



25 February 2025

## National and International News

<p><b>Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP)</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CAQM Sub-Committee on GRAP has revoked Stage-II of the current GRAP schedule across the entire NCR, with immediate effect.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GRAP is a <b>framework designed to combat air pollution</b> in the Delhi-NCR region.</li> <li>It was introduced as an emergency response mechanism, and its implementation is triggered when the Air Quality Index (AQI) reaches "poor" levels.</li> <li>GRAP is particularly important during the winter months when air quality tends to plummet.</li> <li>The <b>Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) in NCR and adjoining areas oversees the implementation of GRAP.</b></li> <li>It collaborates with the <b>Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).</b></li> <li>The CAQM has constituted a sub-committee for the operationalization of the GRAP.</li> <li><b>Different stages of GRAP: GRAP consists of four stages, each with targeted actions to be taken by the necessary authorities and agencies. These are the following:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stage I: "Poor" air quality (Delhi AQI: 201-300)</li> <li>Stage II: "Very Poor" air quality (Delhi AQI: 301-400)</li> <li>Stage III: "Severe" air quality (Delhi AQI: 401-450)</li> <li>Stage IV: "Severe+" air quality (Delhi AQI &gt; 450)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>What is the Air Quality Index (AQI)?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AQI is issued by government agencies to <b>gauge air pollution levels and communicate risks to the public.</b></li> <li>It indicates how air pollution can affect health, with higher AQI values indicating more severe health concerns.</li> <li>According to the AQI scale, the air quality check between <b>0 and 50 is "Good", 51 and 100 "Satisfactory", 101 and 200 "Moderate", 201 and 300 "Poor", 301 and 400 "Very Poor", 401 and 450 "Severe" and over 450 as "Severe +".</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Saras Aajeevika Mela</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Union Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan will inaugurate the Saras Aajeevika Mela at Noida Haat, Uttar Pradesh, tomorrow.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is an initiative by the <b>Deendayal Antyodaya</b></li> </ul>



	<p><b>Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) of the Ministry of Rural Development.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Aim:</b> To bring the rural women Self Help Group members under one platform to showcase their skills, sell their products and help them build linkages with potential market players.</li> <li>● It is organised by the Ministry of Rural Development and National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR)</li> <li>● <b>Key facts about DAY-NRLM:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ It is a flagship rural poverty alleviation program of the Government of India.</li> <li>○ It addresses multiple dimensions of poverty, the programme aims to reach out to 10 Crore rural poor households and organize one woman member from each rural household into affinity-based women SHGs.</li> <li>○ These SHGs provide close, long-term handholding support to their members, enabling them to access financial services from banks, diversify and stabilize their livelihoods, and effectively access their entitlements with ease.</li> <li>○ <b>Objective:</b> To ensure that each family is able to achieve household food security and have more than one stabilized livelihood source.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Spices Board is collaborating with the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and other regulatory bodies to introduce additional regulations aimed at promoting sustainable practices and conservation-driven strategies for the development of the industry.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● It is an autonomous body established under the <b>Ministry of Health and Family Welfare</b>, Government of India.</li> <li>● The FSSAI has been established under the <b>Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006</b>, which is a <b>consolidating statute related to food safety and regulation</b> in India.</li> <li>● <b>Vision:</b> Build a new India by enabling citizens to have safe and nutritious food, prevent diseases, and lead a healthy and happy life.</li> <li>● <b>Mission:</b> Set globally benchmarked standards for food, encourage and ensure that food businesses adhere to these standards, adopt good manufacturing and hygiene practices, and ultimately enable citizens to access safe and right food.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC)</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of Labour &amp; Employment and Youth Affairs &amp; Sports, inaugurated the</li> </ul>



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	<p>first-ever two-day Regional Dialogue on Social Justice under the Global Coalition for Social Justice in New Delhi.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To commemorate the 74th Foundation Day of the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC), an award ceremony was held to honor achievements across its organizations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is a state-run organization set up under the Employee State Insurance Act of 1948.</li> <li>It is responsible for overseeing the ESI plan.</li> <li>Ministry: The Ministry of Labour &amp; Employment</li> <li>It provides socio-economic protection to the worker population and immediate dependent or family covered under the ESI scheme.</li> <li><b>About ESI Scheme:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Employees' State Insurance Scheme (ESI) is an integrated measure of social Insurance embodied in the Employees' State Insurance Act, of 1948.</li> <li>It applies to factories and other establishments Road Transport, Hotels, Restaurants, Cinemas, Newspaper, Shops, and Educational/Medical Institutions wherein 10 or more persons are employed.</li> <li>The benefits of the ESI system are described below.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical Disability Benefits</li> <li>Medical Benefits</li> <li>Maternity Benefits</li> <li>Dependent Benefit</li> <li>Unemployment Allowance.</li> <li>Sickness Benefit</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Kaziranga National Park	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External Affairs Minister <b>S. Jaishankar, along with the heads of missions from 61 countries, enjoyed elephant and jeep safari rides in Kaziranga National Park.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Key Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is situated in the north-eastern part of the country in the districts of Golaghat and Nagoan in the state of Assam.</li> <li>It is the single largest undisturbed and representative area in the Brahmaputra Valley floodplain.</li> <li>In 1985, the park was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.</li> <li><b>Rivers:</b> The river Difalu, a tributary of the Brahmaputra, flows through the National Park area (core/critical tiger habitat), while another tributary, Moradifalu, flows along its southern boundary.</li> <li><b>Flora:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is primarily famous for its dense and tall elephant</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



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	<p>grasses intermixed with small swamplands.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ It also includes an abundant cover of water lilies, water hyacinths and lotus.</li> <li>○ Rattan Cane, a type of climbing palm, is also found here.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Fauna:</b> Many endangered and threatened species like Rhino, Tiger, Eastern swamp deer, Elephant, Buffalo, Hoolock gibbon, Capped langur, and Gangetic River dolphin are commonly found in the habitat.</li> <li>● It is inhabited by the <b>world's largest population of one-horned rhinoceroses, as well as many mammals.</b></li> </ul>
India - EU relations	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The EU and India are strengthening their partnership under a new strategic agenda to boost prosperity, stability, security, and people-to-people connections, with research cooperation playing a key role.</li> <li>● The first India-EU Workshop on Electric Vehicles Charging Technology was held in Pune, under the India-EU Trade and Technology Council (TTC) Working Group 2 on Green and Clean Energy Technologies, bringing together policymakers, industry representatives, and standardization bodies to promote sustainable transport solutions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A cooperation agreement signed in 1994 took the bilateral relationship beyond trade and economic cooperation.</li> <li>● The first India-EU Summit, in June 2000, marked a watershed in the evolution of the relationship.</li> <li>● At the fifth India-EU Summit in 2004, the relationship was upgraded to a 'Strategic Partnership'.</li> <li>● The two sides adopted a Joint Action Plan in 2005.</li> <li>● The 15th India-EU Summit, in July 2020, provided a common road map to guide joint action and further strengthen the partnership over the next five years.</li> <li>● <b>Key areas of cooperation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Trade</b> - The EU is India's second-largest trading partner after the U.S. and the second largest destination for Indian exports.</li> <li>○ <b>Green strategic partnership</b> - the green strategic partnership between India and Denmark aims to address climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution.</li> <li>○ <b>India-Nordic Summit</b> - The India-Nordic Summit focused on green technologies and industry transformation that are vital for sustainable and inclusive growth.</li> <li>○ <b>Science and Technology Joint Steering Committee</b> – focuses on areas such as healthcare, Artificial Intelligence, and earth sciences.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



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- **Maritime security dialogue** - The first maritime security dialogue between India and the European Union in 2021 focused on cooperation in maritime domain awareness, capacity-building, and joint naval activities.



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