-knock performance.

### Significance

- **Energy Security:** Reduces crude oil import dependence, India imports over 85% of its oil needs, making it highly vulnerable to global price shocks and supply disruptions.
- **Agriculture Linkage:** Creates sustained demand for ethanol-producing crops, direct income support to sugarcane and maize farmers.
- **Climate Commitments:** Biofuel blending reduces net lifecycle carbon emissions, aligned with India's NDC targets under the Paris Agreement.

4<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2026

## NCERT Granted Deemed University Tag

- **Context:** The Ministry of Education has declared the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) an Institution Deemed to be a University.

### Key Facts

- The deemed university status has been granted not only to NCERT headquarters, but also to its six Regional Institutes of Education (RIEs), subject to certain conditions.
- NCERT can now start courses and academic programmes and also award degrees.
- It has also been asked to begin research programmes, doctoral programmes, and innovative academic programmes.
- NCERT should also gradually expand into other academic domains in line with UGC norms and regulations, and the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
- NCERT has been clearly prohibited from engaging in commercial or profit-making activities.

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NCERT

### Deemed to be University

- Higher education institutions, other than universities, functioning at a high level in a specified field of education, may be declared as an institution deemed to be a university by the Central Government on the advice of the University Grants Commission.
- Institutions declared as deemed to be universities enjoy the academic standards and privileges of a university.

- NCERT can start new academic programmes, off-campus centres, or offshore campuses only in accordance with the guidelines issued by the UGC from time to time.
- NCERT has been directed to take steps for accreditation of its academic programmes by the National Board of Accreditation (NBA), and institutional accreditation by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC).
- The government has also directed NCERT to participate in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF).
- It must also compulsorily create Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) IDs for students, and upload their credit records to digital lockers so that they can be reflected on the ABC portal.

## Yuva Sangam

- **Context:** Registrations for institution-led exposure tours under Yuva Sangam Phase-VI were held, covering 22 States and Union Territories.



### About Yuva Sangam

- It is an initiative by the Government of India to strengthen people-to-people connect between youth belonging to different States/UTs of India.
- It was conceptualised by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with various other ministries and departments, and was launched under the banner of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB).
  - Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB) launched on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2015 to strengthen national unity by deepening connections between States and Union Territories.
- It has been organised collaboratively on the model of Kashi Tamil Sangamam (KTS).

5<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2026

## Ad Valorem Duty

- **Context:** The United States has announced a 100% ad valorem duty on imports of patented pharmaceuticals and associated active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs).

### Key Facts

- The US is India's single largest pharmaceutical export destination, absorbing nearly 40% of India's total pharma exports.
- India dominates the American generics market supplying approximately 47% of all generic medicines consumed in the US.

### About Ad Valorem Duty

- Ad valorem duty is a customs tariff calculated as a fixed percentage of the declared value of imported goods, as opposed to specific tariffs, which are levied on the basis of weight, volume, or quantity regardless of price.
- As the value of the imported product rises, the absolute duty burden rises proportionally.
- A 100% ad valorem duty effectively doubles the landed cost of the imported product for the buyer, making domestically produced alternatives significantly more competitive on price.

## INS Taragiri

- **Context:** INS Taragiri, a Nilgiri-class stealth guided missile frigate, has been commissioned into the Indian Navy.

### Key Facts

- INS Taragiri is the 4<sup>th</sup> of the 7 Project 17A multi-mission stealth guided missile frigates.
- It was built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL).
- It is named after the Taragiri hill ranges of Uttarakhand.
- About 75% of the ship is indigenously built.

### Key Features

- It is designed for multi-role operations across air, surface and sub-surface warfare.

- It can act as a screen for Carrier Battle Groups and can also undertake independent or small-group missions.
- It is equipped with MF-STAR radar, MRSAM, Barak air defence missiles, and BrahMos missiles.
- For anti-submarine warfare, it carries HUMSA sonar, triple torpedo launchers, and Extended Range Anti-Submarine Rockets (ERASR).
- It uses a Combined Diesel or Gas (CODOG) propulsion system.
- It can achieve speeds of around 30 knots.
- It can carry at least one helicopter, including Kamov or MH-60R.

## INS Aridhaman

- **Context:** INS Aridaman, part of India's Arihant-class ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) fleet, has been commissioned as a more advanced platform than its predecessors — INS Arihant (commissioned 2016) and INS Arighaat (commissioned 2024).



### Key Features

- It is larger than INS Arihant and INS Arighaat, with a displacement of about 7,000 tonnes.
- It can carry up to 24 K-15 Sagarika missiles, or 8 K-4 / K-5 missiles. The K-4 missile has a range of about 3,500 km.
- These are nuclear-capable submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs).

## India's Nuclear Submarine Programme

- India's nuclear submarine effort is rooted in the Advanced Technology Vessel (ATV) Programme initiated over three decades ago as one of India's most classified strategic defence projects.

- It was developed through collaboration between DRDO, the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), the Navy, and private defence firms, with technical assistance from Russia in the early phases.
- The programme's primary output is the SSBN (Ship Submersible Ballistic Nuclear), a nuclear-propelled submarine capable of carrying Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs) armed with single or multiple nuclear warheads.
- India possesses vast thorium reserves, and the PFBR helps generate the required fissile material (U-233) for thorium-based reactors. Thorium-232, is not fissile but can be converted into a fissile material.
- **Technological and Strategic Significance:** India becomes only the second country after Russia to develop a commercial fast breeder reactor. It demonstrates advanced indigenous capability in nuclear technology and engineering.

6<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2026

## Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) at Kalpakkam

- **Context:** India has achieved a major milestone as the indigenously built Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) at Kalpakkam has attained criticality.

### About Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR)

- PFBR is an advanced reactor that generates more fissile fuel than it consumes.
- India's PFBR is located at Kalpakkam and operated by Bharatiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam Limited. It uses Uranium-Plutonium Mixed Oxide (MOX) fuel.
- It is called a fast breeder because, it uses high-energy, fast neutrons to sustain the fission reaction, rather than the slowed-down thermal neutrons used in standard reactors. It also converts fertile material (like Uranium-238) into fissile material (Plutonium-239).
- The criticality refers to the point at which a reactor achieves a self-sustaining nuclear fission reaction, where the number of neutrons produced is sufficient to keep the reaction going without external intervention.

### Significance of the Achievement

- **Advancement of India's Three-Stage Nuclear Programme:** The PFBR marks progress in the second stage of India's three-stage nuclear programme.
  - It enables the conversion of fertile material into fissile fuel.
  - It lays the foundation for the third stage, which focuses on thorium utilization.

### India's Three-stage nuclear programme

- **Establishment:** India established the Atomic Energy Commission in 1948.
- In 1956, Asia's first research reactor, Apsara, was commissioned at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) in Trombay.
- India was the second Asian nation to build a nuclear power plant in 1969 at Tarapur, just after Japan and long before China.
- India has a three-phase programme of nuclear power visioned by Dr. Homi J Bhabha, the father of India's nuclear programme.
- **First Stage (Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors – PHWRs):** India's nuclear program initially focused on establishing a fleet of PHWRs.
  - These reactors use natural uranium (U-238), which contains minuscule amounts of U-235, as the fissile material.
  - Heavy water (deuterium oxide) as both moderator and coolant.
  - The primary purpose of this stage was to produce plutonium-239 as a byproduct from the uranium fuel.
  - Plutonium-239 is a fissile material used as fuel in nuclear reactors.
- **Second Stage (Fast Breeder Reactors – FBRs):** The second stage of the program involves the deployment of Fast Breeder Reactors (FBRs).
  - FBRs are designed to produce more fissile material than they consume by utilizing a fast neutron spectrum.

- In this stage, plutonium-239 produced in the first stage is used as fuel along with U-238 to produce energy, U-233, and more Pu-239.
- Uranium-233 is another fissile material that can be used as fuel in nuclear reactors.
- **Third Stage (Advanced Heavy Water Reactors – AHWRs):** The final stage of the program entails the deployment of Advanced Heavy Water Reactors (AHWRs).
  - Pu-239 will be combined with thorium-232 (Th-232) in reactors to produce energy and U-233.
  - Thorium is abundantly available in India, and this stage aims to harness its potential as a nuclear fuel.

## Bharat Tribes Fest 2026

- **Context:** Bharat Tribes Fest 2026 was concluded recently.



### Key Facts

- It is a flagship initiative of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs organised in association with TRIFED.
- The 19 day festival brought together tribal artisans, entrepreneurs, and self-help groups from across the country, showcasing India's diverse tribal heritage and products.
- Top-performing tribal artisans and sellers were felicitated across ten categories, including pottery, cane and bamboo, jewellery, cuisines, textiles, and forest-based products.
- Key attractions included the RISA Pavilion promoting contemporary tribal design and the Bharat Tribes Fest Bazaar, aimed at strengthening market linkages.

## BioNEST

- **Context:** Recently, the BIRAC-BioNEST Incubation Centre was inaugurated at CSIR-CFTRI, Mysuru.

### Key Facts

- The new BioNEST centre is designed to support food bioprocessing, biotechnology research, scale-up validation, and regulatory support.
- Its main goal is to convert scientific research into market-ready products.
- **Focus Areas:** The startups are working in emerging areas such as Nutraceuticals, Precision fermentation, Probiotics and postbiotics, CRISPR based technologies and Botanicals.
- **CFTRI's Role:** CFTRI has developed over 450 technologies, which have been transferred to thousands of licensees.
- It has emerged as a major national hub for food research, incubation, and industry collaboration.

7<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2026

## India's Wind Energy Capacity

- **Context:** India has achieved the highest-ever annual wind energy capacity addition of 6.05 GW in 2025-26, taking cumulative installed capacity to over 56 GW.

### Key Facts

- It represents an increase of nearly 46% over the capacity in FY 2024-25.
- States such as Gujarat, Karnataka, and Maharashtra have been the primary contributors to capacity addition during the year.
- This milestone reflects renewed momentum in the sector driven by improved policy clarity, transmission readiness, competitive tariff discovery, and a strong project pipeline.

## India's Energy Share

- As of 2025, the country's total installed electricity capacity has crossed 500 GW, reaching 509.6 GW.
- The total non-fossil power installed capacity has reached 262.74 GW in 2025 which is 51.5% of the total installed electricity capacity in the country.

- The solar energy installed capacity has reached 132.85 GW in 2025.
- **Fossil-fuel-based sources:** 244.80 GW, about 49 % of the total, making coal a source of up to almost half the energy needs. Also, coal contributes about 74% of total electricity production in India.
- Globally, India stands 3<sup>rd</sup> in Solar Power installed capacity, 4<sup>th</sup> in Wind Power capacity and 4<sup>th</sup> in total Renewable Energy capacity.

### India's Energy Targets

- **Emissions Intensity Reduction:** India has committed to reducing the emissions intensity (CO<sub>2</sub> per unit of GDP) of its GDP by 47% by 2035 from 2005 levels.
- India has already reduced its emissions intensity by about 36% between 2005 and 2020.
- India has committed to achieving 60% of its installed electric power capacity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2035.
- India has already achieved more than 50% non-fossil fuel capacity by 2026, ahead of its earlier target.
- India has committed to creating a carbon sink of 3.5 to 4 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent through forest and tree cover by 2035.

### Government Initiatives

- **National Solar Mission (NSM):** It was launched in 2010, it has set ambitious targets for solar capacity installation, including grid-connected and off-grid solar power projects.
- **National Clean Energy Fund (NCEF):** It was established to support research and innovation in clean energy technologies and projects that help in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- **National Wind Energy Mission:** Focuses on the development and expansion of wind energy in India. The target for wind energy capacity is set at 140 GW by 2030.
- Concessional Custom Duty on certain components and raw materials used in manufacturing of wind turbines, graded Waiver of Inter-State Transmission System (ISTS) charges till 2028.

- **Financial Support and Incentives:** Viability Gap Funding (VGF) for large-scale solar and hybrid projects.
  - Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for solar PV manufacturing.
  - Subsidies for rooftop solar and off-grid systems.
  - Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) to promote green power trading.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Green Energy Corridor to improve RE grid integration.
  - PM-KUSUM Scheme for solarizing agricultural pumps.
  - Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) to strengthen DISCOMs.
- **Emerging Technologies and Projects:** Support for Battery Storage, hybrid systems, and RTC power.
  - Promotion of offshore wind and floating solar projects.
  - Focus on Hydrogen Mission for green hydrogen development.
- **International Partnerships:** ISA (International Solar Alliance) launched by India to promote global solar cooperation.
  - Collaboration with countries and global funds for clean energy investment and technology.

### United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

- **Context:** Russia and China vetoed a UN Security Council resolution aimed at reopening the Strait of Hormuz.

### About United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

- The UNSC is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations, carrying the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. It is the only UN body empowered to issue legally binding resolutions that all UN member states are obligated to comply with under international law.



- The Council has 15 members divided into two categories:
  - **Permanent Members (P5) with Veto Power:** China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. A single veto from any P5 member is sufficient to block any substantive resolution, regardless of how many other members support it.
  - **Non-Permanent Members (10 seats):** Elected by the UN General Assembly for two-year terms, distributed geographically.
- **Headquarters:** New York, USA
- **Working:**
  - **Voting:** Each member holds one vote. A resolution requires a minimum of 9 affirmative votes with no P5 veto to pass.
  - **Presidency:** Rotates monthly among the 15 members in English alphabetical order.
  - **Binding Nature:** Under Article 25 of the UN Charter, all member states agree to accept and implement UNSC decisions.

8<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2026

## Mission MITRA

- **Context:** The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), in collaboration with the IAF-Institute of Aerospace Medicine, has launched Mission MITRA in Leh, Ladakh.

### About Mission MITRA

- MITRA stands for Mapping of Interoperable Traits and Response Assessment. It is a structured scientific study designed to simulate and evaluate the human dimensions of long-duration spaceflight missions in a controlled yet extreme terrestrial environment.
- First-of-its-kind team behavioural and physiological study in India's human spaceflight programme.

## Soil Sakhis

- **Context:** The "Soil Sakhis" initiative in drought-prone districts of western Maharashtra is empowering women while improving soil health and agricultural productivity.

## About Soil Sakhis

- Launched in 2023 under the Mann Deshi Foundation's Agriculture and Climate Action Programme.
- Trains rural women as "Soil Sakhis" to promote soil testing and scientific farming practices.
- Implemented in Satara, Sangli, Solapur, Kolhapur, and Pune districts.



### Key Features

- Soil Sakhis collect samples and facilitate soil testing through laboratories.
- Farmers receive actionable reports for improved crop and nutrient management.
- Soil Sakhis earn about ₹8,000 – ₹10,000 per month (excluding petrol allowance).

9<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2026

## Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY)

- **Context:** The Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY) has completed 11 years.

### Key Facts

- **Launched:** 2015
- **Aim:** To support small-scale business ventures for non-corporate and non-farm income-generating activities.
- **Target Group:** New entrepreneurs, small shopkeepers, women entrepreneurs, street vendors, artisans, fruit/vegetable vendors, and small manufacturing units.
- These loans are given by Commercial Banks, RRBs, Small Finance Banks, MFIs and NBFCs.

- Under the aegis of PMMY, MUDRA has created four products namely:
  - **Shishu:** Covering loans upto ₹50,000/-.
  - **Kishor:** Covering loans above ₹50,000/- and up to ₹ 5 lakhs.
  - **Tarun:** Covering loans above ₹5 lakh and upto ₹10 lakhs.
  - **TarunPlus:** Covering loans above ₹10 lakh and upto ₹20 lakhs.
- Loans cover term financing and working capital needs across manufacturing, trading and service sectors, including activities allied to agriculture like poultry, dairy, and beekeeping, etc.
- The interest rate is governed by RBI guidelines, with flexible repayment terms.

## Skills Outcomes Fund

- **Context:** The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has launched a campaign to establish the Skills Outcomes Fund.

### Key Facts

- This initiative is designed to create better career opportunities for young people from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.
- It expands upon the achievements of the Skill Impact Bond, India's inaugural outcomes-based project started by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) in 2021. The Skill Impact Bond utilized private

sector resources and knowledge, prioritizing actual job placement and long-term employment over simple training completion.

- The NSDC will also lead and manage this new fund.
- Financial support is directly tied to confirmed career results, specifically focusing on hiring and continued employment.

## Exercise Cyclone-IV

- **Context:** The Indian Army is participating in the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of Exercise Cyclone-IV in Egypt.



### Key Facts

- Started in 2023, it is a bilateral India-Egypt joint Special Forces military exercise.
- It will provide an opportunity for mutual exchange of professional expertise, strengthen camaraderie, and deepen understanding of each other's military traditions and cultures.