





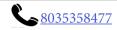
Daily Current Affairs Encyclopedia



2 February 2024 **National & International News**

Committee on Population Growth and Demographic Changes	 Context: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced the formation of a high-power committee. Committee's focus: Address challenges arising from "fast population growth and demographic changes." Key Points:
	 Mandate of the Committee Committee tasked with making comprehensive recommendations aligned with the goal of Viksit Bharat (developed India).
	 Lack of Reliable Data The committee's announcement follows the indefinite postponement of the Census, leading to a lack of reliable data on population growth. Despite limited statistics, security concerns in border areas are being highlighted based on perceived demographic changes.
Budget Allocation for MGNREGS (Financial Year 2024-25)	 ₹86,000 crore was allocated for MGNREGS in the financial year 2024-25. Represents a ₹26,000 crore increase compared to the 2023-24 Budget estimates. Despite the increase, the net gain for the rural employment scheme may be zero or negative.
	 Insufficient Allocation: To meet the employment needs, activists argue that ₹3 lakh crore is essential. The allocated budget of ₹86,000 crore is significantly short, considering outstanding dues and additional work requirements. Raises concerns about jeopardizing the guaranteed right to work under MGNREGS and constitutes a violation of this fundamental entitlement.
Boosting Research and Innovation in India	 Context: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's interim Budget speech announces a corpus of ₹1 lakh crore. The funds will be available at minimal or nil interest rates. Aimed at encouraging private sector investment in research and development in sunrise sectors.



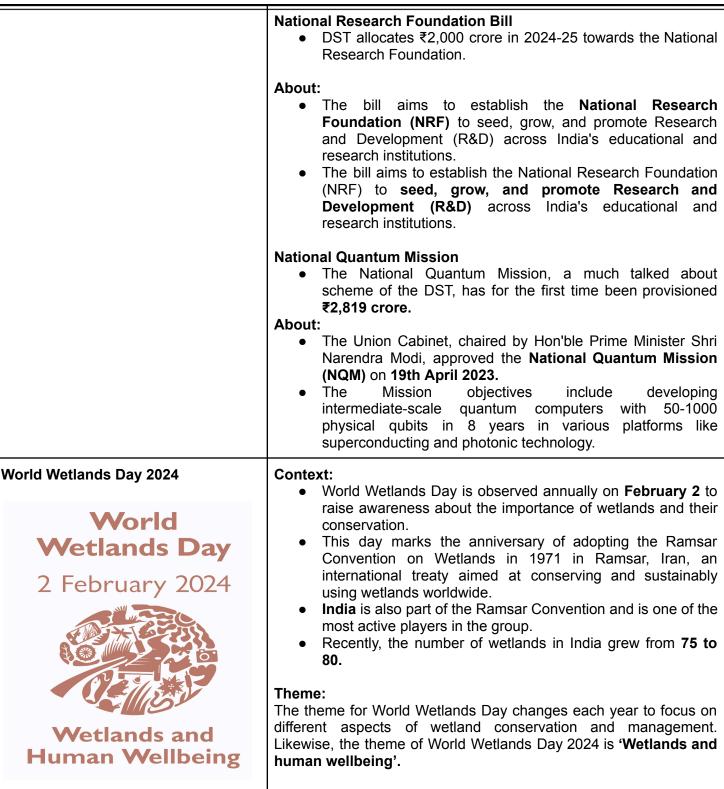








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Investment in Rail Infrastructure	• ₹2.55 lakh crore allocated for 2024-25, reflecting a 5.8% increase from the previous year's ₹2.41 lakh crore.
	 Economic Corridor Programs Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that the Centre will implement three major economic corridor programmes — energy, mineral, and cement corridor, also being referred to as Energy Economic Corridor; port connectivity corridor aka Rail Sagar; and high-traffic density corridors, aka Amrit Chaturbhuj.
	 Key Points: The National High-Speed Rail Corridor's bullet train project receives a substantial increase in allocation, rising from ₹19,592 crore to ₹25,000 crore. Budget allocation for investment in public sector units and joint ventures decreased from ₹34,353 crore in 2023-24 to ₹31,107 crore in 2024-25. Overhauling 40,000 coaches over the next five years for an improved passenger experience, costing ₹15,200 crores.

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