



# STATE **PCS CA** CONSOLIDATION MAHARASHTRA



**JUNE  
2025**



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21,  
Pusa Road,  
Karol Bagh  
New Delhi



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Civil Lines,  
Prayagraj,  
Uttar Pradesh



Tonk Road,  
Vasundhra Colony,  
Jaipur,  
Rajasthan



Burlington Arcade Mall,  
Burlington Chauraha,  
Vidhan Sabha Marg,  
Lucknow



12, Main AB Road,  
Bhawar Kuan,  
Indore,  
Madhya Pradesh

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## Kolhapuri Chappals

### Why in News?

Italian luxury fashion brand Prada has admitted drawing inspiration from **traditional Indian handcrafted footwear** for its **Men's Spring/Summer 2026 sandals**, after facing backlash for not crediting the resemblance to India's **GI-tagged** Kolhapuri chappals.

- ✦ Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (MACCIA), in collaboration with artisans, decided to **patent** Kolhapuri chappals to protect them internationally.



### Key Points

#### ✦ About Kolhapuri Chappals:

- ✦ It is **handcrafted** in Kolhapur (Maharashtra) and nearby districts like Sangli, Satara, and Solapur, dating back to the 12<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> century, and was originally made for royalty.
- ✦ It is made using **vegetable-tanned leather** from cow, buffalo, or goat, and is **fully handmade** without nails or synthetic components
- ✦ It is recognised for its **T-strap shape**, **detailed braiding**, and **open-toe design**, mostly in tan or deep brown shades.
- ✦ It was granted **Geographical Indication (GI)** status in 2019, covering eight districts in Maharashtra and Karnataka.

#### ✦ Other GI Tagged Products of Maharashtra:

- ✦ Kasti Coriander (2023)
- ✦ Sangli Raisins (2016)
- ✦ Mangalwedha Jowar (2016)

#### Geographical Indication (GI) Tag

✦ **About:** A GI tag is a **name or sign used on certain products** that correspond to a specific geographical location or origin.

- ✦ The GI tag ensures that only authorised users or those residing in the geographical territory are **allowed to use the popular product name**.

✦ It also protects the product from being copied or imitated by others.

- ✦ A registered GI is **valid for 10 years** and can be renewed.

- ✦ GI registration is **overseen by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade** under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

#### ✦ Legal Framework:

- ✦ **Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999**
- ✦ **WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).**

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## Operation Deep Manifest

### Why in News?

Under **Operation Deep Manifest**, the **Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI)** seized cargo containers carrying Pakistani-origin goods at Nhava Sheva port in Mumbai.

### Key Points

#### About the Operation:

- ✦ The DRI launched the Operation to crack down on illegal imports of Pakistani-origin goods rerouted through third countries, primarily via Dubai, UAE.
- ✍ Following the **Pahalgam terror attacks**, the Government imposed a **total ban on direct or indirect imports** or transit of goods originating **from Pakistan**.
- ✍ Despite this, importers attempted to bypass the ban by mis-declaring the origin and falsifying shipping documents.
- ✦ Strategic Enforcement to Protect National Security:
  - ✍ Operation Deep Manifest reflects DRI's commitment to enforcing the Government's trade policy and securing India's national and economic interests.
  - ✍ Through targeted intelligence, inter-agency coordination, and robust enforcement, DRI continues to safeguard India's economic borders against misuse of trade channels.

#### Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI)

- 💡 The **DRI**, apex anti-smuggling agency of India, was established on 4<sup>th</sup> December 1957, and has evolved from the Central **Revenue Intelligence Board** formed in 1953.
- 💡 The DRI, under the **Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs, Ministry of Finance**, investigates and enforces Customs and indirect tax laws.

- 💡 The Directorate General of **GST Intelligence** (formerly the Directorate General of Anti-Evasion/Central Excise Intelligence) and the **Narcotics Control Bureau** were created from the DRI before becoming specialized agencies.

## Jiyo Parsi Scheme

### Why in News?

The **Ministry of Minority Affairs** held a one-day biometric authentication drive for **Jiyo Parsi scheme** beneficiaries in Mumbai, Maharashtra to **support the Parsi community** and address its declining population.

- 💡 The successful biometric drive reflects the government's **commitment to transparency, accountability, and timely delivery of benefits to the community**.

### Key Points

#### About Jiyo Parsi Scheme:

- ✦ It is a Central Sector Scheme, **launched in 2013-14**.
- ✦ Offers financial **aid for infertility treatments** like surrogacy, and post-conception care.
- ✦ Provides monthly financial support to Parsi couples with children and dependent elderly members.
- ✦ Promotes early marriage, fertility awareness, and family support within the community.

#### Parsi Community:

- ✦ Parsis are members of the **Zoroastrian** faith, which follows the teachings of the ancient Iranian prophet Zoroaster (or Zarathustra).
- ✦ The Parsis trace their ancestry to Persian Zoroastrians who **migrated to India to escape religious persecution** following the rise of Islam in Persia.
- ✦ **Most Parsis live in Mumbai** and nearby towns and villages in western India, with smaller populations in Pakistan and Karnataka.

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- ✦ While not a Hindu caste, Parsis form a well-defined and close-knit religious community with a strong sense of identity and cultural heritage.

### India's Minority Communities

#### Minority Communities:

- ✦ The Central Government determines minority status under the **National Commission for Minorities Act (NCMA), 1992**, officially recognizing **Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Jains** (added in 2014), and **Zoroastrians (Parsis)** as minority communities.
- ✦ Together, they constitute around 19.3% of India's total population (**Census 2011**).

#### Constitutional Provisions:

- ✦ **Article 29** protects minorities' rights to preserve their distinct language, script, and culture, and prohibits discrimination based on religion, race, caste, or language.
- ✦ **Article 30** grants minorities the right to establish and manage educational institutions.

- 💡 **Reduced Travel Time:** The expressway will significantly **reduce the travel time** from Nagpur to Goa from 18 hours to just 8 hours.

- 💡 **District Connectivity:** The expressway will pass through **12 districts of Maharashtra**: Wardha, Yavatmal, Hingoli, Nanded, Parbhani, Beed, Latur, Dharashiv, Solapur, Sangli, Kolhapur, and Sindhudurg.

- ✦ The expressway will later be connected to the **Konkan Expressway** on the Goa-Maharashtra border.

- 💡 **Religious and Pilgrimage Site Connections:** The highway will **connect several major religious sites**, including Shakti Peethas like Mahur, Tuljapur, Kolhapur, and pilgrimage sites like Ambejogai.

- ✦ It will also link shrines of saints like Mukundaraj Swami, Jogai Devi, and **important Jyotirlingas (Aundha Nagnath and Parli Vajinath)**.

- ✦ Other sacred places such as Shri Vitthal Rukmini Temple in Pandharpur, Karanja-Lad, Akkalkot, Gangapur, Narsobachi Wadi, Audumbara, and Datta Guru shrines will also be connected.

- 💡 **Financial and Land Acquisition Details:** A loan of Rs 12,000 crore has been approved by **HUDCO** for land acquisition.

- ✦ About 7,500 hectares of land will be acquired from this fund.

- 💡 **Project Implementation:** The **Maharashtra Road Development Corporation (MSRDC)** will be responsible for implementing the entire project.

- 💡 **Farmer's Protest:** Farmers' protests over the Shaktipeeth highway project, which involves acquiring 8,000 hectares of land, have sparked political concerns. However, despite opposition, the government has continued with **land acquisitions**.

## Nagpur-Goa Shaktipeeth Expressway Project

### Why in News?

The state cabinet approved the provision of Rs 20,787 crore to accelerate the **Nagpur-Goa Shaktipeeth Expressway** project.

### Key Points

- 💡 **Route and Distance:** The expressway connects the Maharashtra-Goa border from Pawnar (Wardha district) in the east to Patra Devi (Sindhudurg district) in the west.
- ✦ The total length of the expressway will be 802.6 km.

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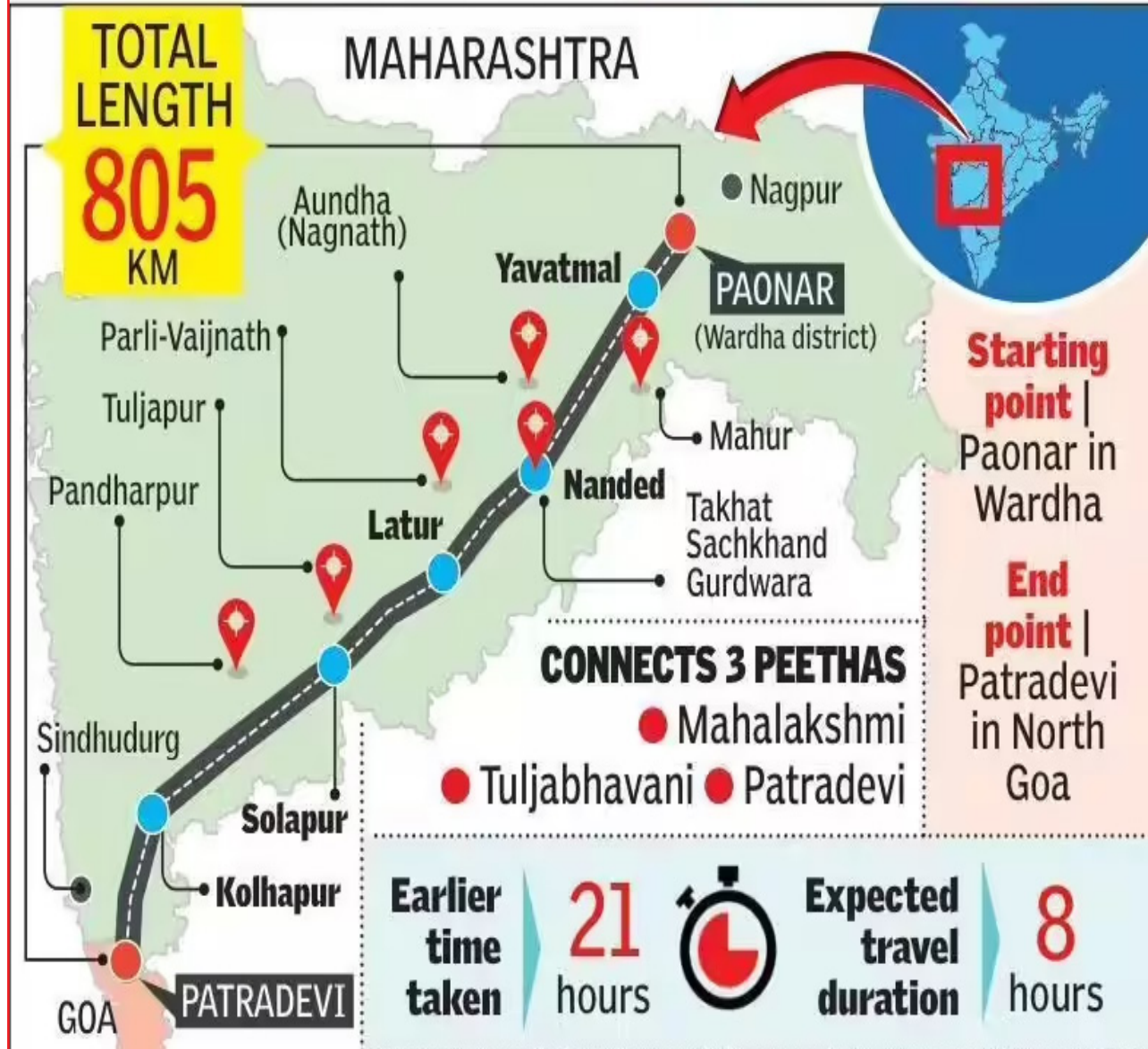
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# GO GOA FROM NAGPUR



**TOURISM DESTINATIONS:** Sewagram, Karanja Lad, Mahur, Aundha Nagnath, Takht Sachkhand Gurudwara, Parli Vajyanath, Ambejogai, Adampur of Saint Balumama, Manalvedha, Kunkeshwar, Narsobachiwadi, Tuljapur, Pandharpur & Patradevi



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## Establishment of Shahir Sable Research Centre

### Why in News?

The **Maharashtra government** has announced that it will establish an independent research centre dedicated to studying the state's experimental arts.

- 💡 This centre will be named after the legendary Marathi folk artist **Shahir Krishnarao Sable**.

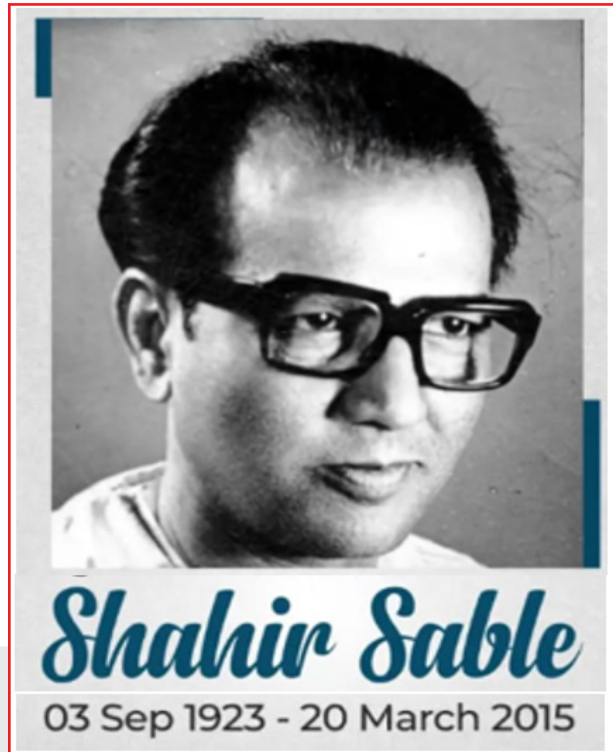
### Key Points

#### Research Centre:

- ✦ The new research centre will be located at the **P. L. Deshpande Maharashtra Kala Academy** in Mumbai.
- ✦ The primary aim of the centre is to facilitate in-depth **academic research** and systematic study of Maharashtra's experimental and folk arts.
  - ✍ Maharashtra has a rich and diverse legacy of experimental and folk art forms with great historical and cultural value, including **Shahiri, Powada, Jagran, Gondhal, Tamasha, Vag Natya, Dashavatari, Bharud, and Keertan**.
- ✦ The centre aims to systematically **classify, analyse,** and academically explore Maharashtra's experimental arts.
- ✦ It will serve as a **valuable resource hub** for undergraduate, postgraduate, and PhD scholars who wish to conduct research in this field.

#### Shahir Krishnarao Sable:

- ✦ He was a legendary **Marathi folk artist** who played a significant role in preserving and promoting Maharashtra's folk traditions.
- ✦ He is best known for composing the iconic song "**Jai Jai Maharashtra Majha**", which was officially declared the **state song in 2023**.
- ✦ In recognition of his contributions, he was awarded the **Padma Shri** in 1998.
- ✦ He was also an important figure in the **Samyukta Maharashtra movement**, which advocated for a separate **Marathi-speaking state**.



## Hindi As Third Language in Maharashtra Schools

### Why in News?

The **Maharashtra government** has issued a new directive mandating the **teaching of Hindi as a third language** in Marathi and English medium schools from **Classes 1 to 5**.

### Key Points

#### Hindi as Third Language:

- ✦ The **revised government resolution (GR)**, stated that **Hindi will "generally" be the third language**.
- ✦ The GR is part of implementing the **State Curriculum Framework for School Education 2024**, aligned with the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**.
- ✦ **Students can opt for another Indian language** if at least **20 students per grade** in a school **make such a request**.
  - ✍ In that case, the government will provide either a language teacher or online instruction.

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- ✦ The directive makes **Marathi** compulsory across all school mediums and mandates inclusion of the medium of instruction, Marathi, and English under the **three-language formula**.

#### NEP 2020 and the Three Language Formula:

- ✦ **NEP 2020 Policy:** Mandates that students learn three languages, with at least two being Indian languages.
- ✦ **Changes from Previous Policies:** Unlike the **NEP 1968**, which required Hindi, English, and a regional language, **NEP 2020** offers flexibility in language choices, allowing states and students to decide their language preferences.
- ✦ **Regional Flexibility:** The policy promotes multilingualism by respecting cultural and regional diversity, giving states and students the freedom to select languages.

#### Evolution of the Three Language Formula

- 💡 **Article 351 of the Constitution:** Directs the Union to promote the spread of the **Hindi language**.
- 💡 **Kothari Commission (1964-66):** Introduced the idea of the three-language formula, which was later included in the **National Policy on Education (1968)**.
- 💡 **NEP 1968:** Recommended the use of **regional languages** in primary and secondary education and advocated for their adoption at the university level as well.
- 💡 **1992 Programme of Action:** Suggested that the **mother tongue or regional language** should be the medium of instruction at the pre-school level.
- 💡 **Right to Education Act, 2009:** Stated that, whenever possible, the **medium of instruction** should be the child's **mother tongue**.
- 💡 **NEP 2020:** Advocates for using the **home language, mother tongue, local language, or regional language** as the medium of instruction at least until **Grade 5**, with a preference for extending this till **Grade 8** and beyond.

## Maharashtra Cabinet Approves Agri AI Policy

### Why in News?

The Maharashtra Cabinet approved the **MahaAgri-AI Policy 2025-29**, focusing on transforming the **agriculture sector** with the integration of **AI, robotics, drones**, and predictive analytics.

### Key Points:

- 💡 **Innovation and Incubation Centres:** The policy will establish **innovation and incubation centres** at four agricultural universities, guided by prestigious institutions such as the **Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs)** and the **Indian Institute of Science (IISc)**.
- 💡 **Funding and Implementation:** A fund of **Rs 500 crore** has been allocated for the first three years of the policy, accompanied by a **three-tier administrative structure** to ensure efficient execution.
- 💡 **Global Collaboration and Annual Summit:** An **independent centre** will be established to **foster global partnerships**, and an annual global summit will be organized to connect with investors, rotating locations across the state.
- 💡 **Policy Evolution:** The policy will be **updated every five years** to keep pace with rapid advancements in the AI sector.

## Servants of India Society (SIS)

### Why in News?

Tensions have reignited between **Pune-based Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics (GIPE)** and its parent body, the **Servants of India Society (SIS)**, with both parties express concerns regarding financial management matters.

### Key Points

#### Servants of India Society (SIS):

##### ✦ About

- 📌 Established on **12<sup>th</sup> June 1905**, in **Pune** by **Gopal Krishna Gokhale**, along with G.K. Devadhar, A.V. Patwardhan, and N.A. Dravid.

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- ✍ Gokhale envisioned the Society as a platform to train committed individuals who would serve the nation with a spirit of dedication and service.
- ✍ The Society aimed to **promote political education, constructive agitation, and constitutional methods** to further India's national interest.
- ✍ Members were viewed as missionaries of Indian nationalism, working for the upliftment of the people.
- ✦ **Prominent Members and Contributions:**
  - ✍ Early members included influential nationalists like V.S. Srinivasa Sastri, Hriday Nath Kunzru, and A.V. Thakkar.
  - ✍ The Society made notable contributions to **India's independence movement**, and its ideals continue to shape Indian public life.
  - ✍ The Society played a key role in shaping India's freedom struggle by nurturing leaders **committed to non-violence, reform, and constitutionalism**.

#### Gopal Krishna Gokhale



#### Early Life and Education:

- ✦ Gopal Krishna Gokhale was born on **9<sup>th</sup> May 1866** in Maharashtra.
- ✦ He belonged to the first generation of **Indians to receive a university education** and graduated from Elphinstone College in 1884.
- ✦ Gokhale was deeply **influenced by Western political thought**, especially the ideas of John Stuart Mill and Edmund Burke.
- ✦ He considered **Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade** his mentor and was regarded as Ranade's "**Manas Putra**" (spiritual son).

#### Political Career and Reform Work:

- ✦ He became a **senior leader of the Indian National Congress** and played a vital role in its moderate faction.
- ✦ In **1905**, he **founded the Servants of India Society** to promote education, social reform, and constitutional methods for achieving self-rule.
- ✦ Through his roles in the Congress, legislative councils, and civil society, Gokhale persistently advocated for social and political reforms.

#### Mentorship to Mahatma Gandhi:

- ✦ Gokhale was a **mentor to Mahatma Gandhi**, especially after Gandhi's return from South Africa.
- ✦ He introduced Gandhi to the realities of Indian society and politics and helped shape his early views on reform and nation-building.

#### Legislative Contributions:

- ✦ His **testimony before the Welby Commission** on India's finances earned him national acclaim.
- ✦ Gokhale's budget speeches in the Central Legislative Council stood out for their depth and statistical rigor.
- ✦ He played a key role in the formulation of the **Morley-Minto Reforms (1909)**, which expanded Indian participation in governance.

#### Legacy and Death:

- ✦ Gokhale was **known as a scholar-statesman** and is often hailed as India's greatest liberal leader of his time.
- ✦ He **passed away on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1915**.

## 29<sup>th</sup> Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC)

### Why in News?

The Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs chaired the **29<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC)** in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

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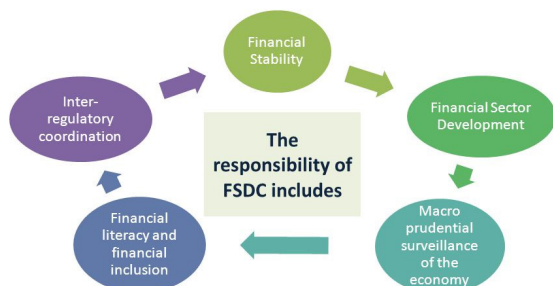
## Key Points

### About FSDC:

- ✦ The FSDC is a **non-statutory apex council** established by an executive order in **2010**. It functions **under the aegis of the Ministry of Finance**.
- ✦ The idea for creating the FSDC was first recommended by the **Raghuram Rajan Committee on Financial Sector Reforms in 2008**.
- ✦ It is **chaired** by the Union Finance Minister and includes the heads of financial sector regulators such as the **RBI, SEBI, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)**, and **Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)** and **Chief Economic Adviser (CEA)** among others.
- ✦ **Key Objectives:**
  - 📌 To monitor macroeconomic and financial sector developments.
  - 📌 To assess and manage systemic risks that may threaten financial stability.
  - 📌 To enhance inter-regulatory coordination among key financial sector regulators.
  - 📌 To foster financial sector development and promote financial inclusion across the country.

### Financial Stability and Development Council

*The FSDC, set up in 2010, is a body consisting all regulators and the Ministry of Finance. It is the highest forum in matters relating to financial stability. The Council is chaired by the Union Finance Minister*



### Deliberations of the 29<sup>th</sup> FSDC Meeting:

- ✦ **Focus on Macro-Financial Stability:**
  - 📌 The FSDC **discussed key issues concerning macro-financial stability and India's preparedness to manage associated risks.**

- 📌 The Council emphasised vigilance in light of both domestic and global macroeconomic trends.

### Cybersecurity and Resilience Strategy:

- 📌 Based on the analysis of sectoral **cybersecurity** preparedness and the **Financial Sector Assessment Programme (FSAP) 2024-25** recommendations, the FSDC proposed a financial sector-specific cybersecurity strategy.
- 📌 The aim is to **strengthen the cyber resilience framework** across financial regulators and institutions.

**Note:** The Financial Sector Assessment Program (FSAP) is a periodic assessment jointly conducted by the **IMF** and **World Bank** in countries with significant financial sectors, which **aims to comprehensively analyse financial stability and sector development**.

- 📌 India underwent its first FSAP in 2011-12 and the second in 2017 and India's third FSAP is scheduled for 2023-24, with reports expected to be published by February 2025.

## New Flatworm Species Discovered in Pune

### Why in News?

A new **regenerating flatworm species, *Dugesia punensis***, has been discovered in the Pashan Lake, Pune.

- 📌 The findings, published in the **Records of the Zoological Survey of India**, mark India's first discovery of a new planarian species since 1983.

**Note:** Planarians are aquatic flatworms **known for their remarkable regenerative abilities**, earning them the title '**immortal under the edge of a knife**'.

### Key Points

#### About *Dugesia punensis*:

- ✦ The species has a **spotted dark brown dorsal surface** and a **light brown back**.
- ✦ The ventral side is pale, and the eyes appear bright black, enclosed in auricular grooves.
- ✦ Body length ranges from 8mm to 12mm.
- ✦ Features include slightly reduced auricles, an elongated pharynx, and a long gonopore.
- ✦ The eggs are circular and reddish in appearance.

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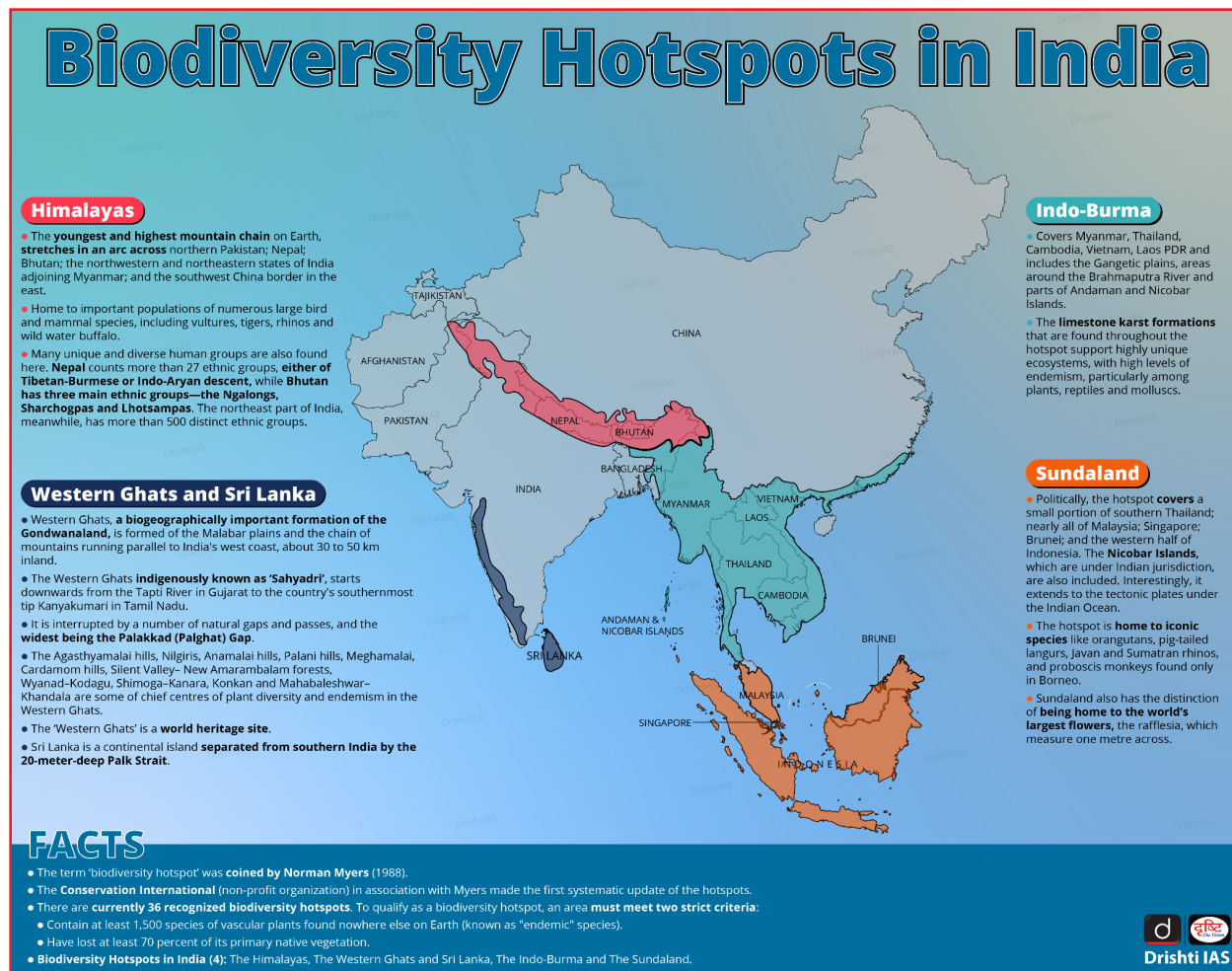


### Feeding and Regeneration:

- ✦ It feeds on chicken liver.
- ✦ Even after starvation for 15–20 days, the worm regenerates completely within 10–13 days.
- ✦ Researchers observed that *Dugesia punensis* is **morphologically more delicate** compared to known species.

### Ecological Significance:

- ✦ The discovery underscores Pashan Lake's role as a vital habitat for endemic species.
- ✦ Pashan Lake is part of the **Western Ghats biodiversity hotspot** and serves as a **critical wetland** habitat.



## Tamhini Wildlife Sanctuary

### Why in News?

The **Maharashtra Forest Department** partnered with **Microsoft** and Pune-based **CYDA (Centre for Youth Development and Activities)** to address the **eco-restoration** project in the Tamhini Wildlife Sanctuary.

### Key Points

#### About Tamhini Wildlife Sanctuary:

- ✦ Located 70 km from Pune, Tamhini Wildlife Sanctuary is known for its **lush biodiversity and scenic landscapes**.
- 📎 It was declared a **Wildlife Sanctuary in January 2013**.

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- ✦ Situated along the crest of the **Western Ghats**, the sanctuary features popular **eco-tourism spots** like **Andharban forest**, **Plus Valley**, and **Devkund**.
- ✦ It attracts a high number of visitors during the **monsoon season**, especially trekkers, birders, and nature lovers.
- ✦ **Biodiversity:**
  - 📌 **Mammals:** Home to 28 mammal species, including the **endangered Kondana Soft-furred Rat** (*Millardia kondana*).
  - 📌 **Birds:** Hosts 150 bird species, including 12 species endemic to India.
  - 📌 **Butterflies and Reptiles:** Records show 72 butterfly species and 18 species of reptiles.
  - 📌 **Invertebrates and Flora:** Includes 33 invertebrate species and a variety of rare and interesting plant life.
- ✦ **Notable Species:**
  - 📌 The **Indian Giant Squirrel (Shekaru)**, Maharashtra's state animal, is commonly seen here.
  - 📌 The forests support rich bird life and endemic insect populations, making it a vital habitat for biodiversity conservation.

# Western Ghats

One of the four biodiversity hotspots of India; recognised as a UNESCO WHS (2012)



### Names

- Sahyadri - northern Maharashtra; Sahya Parvatham - Kerala

### Diverted views about Mt. type

- View 1: Block Mt. formed due to down warping of a part of land into Arabian Sea
- View 2: Not true mt. rather the faulted edge of Deccan Plateau

### Major Rocks

- Basalt, granite gneiss, khondalites, metamorphic gneisses, crystalline limestone, iron ore

### Geographical Extent

- Satpura (in north) to the end of TN at Kanyakumari (in south)

### Mt. Ranges

- Nilgiri ranges, Shevaroys and Tirumala range
- Highest peak - Anamudi (Kerala)

### Rivers (originating)

- West-flowing: Periyar, Bharathappuzha, Netravathi, Sharavathi, Mandovi
- East-flowing: Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri, Tunga, Bhadra, Bhima, Malaprabha, Ghataprabha, Hemavathi, Kabini

### Endemic Species

- Nilgiri tahr (IUCN Status - EN)
- Lion-tailed macaque (IUCN Status - EN)

### Imp Protected Areas

- Biosphere Reserves - Agasthyamala and Nilgiri
- NP - Silent Valley, Bandipur, Eravikulam, Wayanad-Mudumalai, Nagarhole
- TR - Kalakad-Mundanthurai, Periyar

### Imp Passes

■ Thal Ghat Pass (Kasara Ghat)	■ Amba Ghat Pass
■ Bhore Ghat Pass	■ Naneghat Pass
■ Palakkad Gap (Pal Ghat)	■ Amboli Ghat Pass

### Significance

- Hydroelectricity production
- Influences Indian monsoon weather patterns
- Carbon sequestration (neutralise ~4 MT of carbon every year)
- One of the 8 global hottest hotspots of biodiversity (due to richness in species and endemism)
- Rich in iron, manganese and bauxite ores, timber, pepper, cardamom, oil palm and rubber
- Sizeable indigenous population (including PVTGs)
- Important tourism/pilgrimage centres

### Major Threats

- Mining, Industrialisation
- Massive extraction of forest produce
- Human-wildlife conflict, encroachment, illegal hunting
- Livestock grazing, deforestation
- Large hydropower projects
- Climate change

### Imp Committees

- Gadgil Committee (2011) (Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel)
  - » Recommendation: All of WG be declared as Ecological Sensitive Area (ESA) with only limited development allowed in graded zones.
- Kasturirangan Committee (2013)
  - » Recommendation: Instead of whole, only 37% of the total area of WG be brought under ESA + complete ban on mining, quarrying and sand mining be imposed in ESA.



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## Powai Lake

### Why in News?

In Maharashtra, locals launched a campaign to save **Powai Lake**, aiming to raise awareness about pollution and the spread of invasive weeds like **hyacinths**.

### Key Points

#### About the Powai Lake:

##### ✦ Location and Origin:

- ✎ Powai Lake is an **artificial lake** located in the **northern suburbs of Mumbai**.
- ✎ It was **constructed in 1891** by building a dam across the **Mithi River between two hillocks**.

##### ✦ Hydrological Features:

- ✎ The **catchment area** of the lake spans approximately 600 hectares.
- ✎ At its full supply level, the lake covers a water spread area of about 220 hectares.
- ✎ The lake water is primarily used for non-potable purposes such as gardening and industrial activities.

##### ✦ Current Environmental Concerns:

- ✎ In recent years, over 40% of the lake has shrunk due to urban pressures.
- ✎ The lake's **condition has worsened** with the rapid expansion of residential, commercial, and industrial zones around it.
- ✎ The discharge of **untreated sewage and solid waste**, particularly from nearby slums and residential settlements, has severely impacted water quality.

##### ✦ Inclusion Under the National Lake Conservation Plan (NLCP):

- ✎ In 1995, the **Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoE&F)**, under the **National Lake Conservation Plan (NLCP)**, assessed the deteriorating condition of Powai Lake.
- ✎ As a result, Powai Lake was selected as **one of ten major lakes** in India identified for **restoration and ecological improvement**.

##### ✦ Restoration Efforts:

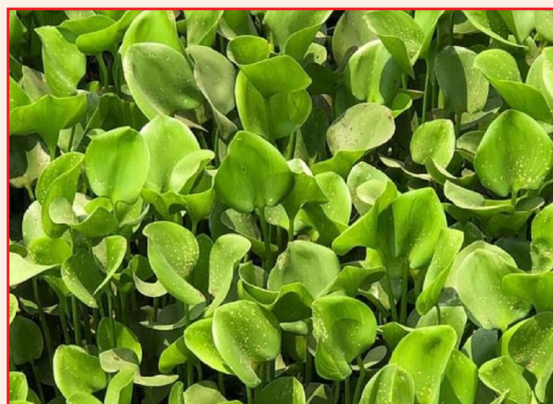
- ✎ The revival programme for Powai Lake was fully funded by NLCP.

- ✎ Restoration work was **officially launched in April 2002**.
- ✎ The programme was **implemented by the Bombay Municipal Corporation (BMC)**, now known as the **Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC)**.

### National Lake Conservation Plan (NLCP)

- ✎ Until 2012–13, the **Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC)** extended financial support to States and Union Territories under two separate schemes:
  - ✦ National Wetlands Conservation Programme (NWCP) – for identified **wetlands**, including some lakes.
  - ✦ National Lake Conservation Plan (NLCP) – for urban and peri-urban lakes.
- ✎ To **ensure better coordination and prevent duplication of efforts**, the NWCP and NLCP were **merged in February 2013**.
- ✎ The merged initiative is now known as the **National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Ecosystems (NPCA)**, a centrally sponsored scheme aimed at the integrated conservation of all aquatic ecosystems.

### Water Hyacinth



- ✎ Water hyacinth, scientifically known as ***Eichhornia crassipes* Mart. (Pontederiaceae)**, is an **aquatic weed common in waterbodies across South Asia, including India**.
- ✎ This is **not an indigenous species** but was **introduced to India during British colonial rule** as an ornamental aquatic plant from South America.
- ✎ The plant **produces beautiful purple flowers** that have **high aesthetic value**.

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## Independent Commission for STs in Maharashtra

### Why in News?

The Maharashtra government approved the formation of a separate **Scheduled Tribes (STs) Commission**. The move aligns with the central government's model of separate commissions for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and STs.

- 💡 This move is **expected to enhance the autonomy, authority, and effectiveness of these bodies.**

### Key Points

- 💡 **Independent Commission for STs:**
  - ✦ The **51<sup>st</sup> Tribal Advisory Committee** recommended establishing a separate and independent Commission for Tribals in the state.
  - ✦ The Maharashtra Cabinet has granted **in-principle approval** to confer Constitutional status on the proposed SC and ST commissions.
    - 📎 Additionally, Rs 4.20 crore has been sanctioned for administrative expenses, including infrastructure and salaries for commission members.
  - ✦ The **composition** of this Commission **will be similar to that of the Maharashtra Commission for SCs**, comprising one Chairperson and four non-governmental members.

### National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)

- 💡 **Formation:** NCST was set up in 2004 by amending **Article 338** and by inserting a **new Article 338A** in the **Constitution** through the **89<sup>th</sup> Constitution Amendment Act, 2003**. Hence, it is a constitutional body.
  - ✦ By this amendment, the erstwhile National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was **replaced by two separate Commissions: the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC), and the NCST.**
- 💡 **Objective:** Article 338A inter-alia gives powers to the NCST to oversee the implementation of various safeguards provided to **Scheduled Tribes (STs)** under the Constitution or under any other law for the time being in force or under any other order **to the Government and to evaluate the working of such safeguards.**

### National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC)

- 💡 NCSC is a **constitutional body** that works to **safeguard the interests of the scheduled castes (SC)** in India.
- 💡 **Article 338** of the constitution of India deals with this commission:
  - ✦ It provides for a **National Commission for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes** with duties to investigate and **monitor all matters relating to safeguards provided for them**, to inquire into specific complaints and to participate and advise on the planning process of their socio-economic development etc.

## Clean Plant Programme

### Why in News?

At India's first international Agri Hackathon in Pune, the Union government unveiled the 'Clean Plant Programme', aimed at providing **disease-free horticultural plants** to farmers, beginning with Maharashtra.

- 💡 The initiative **aims to boost agricultural productivity by offering healthy plants** for crops like grapes, oranges, and pomegranates.

### Key Points

- 💡 **About the Agri Hackathon:**
  - ✦ **International Agri Hackathon** served as the largest platform for fostering dialogue and **accelerating innovation in agriculture.**
  - ✦ The event was **jointly organised by** the Department of Agriculture, **Government of Maharashtra**, along with **other institutions of Pune.**
  - ✦ **Objective:**
    - 📎 It addresses the **challenges posed by a growing population, climate change, and agricultural uncertainties**, envisioning a future where agriculture can transform lives.
    - 📎 It seeks to harness the potential of innovation to **build sustainable and scalable agricultural solutions.**

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### 💡 About the Clean Plant Programme:

- ✦ The programme will be **launched with an investment of Rs 300 crore**, with a focus on Maharashtra, where the programme will start in Pune (**Grapes**), Nagpur (**Oranges**), and Solapur (**Pomegranates**).

📌 **Maharashtra** has emerged as the **horticulture hub of India**, driven by consistent government efforts and the innovative spirit of its farmers.

### ✦ Key Features of the Programme:

📌 **Disease-Free Plants:** Farmers will receive plants that are free from diseases, increasing productivity and reducing crop loss.

📌 **Financial Support for Nurseries:** The government will provide funding for large and medium-sized nurseries to support the production of disease-free seedlings.

- Large nurseries will receive Rs 3 crore, while medium-sized ones will receive Rs 1.5 crore.

📌 **Production of Seedlings:** The initiative aims to produce 8 crore disease-free seedlings annually, benefiting farmers across the nation.

- ✦ India aims to **collaborate with countries like Israel and the Netherlands** to enhance the Programme's impact.

### 💡 Lab to Land Initiative:

- ✦ To **bridge the gap between research and practice**, the government has launched the 'Lab to Land' initiative to directly connect agricultural scientists with farmers.

- ✦ Under this 16,000 agricultural scientists across the country will **work closely with farmers and agriculture departments** to transfer critical knowledge on seed production, disease diagnosis, and agricultural best practices.

### Status of Horticulture Sector in India

- 💡 As of 2023, India is the **2<sup>nd</sup> largest producer of fruits and vegetables**.

- 💡 The Indian horticulture sector contributes about **33%** to the agriculture **Gross Value Added (GVA)** making a very significant contribution to the Indian economy.

### 💡 Government Initiatives Related to Horticulture:

- ✦ **Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH)**
- ✦ **National Horticulture Mission (NHM)**
- ✦ **Horticulture Mission for North East & Himalayan States (HMNEH)**
- ✦ **Central Institute for Horticulture (CIH)**
- ✦ **Horticulture Cluster Development Programme**

## Astrolabe Excavated at Raigad Fort

### Why in News?

The **Archaeological Survey of India** and the Raigad Development Authority jointly unearthed a 'Yantraraj' (astrolabe) during an excavation at Raigad, the capital fort of **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj**.

- 💡 The excavation also uncovered a variety of artefacts, including **Shivrai coins minted by Shivaji Maharaj**, clay and glass utensils, as well as weapons and lamps.



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## Key Points

### Key Features of the Astrolabe:

- ✦ The astrolabe is **rectangular**, made of **copper-bronze**, and dated **Shaka 1519 (1597 CE)**.
- ✦ It was in use **during Raigad's renovation in 1656** and at the time of **Shivaji Maharaj's coronation in 1674**.
- ✦ The instrument's upper surface has inscriptions in the **Sanskrit language** and in **Devanagari script**, with two animal engravings—likely a tortoise or snake—at the centre.
- ✦ It features the inscribed words **"mukh"** (head) and **"poonchh"** (tail), likely used to align with the north-south orientation.
- ✦ Such astrolabes were **commonly used by astrologers and navigators** to track stars and calculate directions.
  - ✍ This discovery affirms that Raigad Fort, like other Maratha strongholds, was strategically planned, integrating

advanced knowledge of astronomy to aid its construction, defense, and administration.

### About Raigad Fort (Raigad District):

- ✦ **Significance:** On **6<sup>th</sup> June, 1674 CE** a grand **coronation ceremony of Shivaji Maharaj** was held on Raigad post, during which he **attained the title of "Chhatrapati"**.
- ✦ The fort served as the **second capital** of Shivaji Maharaj and played an **important role in the administration and expansion** of the Maratha Kingdom.
- ✦ It is part of the 12 forts nominated for **UNESCO World Heritage** under the title **"Maratha Military Landscapes of India"**.
  - ✍ It is the classic **example of Maratha architecture** and **best representation of the capital fort on a hill**, showcasing well-integrated design with the terrain and advanced structural typologies.



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## Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj



#### About:

- ✦ Born on **19<sup>th</sup> February 1630**, at **Shivneri Fort, Pune** was a visionary leader from the **Bhonsle clan** and the founder of the **Maratha Empire**, known for resisting the **Mughal Empire** and striving for **self-rule**.

#### Major Battles:

- ✦ Battle of Pratapgad (1659), Battle of Pavan Khind (1660), Sacking of Surat (1664), Battle of Purandar (1665), Battle of Sinhagad (1670), and Battle of Sangamner (1679).
- ✦ The **Wagh nakh** (tiger claw-shaped), was used by Shivaji to kill Afzal Khan in the **1659 Battle of Pratapgad**.

#### Titles:

- ✦ Chhatrapati, Shakakarta, Kshatriya Kulavantas, and Haindava Dharmodhhaarak.

#### Administration:

- ✦ Centralized administration with the **Ashtapradhan (Council of Eight Ministers)**, abolished the **Jagirdari System**, implemented the **Ryotwari System**, and built a **strong naval force** for coastal defense.
- ✍ Shivaji is renowned for his innovative **guerrilla warfare tactics**, which influenced subsequent rulers and shaped the **Maratha Military Landscapes**.

## Bharat Gen: India's First Indigenous AI Model

### Why in News?

Union Minister for Science & Technology launched '**Bharat Gen**'—India's first indigenously developed, government-funded, **AI-based Multimodal Large Language Model (LLM)** for Indian languages, at the **BharatGen Summit**.

- 💡 India has emerged as a **global leader in AI**, with platforms like the **Centralised Public Grievance Redressal and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS)** serving as international benchmarks for citizen engagement and effective grievance redressal.

#### Note:

- 💡 LLMs are large **general-purpose language models** capable of solving common language problems such as text classification, question answering, and text generation.
- 💡 These models are trained on massive datasets to understand patterns, structures, and relationships within human language.

### Key Points

#### About Bharat Gen:

- ✦ Bharat Gen is a part of the **National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS)** and aims to create **AI that is ethical, inclusive, multilingual, and deeply embedded in Indian values and ethos**.
- ✍ It is implemented through the **Technology Innovation Hubs (TIH) Foundation for IoT (Internet of Things) and IoE (Internet of Everything)** at IIT Bombay.
- ✦ The project integrates **text, speech, and image modalities**, offering seamless AI solutions in **22 Indian languages**.
- ✦ It aims to transform sectors like **healthcare, education, agriculture, and governance** by delivering region-specific AI solutions.

#### AI and Education:

- ✦ BharatGen echoes the inclusive spirit of the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**, which promotes interdisciplinary learning, helping students combine technical and social sciences for better innovation and employability.

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### 🔦 Launch of Generative AI Hackathon 2025:

- ✦ The summit also marked the launch of the **Generative AI Hackathon 2025**, inviting students to tackle real-world challenges using AI.

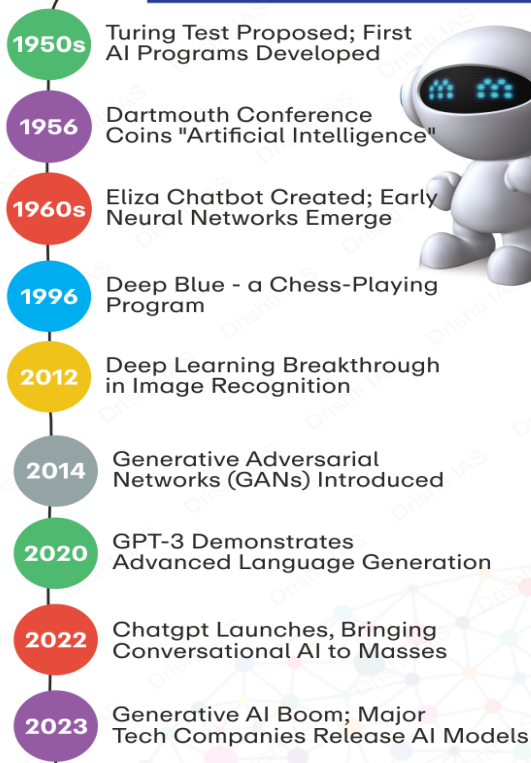
### 🔦 MoUs at the Summit:

- ✦ The BharatGen Summit **hosted major Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) exchanges to deepen collaboration** across government agencies, academia, and research institutions.

## Artificial Intelligence(AI)

*AI is the simulation of human intelligence in machines programmed to think and learn like humans, capable of problem-solving, reasoning, and adapting to new information.*

### AI Timeline - Major Milestones



### Applications of AI

- 👉 **Healthcare:** Personalised medicine
- 👉 **Finance:** Algorithmic trading
- 👉 **Transportation:** Autonomous vehicles
- 👉 **Marketing & Customer Service:** Targeted advertising, chatbots
- 👉 **Education:** Adaptive learning systems, personalised tutoring
- 👉 **Agriculture:** Crop monitoring
- 👉 **Cybersecurity:** Threat detection
- 👉 **Energy:** Smart grid management, consumption forecasting

### Concerns

- 👉 Deepfakes & misinformation
- 👉 Algorithmic bias
- 👉 Automation & job displacement
- 👉 Privacy issues
- 👉 Data ownership & liability issue
- 👉 Ethical decision-making complexes

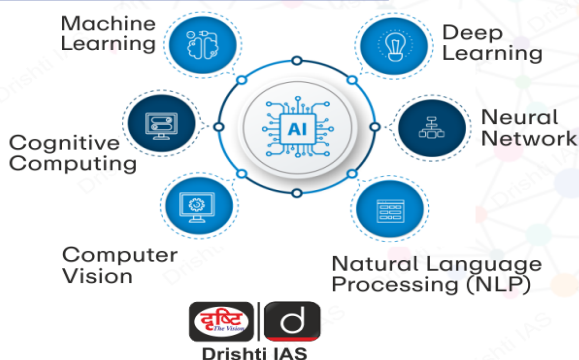
### Regulating AI

- 👉 **Global Partnership on AI (GPAI)** launched in 2020
- 👉 **Bletchley Declaration (2023):** Enhance Global Collaboration on AI
- 👉 **G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration (2023):** Harnessing AI responsibly for good and for all
- 👉 **Hiroshima AI Process (2023)** by G7

### India and AI

- 👉 **National Strategy For AI 2018**
- 👉 **AI For All:** Self-learning online program
- 👉 **GPAI Summit 2023** hosted by India
- 👉 **IndiaAI Mission 2024**
- 👉 **US India Artificial Intelligence (USIAI) Initiative:** AI cooperation in critical areas
- 👉 **AIRAWAT** (AI Research, Analytics and Knowledge Assimilation Platform): Supercomputer

### KEY COMPONENTS OF AI



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### National Mission-Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems

#### 💡 About:

- ✦ It was launched in 2018 by the Ministry of Science and Technology with an outlay of **Rs. 3,660.00 crore for a period of five years** to encourage innovation in new age technologies.
- ✦ It covers the entire India which includes Central Ministries, State Governments, Industry and Academia.

#### 💡 Objectives:

- ✦ The NM-ICPS is a **comprehensive Mission which would address technology development, application development, human resource development & skill enhancement, entrepreneurship and start-up development in Cyber Physical System (CPS) and associated technologies.**
- ✦ The Mission aims **at the establishment of 15 Technology Innovation Hubs (TIH), six Application Innovation Hubs (AIH) and four Technology Translation Research Parks (TTRP).**
- ✦ These Hubs & TTRPs will connect to **Academics, Industry, Central Ministries and State Government in developing solutions** at reputed academic, R&D and other organizations across the country in a hub and spoke model.
- ✦ The Hubs & TTRPs have **four focused areas along which the Mission implementation** would proceed, namely:
  - 📎 Technology Development,
  - 📎 HRD & Skill Development,
  - 📎 Innovation, Entrepreneurship & Start-ups Ecosystem Development, and
  - 📎 International Collaborations.

## Dharavi Project Master Plan Approved

### Why in News?

The **Maharashtra government** approved the master plan for the **Dharavi redevelopment project**, emphasizing that it should be developed in an environmentally friendly and integrated manner while preserving its original concept.

### Key Points

#### 💡 Dharavi Redevelopment Plan (DRP):

- ✦ The Dharavi Redevelopment Plan is a joint venture between the Adani Group and the Maharashtra government.
- ✦ The redevelopment plan aims for an **integrated development approach** encompassing residential, commercial, and industrial aspects.
- ✦ The redevelopment plan's **floor space index of over 4** indicates a **significant intensity of land use**, emphasizing the **multi-dimensional nature of the project.**
- ✦ This project highlights the **public-private partnership aspect** in addressing urban redevelopment challenges.

#### 💡 Concerns:

- ✦ Many **residents have expressed concerns** about the future of **small-scale manufacturing units and informal industries**, which form the economic backbone of Dharavi.
- ✦ Concerns have also been raised regarding the lack of public consultation and the absence of a clear rehabilitation roadmap.
- ✦ However, the government has emphasized that the top priority of the project should be the **rehabilitation of local artisans** and those running small-scale businesses.

#### 💡 About Dharavi:

- ✦ **Dharavi** is the **biggest slum cluster of Asia** that lies on prime property right in the middle of Mumbai.
- ✦ It was **founded in 1882** at the time of the British Raj.

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**Summary**



**Key Points**

**Details**


**Summary**

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