



17 Mar 2025

National and International News

<p>The Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new bill proposes a prison sentence of up to 7 years for using a forged passport. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed legislation aims to streamline immigration laws, bringing them in line with modern security needs and regulatory requirements. It will replace outdated laws such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920 ○ The Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939 ○ The Foreigners Act, 1946 ○ The Immigration (Carriers' Liability) Act, 2000 • The Bill introduces stricter penalties, clearer regulations for educational and medical institutions, and a more defined framework for foreigner registration, visa issuance, and deportation procedures. • Key Features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It obligates the mandatory registration of foreigners upon their arrival and places restrictions on movement, name changes, and stays in protected/restricted areas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The burden of proof is on individuals to establish that they are not foreigners. ■ Entering India without valid passport/visa: Up to 5 years in prison and a fine of up to Rs 5 lakh. ■ Entry, stay, or exit with forged documents: 2-7 years in prison and a fine of Rs 1-10 lakh. ■ Overstaying, violating visa conditions, or accessing restricted areas: Up to 3 years in prison, a fine up to Rs 3 lakh, or both. ○ Reporting requirements: Educational institutions, universities, hospitals, and nursing homes must report foreigners to the registration officer. ○ Carrier accountability: Carriers transporting foreigners without valid documents will have to pay a fine up to Rs 5 lakh and failure to pay penalty may lead to the potential seizure of transport. ○ If any foreigner's entry has been refused, he shall be handed over to the transport carrier by the Immigration Officer, who is responsible for the individual's removal from India without delay. ○ It empowers immigration officers to arrest such individuals without a warrant. ○ Government authority: The bill also grants the central government increased authority to regulate the movement of foreigners, including the power to restrict
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India-New Zealand relations



entry, prevent departure, and prohibit access to specific areas.

Why in news?

- After a gap of approximately 10 years, India and New Zealand announced the resumption of negotiations for a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) aimed at strengthening economic relations.

Key Points:

- **Historical Relations:**
 - India and New Zealand share a long-standing, friendly, and growing relationship dating back to the 1800s, with Indian settlers arriving in Christchurch as early as the 1850s.
 - Larger waves of immigrants from Punjab and Gujarat arrived in New Zealand during the 1890s.
 - Indian troops fought alongside the Anzacs at Gallipoli in 1915.
- **Political Relations:**
 - India and New Zealand maintain cordial, friendly relations based on their shared history in the Commonwealth, parliamentary democracy, and the English language.
 - Both nations gained independence in 1947, and diplomatic ties were formalized in 1950 with the opening of a Trade Commission, later upgraded to a High Commission.
 - Both countries share a commitment to disarmament, global peace, North-South Dialogue, human rights, ecological preservation, and combating international terrorism.
- **Trade Relations:**
 - New Zealand is India's 11th largest trading partner, with total two-way trade valued at US\$1.80 billion in 2020.
 - Education and tourism are key sectors for New Zealand's growth with India.
 - India is the second-largest source of international students for New Zealand, with approximately 15,000 Indian students prior to the pandemic.
 - In 2018, India ranked as the 9th largest source of visitors to New Zealand, with 67,953 Indian tourists.
 - India imports logs and forestry products, wood pulp, wool, and edible fruits and nuts from New Zealand.
 - India exports pharmaceuticals, precious metals and gems, textiles, motor vehicles, and non-knitted apparel and accessories to New Zealand.
 - India and New Zealand have signed Free Trade Agreements (FTAs).
- **Cultural Relations:**



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New Zealand is home to around 250,000 people of Indian origin and non-resident Indians (NRIs), the vast majority of whom have made New Zealand their permanent residence.
Wholesale Price Index (WPI)	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The annual inflation rate based on the All India Wholesale Price Index (WPI) for February 2025 is 2.38% (provisional), mainly driven by higher prices in food product manufacturing, food articles, other manufacturing, non-food items, and textiles. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WPI measures the changes in the prices of goods sold and traded in bulk by wholesale businesses to other businesses. ● It is calculated and published by the Office of Economic Advisor, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. ● WPI data is published monthly, with the index value representing an estimate of the price level for the month as a whole, rather than a specific date. ● An upward surge in the WPI indicates inflationary pressure in the economy, and vice versa. ● The quantum of rise in the WPI month-after-month is used to measure the level of wholesale inflation in the economy. ● New series of WPI: With an aim to align the index with the base year of other important economic indicators such as GDP and IIP, the base year was updated to 2011-12 from 2004-05 for the new series of WPI, effective from April 2017. ● The basket of goods comprises three major groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Primary Articles (Weight 22.62%) ○ Fuel and Power (Weight 13.15%) ○ Manufactured Products (Weight 64.23%)
International Labour Organisation (ILO)	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● India is set to participate in the 353rd Governing Body meeting of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) being held in Geneva, Switzerland, from March 10 to March 20, 2025. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) dedicated to improving labour conditions and living standards throughout the world. ● History: ● It was created in 1919, as part of the Treaty of Versailles that ended World War I, to reflect the belief that universal and lasting peace can be accomplished only if it is based on social justice. ● In 1946, the ILO became a specialized agency of the newly formed UN. ● HQ: Geneva, Switzerland.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is also a member of the United Nations Development Group (UNDP), a coalition of UN organizations aimed at helping meet the Sustainable Development Goals. • Members: The ILO has 187 member states: 186 out of 193 UN member states plus the Cook Islands. • In recognition of its activities, the ILO was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1969.
International Space Station	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SpaceX Crew docks with the ISS to rescue astronauts stranded in space for 9 months. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The International Space Station (ISS) is the largest man-made object in space launched on November 20, 1998. It serves as a habitat for astronauts in space. Since 2011, the ISS has been continuously inhabited. • Participating States: ISS is a collaborative project of the United States (NASA), Russia's (Roscosmos), Europe's (ESA), Japan's (JAXA), and Canada's (CSA) space agencies. • Orbit: The International Space Station is in orbit about 400 kilometres above Earth. • Speed: It travels around Earth at a speed of about 28,000 kilometres per hour. This means that it orbits Earth about every 90 minutes. • Objectives: To expand our knowledge about space and microgravity and promote new scientific research. It also serves as an example of international cooperation. • Importance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It acts as a testing ground for long-duration space missions, allowing researchers to study the effects of extended space travel on the human body, which is crucial for crewed missions to Mars and the Moon. ○ Space Medicine Research: The space environment has offered valuable insights into treatments for age-related conditions like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease, as well as cancer in the immune system, by simulating the microgravity conditions that affect cells. ○ Human Spaceflight Expertise: The International Space Station has also functioned as a training platform for astronauts getting ready for future missions to Mars and the Moon.
e-Shram Portal	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 30.68 crore unorganised workers have registered on the e-Shram portal, with women constituting 53.68% of the registrations. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was launched by the Ministry of Labour And Employment

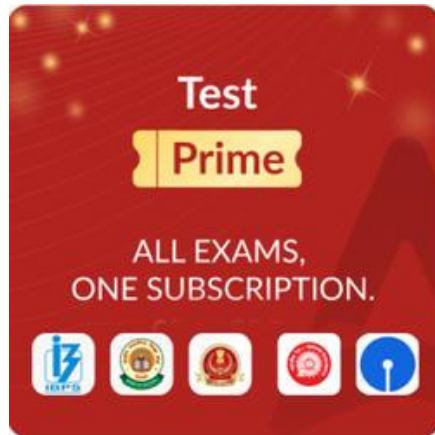


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	<p>in 2021 for registration and creation of a comprehensive National Database of Unorganized Workers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will provide seamless access of different Social Security Schemes to the unorganized workers registered on eShram portal. • Purpose: The primary purpose of the eShram One Stop Solution is to simplify the registration process for unorganized workers and facilitate their access to government welfare schemes. • This platform will act as a bridge, connecting the workers to the numerous benefits offered by the government and making the registration process easier and more transparent," • It entails consolidating and integrating data from various Central Ministries/Departments into a single repository. • Key welfare schemes such as One Nation One Ration Card, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, National Social Assistance Programme, National Career Service, Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan etc. have been integrated with eShram.
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