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**APRIL  
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## Musk Deer

### Why in News?

According to a **Central Zoo Authority (CZA)** report, Indian zoos have not yet started any breeding programme for the conservation of the **Musk Deer**.

### Key Points

#### ⚡ Lack of Population Data for Musk Deer:

- ✦ The report reveals **no updated population information** for the alpine musk deer (*Moschus chrysogaster*).
- ✦ No recent estimates exist regarding the species' numbers in the wild.

#### ⚡ Ineffective Conservation Response:

- ✦ In response to an RTI, the **Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change** said that **conservation is a state responsibility** and did not provide details about the **Himalayan Musk Project started in 1982**.
  - ✍ The 1982 Himalayan Musk Project aimed to promote in-situ conservation and animal welfare.
  - ✍ Over time, **focus shifted to high-profile species** like the **tiger**, neglecting musk deer conservation.

#### ⚡ History of Captive Breeding Attempts:

- ✦ **Captive breeding began in 1965 and intensified post-1975** under government schemes.
- ✦ Breeding centres at Kufri, Almora, and Chamoli failed to achieve goals of rewilding and musk extraction.
- ✦ All deer at **Kedarnath Wildlife Sanctuary's** breeding centre eventually died, leading to closure in 2006.

#### ⚡ Confusion in Species Identification:

- ✦ The CZA report highlights that **zoos often misidentified alpine musk deer (*Moschus chrysogaster*) and Himalayan musk deer (*Moschus leucogaster*)**.
- ✦ This confusion has hampered captive breeding efforts and proper species management.

#### ⚡ Poor Management of Captive Breeding Programmes:

- ✦ Although breeding plans exist for various endangered species, many are either non-functional or poorly managed.

- ✦ Issues such as poor record-keeping, species misidentification, and lack of systematic tracking have weakened conservation outcomes.

#### ⚡ Other Species Facing Similar Challenges:

- ✦ Endangered species like the **Tibetan antelope**, **Nilgiri tahr**, **Ganges river dolphin**, and **Hangul** also lack proper captive breeding programmes.
- ✦ **Wild water buffalo** and **pygmy hog** conservation efforts show some promise but remain fragile and underfunded.

#### ⚡ Gaps in Genetic Monitoring and Research:

- ✦ Breeding efforts suffer due to insufficient founder stock and lack of genetic monitoring.
- ✦ **India still lacks genome information** for many endangered species.
- ✦ **Research is constrained by forest regulations** that restrict the collection of animal tissue and blood samples.

#### ⚡ Need for Improved Scientific Investment:

- ✦ India needs significant investment in **de-extinction sciences, conservation genomics, and wildlife research infrastructure**.
- ✦ Existing facilities like **Hyderabad's Laboratory for the Conservation of Endangered Species** require better integration with zoo networks.

#### Central Zoo Authority

- ⚡ The Central Zoo Authority (CZA) is a **statutory body** under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, **established in 1992 under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**.
- ⚡ It is chaired by the Environment Minister and has 10 members and a member-secretary.
- ⚡ Its objective is to complement and strengthen the national effort in conservation of rich biodiversity.

## NHRC Condemns Pahalgam Attack

### Why in News?

The **National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)**, India, expresses deep distress over **terrorists killing 28 people after identifying their faith in the Pahalgam area** of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir on 22nd April, 2025.

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## Key Points

### 💡 Condemnation of the Attack:

- ✦ The Commission strongly condemns the brutal attack on unarmed, innocent civilians who were on a holiday in the valley.
- ✦ This heinous act has deeply disturbed the conscience of every right-thinking individual, as it involves a serious **violation of human rights**, affecting the victims and their families.

# NATIONAL HUMAN Rights COMMISSION (NHRC)

*According to NHRC, Human Rights are the rights relating to life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual guaranteed by the Constitution or embodied in the International Covenants and enforceable by courts in India*

- Watchdog of Human Rights in India
- **Estd:** 1993 (in conformity with Universal Declaration of Human Rights)
- **Act:** Protection of Human Rights Act (PHRA), 1993

### State Human Rights Commissions

- Also constituted under the PHR Act, 1993
- **Appointment of Members:** by Governor
- **Removal of Members:** by President

## Human Rights Day: 10 December

### Functions

- ④ Investigates Complaints of human rights violations
- ④ *Suo Moto* cognizance of cases
- ④ Reviews and recommends human rights implementation
- ④ Spreading human rights awareness
- ④ Conduct studies, publish reports on human rights issues

### Powers

- ④ Summon individuals, examine witnesses, and receive evidences
- ④ Inspect prisons and other institutions to ensure conditions are humane
- ④ Intervene in court proceedings relating to human rights

## Members of NHRC

### Composition

- ④ 5 full-time members and 7 deemed members
- ④ **Chairperson:** Retired CJI/Judges of the SC
- ④ **Administrative Head:** Secretary-General

### Appointment

- ④ All members appointed by **President** on recommendations of a **6-member** committee (PM, Speaker of LS, Deputy Chairman of RS, Union Home Minister and Leaders of Opposition of both Houses of Parliament)

### Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) Status

- NHRC has been accredited '**A**' Status since 1999
- Retained '**A**' Status: 2006, 2011 and 2017
- Suspension of '**A**' Status: 2023 and 2024

### Tenure

- ④ 3 years / till age 70 (whichever is earlier)

### Removal

- ④ President can remove the chairman or any member
- ④ **Ground:** Charges of proved misbehaviour or incapacity



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### Role of Terrorism in Human Rights Violations:

- ✦ Terrorism has consistently been recognized as one of the primary causes of human rights violations globally.
- ✦ Immediate **action** is necessary **against those who aid, abet, support, or advance terrorism**, holding them accountable for the devastating impact of this menace.
- ✦ Failing to take action may lead to the erosion of democratic values, increased intimidation, reprisals, community disharmony, and grave violations of human rights, including the **rights to life, liberty, equality, fraternity, and livelihood**.

### State Accountability and Justice:

- ✦ The Commission expects the **State to take all required measures to establish accountability**, ensure justice for the perpetrators, and provide support to the victims' families in every possible way.

## Centre Emergency Evacuation Measures for Pahalgam Tourists

### Why in News?

After the **Pahalgam terror attack**, the Union Civil Aviation Minister began monitoring the situation to **ensure quick help for affected tourists**. Four **special flights have been arranged from Srinagar**, with more on standby for evacuations.

### Key Points

#### Urgent Meeting with Airlines:

- ✦ The Union Minister held an **emergency meeting with all airline operators**.
- ✦ He firmly directed airlines to **avoid surge pricing and maintain standard fares**, ensuring passengers are not burdened during the crisis.

- ✦ He also directed all airlines to **ensure dignified and timely transportation of deceased victims to their home states**.

#### IndiGo Offers Relief Measures:

- ✦ **IndiGo announced waivers on rescheduling and cancellation fees** for bookings made on or before 22 April, valid until 30 April.
- ✦ The airline also introduced two special flights to support evacuation and travel needs.

### Terrorism

- 💡 It is the **deliberate and unlawful use of violence and intimidation**, especially against civilians, to instill fear and achieve political, religious, or ideological goals.
- ✦ It seeks to influence governments or societies by creating a **climate of fear, disruption, and uncertainty**.
- ✦ India maintains a strong stance against terrorism with a **"zero tolerance" policy**.
- ✦ However, there are **no universally accepted definitions of terrorism**, making it difficult to classify specific activities as terrorist acts.
- 💡 This ambiguity gives terrorists an advantage and enables some countries to remain silent and veto actions in global institutions.

## Violation of Ceasefire at LOC

### Why in News?

Days after the **Pahalgam terror attack**, the Pakistan Army fired from multiple posts along the **Line of Control (LoC)**, violating the ceasefire. Indian forces responded with retaliatory fire, Indian Army officials confirmed.

### Key Points

#### Pahalgam Terror Attack Triggers Crisis:

- ✦ On 22 April 2025, **terrorists killed 26 tourists in a brutal attack in Pahalgam**, Jammu and Kashmir.
- ✦ The attack has sparked nationwide outrage and triggered widespread protests demanding tougher action against Pakistan.

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### India Takes Diplomatic Countermeasures:

- ✦ The central government **closed the Integrated Check Post (ICP)** at Attari.
- ✦ It suspended the **South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Visa Exemption Scheme (SVES)** for Pakistani nationals and gave them 40 hours to return.
- ✦ India also reduced the strength of diplomatic staff in both High Commissions.
- ✦ India has **suspended the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty (IWT)** until Pakistan ceases its support for **cross-border terrorism**.
  - ✍ It reflects a shift in India's strategic calculus, using **hydrological leverage** as a pressure tool.

### Indus Waters Treaty

- ✦ The IWT, **signed in 1960 in Karachi** after nine years of negotiations between **India and Pakistan**, was mediated by the **World Bank**.
  - ✦ The treaty allocates the **"Eastern Rivers"** of the **Indus system** (Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej) to India for unrestricted use, while the **"Western Rivers"** (Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab) are reserved for Pakistan, effectively giving **Pakistan access to about 80% of the total water**.
    - ✍ India is allowed limited **non-consumptive uses of the Western Rivers**, such as for navigation, agriculture, and hydroelectricity, subject to design and operational conditions under the treaty.
  - ✦ IWT established a **Permanent Indus Commission (PIC)** to ensure annual dialogue and cooperation, and laid out a **three-tier dispute resolution mechanism**, including resolution at the PIC level, through a **Neutral Expert** (appointed by the World Bank or jointly by the India and Pakistan), or if needed, a **Court of Arbitration**.

### The Indus Waters Treaty (IWT)

■ The distribution of waters of the Indus and its tributaries between India and Pakistan is governed by the Indus Water Treaty (IWT).

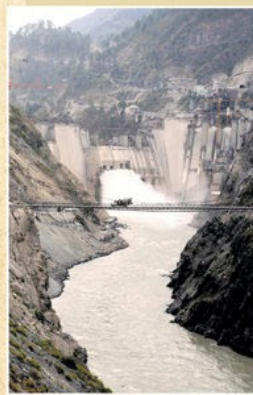
■ Was signed on Sept 19, 1960, between India, Pakistan and a representative of World Bank after eight years of negotiations.

■ Partition of India cut across the Indus river basin, which has the Indus river, plus five of its main tributaries.

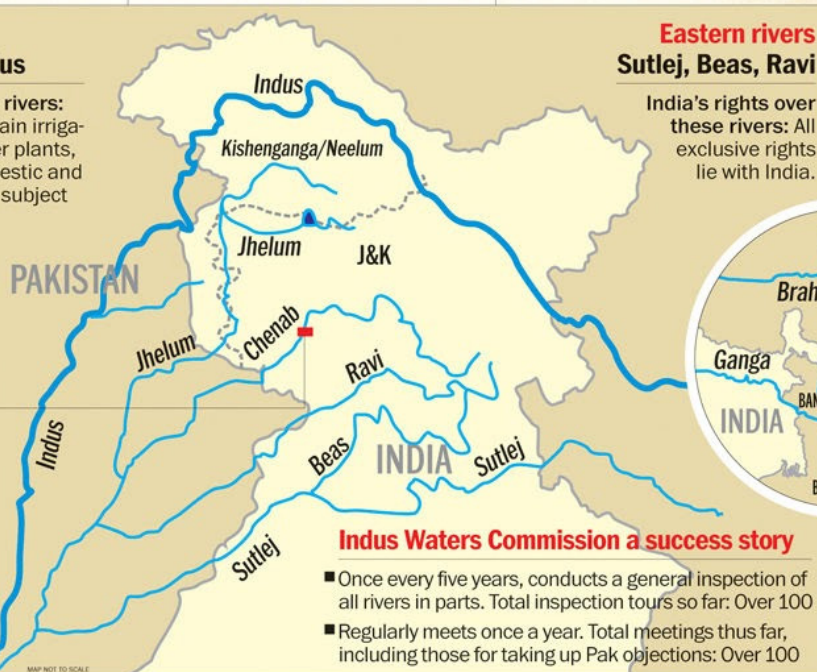
#### Western rivers

#### Chenab, Jhelum, Indus

India's rights over these rivers: Limited — can set up certain irrigation, run-of-the-river power plants, very limited storage, domestic and non-consumptive use, all subject to conditions



Baglihar dam on Chenab



#### Eastern rivers

#### Sutlej, Beas, Ravi

India's rights over these rivers: All exclusive rights lie with India.

#### Indus Waters Commission a success story

- Once every five years, conducts a general inspection of all rivers in parts. Total inspection tours so far: Over 100
- Regularly meets once a year. Total meetings thus far, including those for taking up Pak objections: Over 100

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## Pahalgam Terror Attack

### Why in News?

**Terrorists** launched a **deadly attack in Anantnag district, Jammu & Kashmir**, killing at least 26 people.

- The attack's timing coincided with the **Indian Prime Minister's visit to Saudi Arabia** and the **US Vice President J.D. Vance's tour of India**, suggests a deliberate move aimed at **sending a provocative geopolitical message**.

### Key Points

#### Brutal Assault in Baisaran Meadows:

- Terrorists attacked a group of around 40 tourists in the Baisaran meadows near Pahalgam.
- Eyewitnesses said the terrorists fired with automatic rifles and small arms, and allegedly checked identities (religion) before shooting victims at close range.
- This is the **first major terror attack targeting civilians** in Kashmir since the **abrogation of Article 370** in 2019.

#### Terror Group Claims Responsibility:

- The Resistance Front (TRF)**, a **Lashkar-e-Taiba** offshoot, claimed responsibility for the attack.
- TRF opposed the issuance of 85,000 domicile certificates to non-locals or "a pathway for demographic change."
- Security agencies have not confirmed the authenticity of the claim.

#### Strategic Exploitation of Terrain:

- Officials stated that terrorists took advantage of Baisaran's non-motorable terrain, delaying emergency response.
- The area, though remote, lies within Pahalgam's **high-security zone** due to its proximity to the **Amarnath shrine**.

#### Consequences of the attack:

- Security Setback in Kashmir:**
  - The attack severely **dents the narrative of normalcy and stability** following the abrogation of Article 370.
  - It raises serious **concerns over the effectiveness of security measures** and exposes vulnerabilities in counterterrorism efforts.
- Blow to Tourism and Local Economy:**
  - As a major tourist destination, Pahalgam is likely to witness a **sharp decline in visitor numbers**, especially during the crucial summer season.
  - The **dip in tourism will directly impact local businesses, hospitality services, and livelihoods** that rely heavily on seasonal footfall.
- Diplomatic and International Fallout:**
  - The attack occurred during the visit of key global leaders, casting India in a light of instability and internal unrest.
  - It risks **diplomatic unease and may strengthen adversarial propaganda**, particularly from Pakistan, on the international stage.
- Risk of Communal Polarization:**
  - The **selective targeting of civilians based on identity** hints at an **attempt to stoke religious divisions**.
  - Such actions carry the potential to **fuel communal tensions** and disrupt the social fabric, which aligns with the terrorist agenda of destabilisation through fear and division.

#### The Resistance Front (TRF)

- Formed in 2019**, TRF has emerged as a significant player in the region. It is believed to be a **front for Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)** and has been involved in several high-profile attacks.

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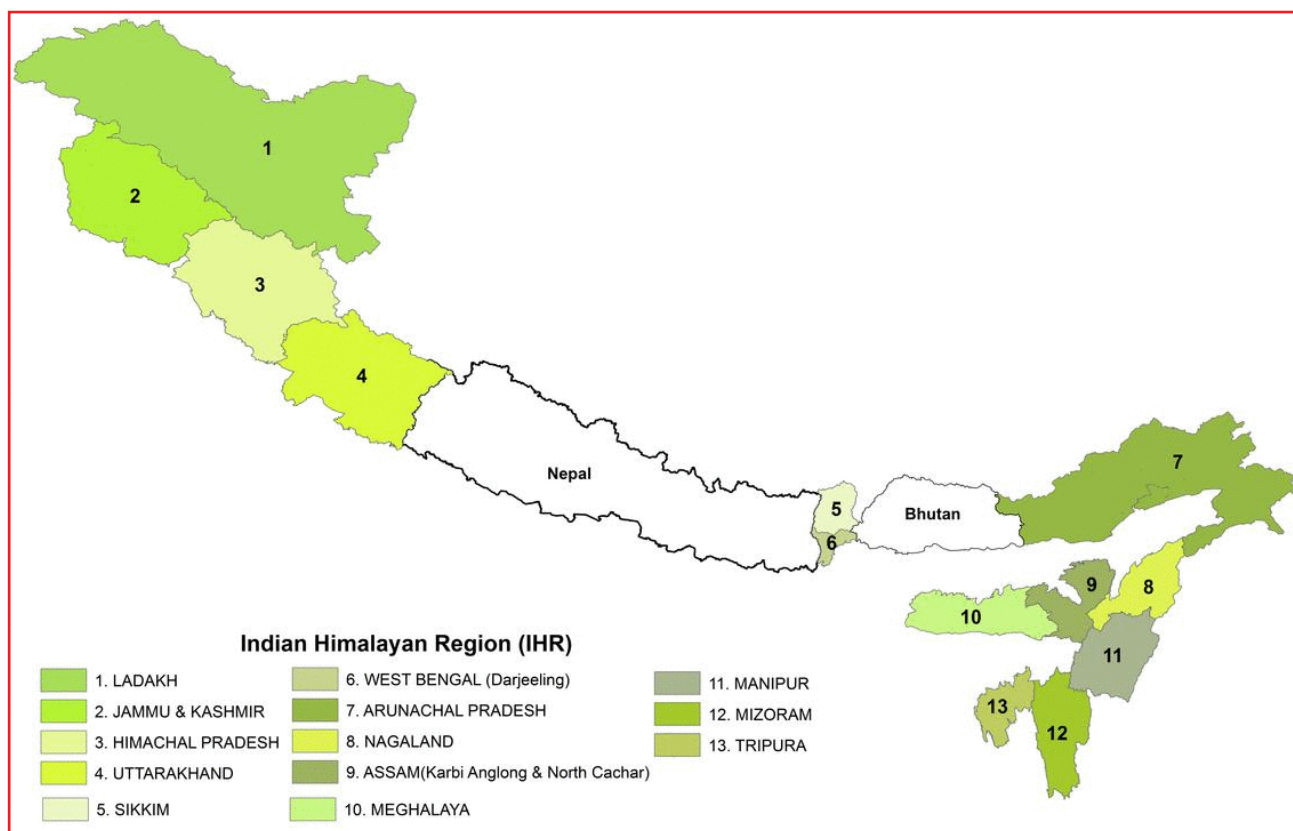
### Terrorism

- 💡 It is the **deliberate and unlawful use of violence and intimidation**, especially against civilians, to instill fear and achieve political, religious, or ideological goals.
  - ✦ It seeks to influence governments or societies by creating a **climate of fear, disruption, and uncertainty**.
  - ✦ India maintains a strong stance against terrorism with a **“zero tolerance” policy**.
  - ✦ However, there are **no universally accepted definitions of terrorism**, making it difficult to classify specific activities as terrorist acts.
    - 📎 This ambiguity gives terrorists an advantage and enables some countries to remain silent and veto actions in global institutions.

## Extreme Weather Events in J&K

### Why in News?

The **occurrence of cloudburst, flash flood, and landslide**, in Ramban, Jammu & Kashmir caused deaths, damaged buildings, disrupted transport, and displaced many. This highlights the issue of increasing frequency of extreme weather events in the **ecologically sensitive Himalayan region**.



### Key Points

#### Cloudburst

- 💡 A cloudburst is a **localised extreme rainfall event, defined as 10 cm or more rainfall** within an hour over an area of approximately 10 km<sup>2</sup>.

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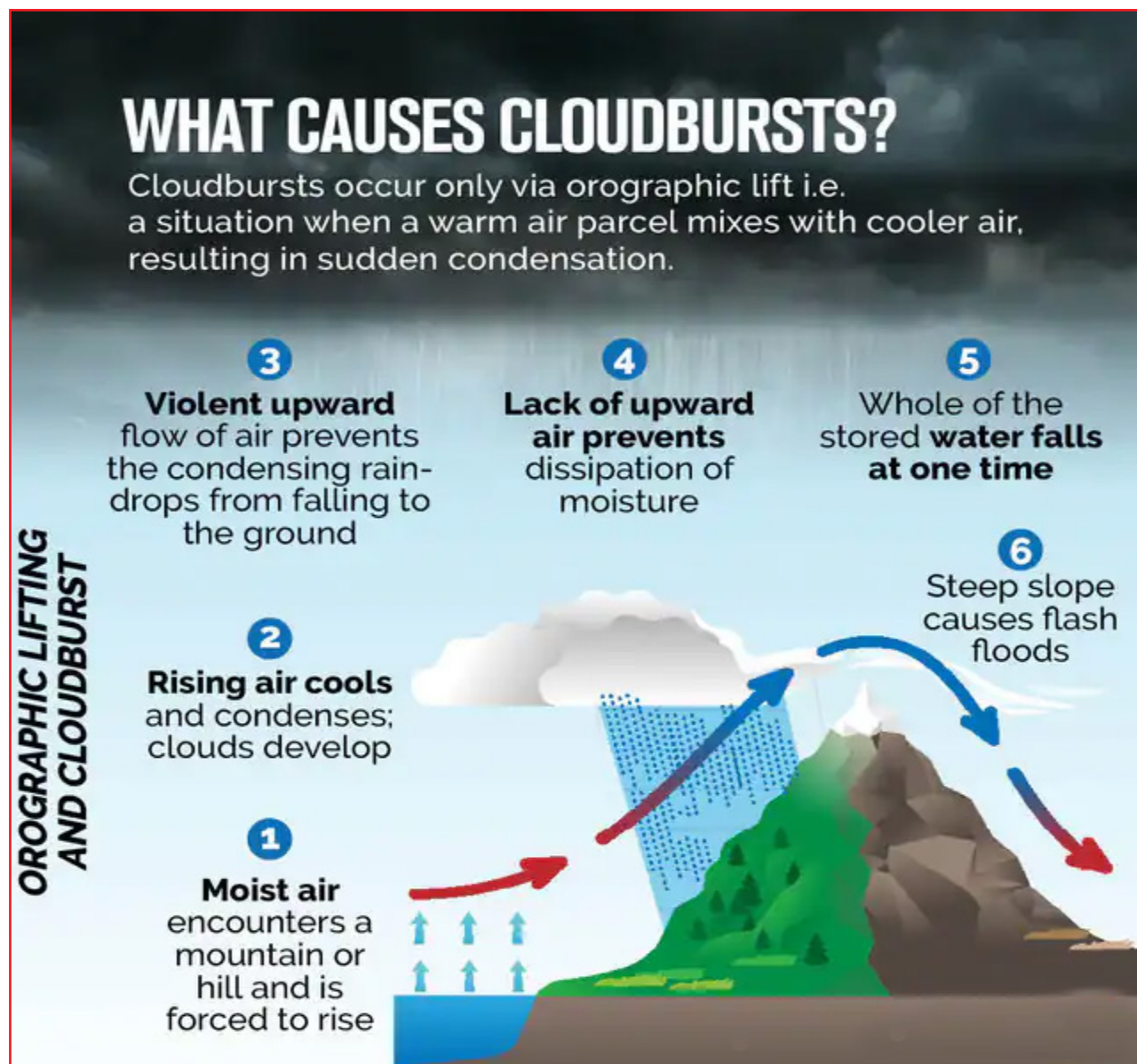


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- 💡 The phenomenon is common in hilly regions due to **orographic lift**—where warm air rises along mountain slopes, cools rapidly at higher altitudes, and releases accumulated moisture as sudden, intense rainfall.
- ✦ **Cloudbursts are difficult to predict or monitor** due to their localized and short-lived nature.
- 💡 It can trigger **flash floods and landslides** by overwhelming natural and artificial drainage.
- 💡 **Cloudbursts in Himachal Pradesh (2024)** and **Uttarakhand (2021)** caused fatal floods, landslides, and extensive damage to infrastructure.



### Flash Floods

- 💡 A flash flood **occurs when sudden, intense rainfall leads to rapid runoff into rivers, streams, and drainage systems**, especially in rocky terrains that have low water absorption capacity.
- 💡 These **floods are short-lived but violent**, and can result in serious loss of life, unlike **riverine floods that are slower but more damaging to property**.

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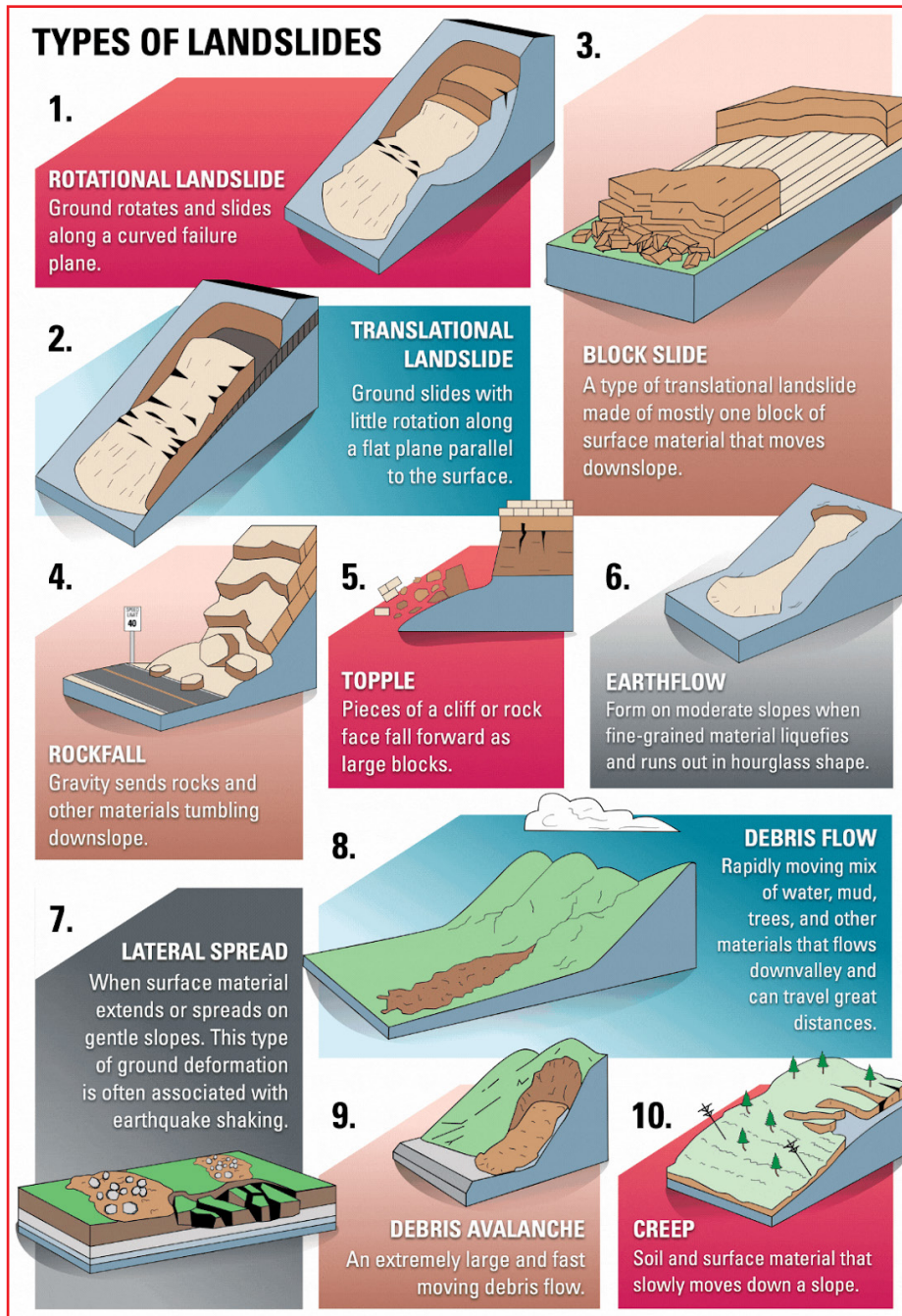


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## Landslide

- ⚡ A landslide is the **downward movement of soil, rocks, and debris** due to **gravity**, often triggered by water infiltration.
- ✦ **Excess rainfall reduces soil strength and friction**, making it easier for slopes to fail.
- ⚡ Landslides in hilly areas block roads, destroy homes, and even **cause secondary flooding by displacing water bodies**.
- ✦ The **2021 Chamoli landslide**, triggered by heavy rain and a glacier burst, led to widespread flooding and fatalities.



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### Why Himalayan Regions Like Ramban Are Vulnerable?

- 💡 The Himalayas are **young fold mountains**, tectonically active and prone to erosion, making the region naturally unstable.
  - ✦ Roads, buildings, and dams are **often built without adequate slope stabilization** or environmental assessments, **increasing the risk of disaster**.
- 💡 **Loss of vegetation reduces soil cohesion**, which increases the chances of landslides and slope failure.
- 💡 The **frequency of extreme weather events** such as cloudbursts is **rising due to changing climate patterns**, leading to intense and erratic rainfall.
  - ✦ Local populations often lack the training and resources to respond quickly and effectively during such disasters.

### Mitigation Measures

- 💡 Enhance **satellite-based monitoring and real-time forecasting tools** to track localised extreme weather events.
- 💡 Enforce **eco-sensitive construction norms**, especially in hilly and ecologically fragile districts like Ramban.
- 💡 **Integrate climate vulnerability assessments** into district-level disaster management plans and planning processes.
- 💡 **Train local communities in evacuation protocols** and first-response mechanisms to minimise casualties during extreme weather events.

## Paediatric Education Network Portal

### Why in News?

Jammu and Kashmir **Lieutenant Governor** Manoj Sinha launched the **Paediatric Education Network's free online portal**, developed by leading paediatricians and academicians.

### Key Points

#### 💡 About the Initiative:

- ✦ It aims to **strengthen paediatric education and improve access to quality learning tools** for practitioners and learners across the medical community.
- ✦ Lieutenant Governor acknowledged the platform's goal to **enhance paediatric healthcare education and empower medical professionals**, students, and institutions with reliable, updated resources.

#### 💡 Platform Features:

- ✦ The Paediatric Education Network serves as a **comprehensive, user-friendly hub for child health knowledge**.
- ✦ It offers a range of materials, including:
  - 📎 Lectures
  - 📎 Clinical guidelines
  - 📎 Case studies
  - 📎 Interactive modules
  - 📎 Expert insights
  - 📎 Accessibility

## J&K to Develop Tourism Destinations

### Why in News?

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister announced that the government plans to develop nine **new tourism destinations** across the Union Territory.

- 💡 He expressed hope that the **World Bank** would move beyond its "traditional reluctance" and agree to fund projects in the region.

### Key Points

#### 💡 New Tourism Destinations in Pipeline:

- ✦ The J&K government has identified **nine new tourist destinations for development** with assistance from multilateral funding agencies.

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- ✦ These destinations aim to **ease tourist pressure on already saturated hotspots** like Gulmarg, Pahalgam, and Sonmarg, while also opening up lesser-known areas in Jammu.

#### 💡 World Bank Engagement and Investment Outlook:

- ✦ The **World Bank has agreed to fund the preparation of project reports** for the nine destinations.
- ✦ Once the reports are complete, the government plans to approach the same agencies for full-scale funding, aiming to overcome traditional reluctance toward funding in J&K.
- ✦ The government is targeting an **estimated investment of Rs 5,500 crore** to build essential infrastructure across these locations.

#### 💡 Value-Based Tourism:

- ✦ The CM emphasized a shift from volume-driven tourism to value-based tourism, focusing on enhanced tourist experiences and higher-quality services.
- ✦ He underlined the need to improve hotel standards, visitor experiences, and the overall satisfaction of tourists to encourage repeat visits.

#### World Bank

##### 💡 About:

- ✦ It was **created in 1944**, as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) along with the IMF. The IBRD later **became the World Bank**.
- ✦ The World Bank Group is a unique global partnership of five institutions working for sustainable solutions that reduce poverty and build shared prosperity in developing countries.
- ✦ The World Bank is one of the **United Nations'** specialized agencies.

##### 💡 Members:

- ✦ It has **189 member countries**.
- ✦ **India is also a member country**.

##### 💡 Major Reports:

- ✦ **Ease of Doing Business** (Stopped publishing).
- ✦ **Human Capital Index**.
- ✦ **World Development Report**.

#### 💡 Its Five Development Institutions:

- ✦ International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)
  - ✦ International Development Association (IDA)
  - ✦ International Finance Corporation (IFC).
  - ✦ Multilateral Guarantee Agency (MIGA)
  - ✦ International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID)
- 📌 India is not a member of ICSID.

## Review of Social Welfare Schemes in Jammu & Kashmir

### Why in News?

The Jammu & Kashmir Social Welfare Department **has identified over 1.14 lakh children suffering from malnutrition** as part of its intensified outreach and intervention programme.

### Key Points

#### Findings of the Department:

##### 💡 **Malnutrition** and Health Interventions:

- ✦ Over 1.14 lakh children with nutrition-related health issues have been identified, including cases of **severe and moderate malnutrition, as well as anaemia**.
- 📌 These children are now being provided with special nutritional support to improve their health.

##### 💡 Coverage and Monitoring:

- ✦ The **Supplementary Nutrition Programme** has reached **9.14 lakh people**.
- ✦ **99% Aadhaar verification** has been achieved, ensuring transparency and preventing misuse.
- ✦ **22.76 lakh home visits** (96% of the target) were made to identify and assist beneficiaries.

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### Child and Women Welfare:

- ✦ 116 child care homes established under **Mission Vatsalya** for vulnerable children.
- ✦ **Mission Shakti** is being implemented for women empowerment and protection.
- ✦ Financial support for girl children and marriage assistance for economically weaker sections were being provided under the **Ladli Beti Scheme**.
- ✦ Two Abhinanda Homes will be established—residential schools and rehabilitation centres for marginalised children in both J&K divisions.

### Support to Marginalised Communities:

- ✦ **Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhuyday Yojana (PM-AJAY)** is focusing on the holistic development of **Scheduled Castes (SCs)**.
- ✦ Scholarships are provided for minorities, SCs, and OBCs.
- ✦ Prosthetic aids are offered to **persons with disabilities**.
- ✦ The department also ensures pensions and scholarships for militancy-affected families.
- ✦ It runs **Pahari hostels for tribal communities** along with proactive enforcement of more than 14 social justice laws across J&K.

### Anganwadi and Saksham Centres:

- ✦ The government is **strengthening Anganwadi infrastructure** across J&K by upgrading centres into Saksham Anganwadis with modern facilities.
- ✦ There is a **plan to upgrade 500 more centres by 2025–26** to enhance services and support for children.

### Budget and Funding:

- ✦ **FY 2024–25:** ₹2,496.25 crore allocated, with 86% utilisation (₹2,147.24 crore).
- ✦ **FY 2025–26:** Budget increased by 68% to ₹4,361.14 crore, reflecting government's renewed focus on social protection.

### Welfare Schemes

#### Mission Shakti:

- ✦ It is a **scheme of the Ministry of Women and Child Development** aimed at strengthening interventions for women safety, security and empowerment.
- ✦ **Sub-Schemes:** Samarthya and Sambhal

#### Mission Vatsalya:

- ✦ It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) **implemented to support Children in Need of Care and Protection (CNCP)** and Children in Conflict with Law (CCL) through Institutional and Non-Institutional Care.

#### Ladli Beti Scheme:

- ✦ The **social assistance scheme** by the **Jammu & Kashmir Government** supports newborn girl children of J&K and Ladakh (born on or after **April 1, 2015**) to address the **declining female sex ratio** and ease financial burdens for parents.

#### PM-AJAY:

- ✦ It is a **comprehensive scheme** amalgamating three Centrally Sponsored Schemes, including **Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY)**, **Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan (SCA to SCSP)**, and **Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana (BJRCY)**.
- ✦ This initiative, **launched in the fiscal year 2021-22**, aims to **uplift SC communities** by generating employment opportunities through skill development, income-generating schemes, and various initiatives.

## Brigade Commander-Level Flag Meeting in J&K

### Why in News?

To ease **Line of Control (LoC)** tensions, Indian and Pakistani brigadiers held a flag meeting at **Chakan-Da-Bagh in Poonch**, discussing ceasefire breaches, infiltration, and border management.

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## Key Points

### Commitment to Ceasefire Agreement:

- During the meeting the Indian Army strongly urged Pakistani counterparts to honour the **renewed ceasefire agreement** signed on **25th February 2021**.
- The message came in response to **recent cross-border firing** and an attempted intrusion by Pakistani troops in the Krishna Ghati sector on **1st April 2025**.
  - Indian soldiers successfully foiled the infiltration attempt, which **triggered intense and intermittent ceasefire violations** over the next two days.
- The Indian delegation raised serious concerns about the use of **Improvised Explosive Device (IED)** and recent terrorist infiltration bids.

### Concerns Over Border Stability:

- Despite the 2021 ceasefire pact significantly reducing cross-border violations, recent developments have raised **concerns about deteriorating border stability**.
- Both armies, however, reiterated the importance of dialogue and adherence to the ceasefire to avoid further escalation.

Line of Control



- The Line of Control (LoC) emerged from the 1948 ceasefire line negotiated by the **United Nations (UN)** after the Kashmir War.
- It was designated as the LoC in 1972, **following the Shimla Agreement** between the two countries.
- LoC is **demarcated up to the Siachen Glacier** (Point NJ9842)- the world's highest battlefield.
- LoC is delineated on a map signed by the Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) of both armies and has the international sanctity of a legal agreement.

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## Acting Chief Justice of J&K Appointed

### Why in News?

On 9th April 2025, the Law Ministry announced that Justice Sanjeev Kumar has taken charge as the acting Chief Justice of the Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court.

### Key Points

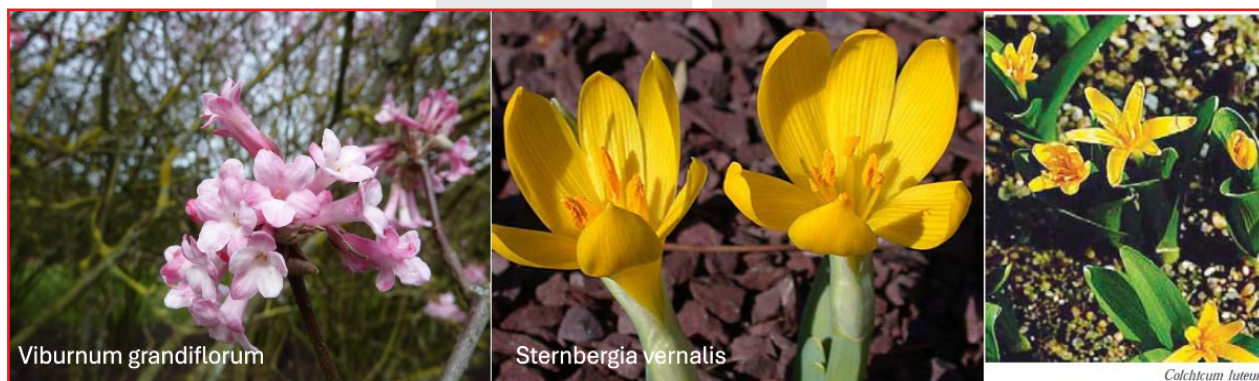
#### Appointment of Acting Chief Justice:

- ✦ **Article 223** of the Constitution of India deals with the **appointment of an acting Chief Justice**.
- ✦ According to this, when the office of the Chief Justice of a High Court is vacant or when such a Chief Justice, on account of absence or otherwise, is unable to perform the duties of his office, the duties of the office shall be performed by such person. Other judges of the Court may be appointed by the President for this purpose.

## Kashmir's Spring Blooms

### Why in News?

Kashmir's **unique agroclimatic conditions** nurture a wide variety of endemic plants, especially **spring blooms**, which are crucial for the valley's biodiversity and cultural heritage.



Viburnum grandiflorum

Sternbergia vernalis

Colchicum luteum

### Key Points

#### Notable Spring Blossoms:

- ✦ **Colchicum luteum (Veer Kaum)**: This delicate yet radiant bloom often carpets hillocks and forest grooves.
- ✦ **Sternbergia vernalis (Goul Tour)**: A golden-yellow flower that heralds the arrival of spring.
- ✦ **Salix (Braed Mushuk)**: A culturally and ecologically important plant with multiple uses.
- ✦ **Viburnum grandiflorum (Kulmansh)**: A shrub bearing large, soft pink flowers.
- ✦ **Daffodils**: Their bright yellow and white petals symbolise renewal and hold a special place in Kashmiri folklore.

#### Cultural and Ecological Significance:

- ✦ These spring blooms **provide vital ecosystem services by supporting pollinators** essential for fruit tree pollination.
- ✦ For generations, **local ethnic communities** have relied on these blooms for **medicinal and cultural practices**.

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### Mounting Threats to Spring Flora:

- ✦ **Unsustainable development, deforestation, and human encroachment** threaten these spring blooms.
- ✦ **Climate change** is altering blooming patterns, causing premature flowering, disrupting natural seasonal cycles.
- ✦ Despite their importance, there are **no dedicated conservation programs for spring blooms**.
  - ✍ Current protection comes from **national parks like Salim Ali** and wildlife sanctuaries like **Gulmarg Wildlife Sanctuary**.

### Gulmarg Wildlife Sanctuary

#### About:

- ✦ Authorities officially notified the Gulmarg Wildlife Sanctuary as a **protected area in 1987**.
- ✦ They proposed it as a **biosphere reserve in 1981** before granting it sanctuary status.
- ✦ It lies approximately 26 km **southwest of Baramulla district headquarters**.

#### Altitude:

- ✦ The sanctuary spans altitudes ranging from **2,400 to 4,300 meters above sea level**, supporting diverse ecological zones.

#### Flora:

- ✦ The vegetation varies based on altitude, slope orientation, habitat conditions, and human interference.
- ✦ **Coniferous forests dominate the landscape**, covering nearly 85% to 90% of the total forested area, especially across the spurs and grooves.

#### Fauna:

- ✦ The sanctuary provides critical habitat for several important wildlife species.
- ✦ Key species include the endangered **Kashmir stag (Hangul)**, the **Himalayan black bear**, and the elusive **musk deer**.

### Salim Ali National Park

#### About:

- ✦ Salim Ali National Park lies **amidst the scenic landscapes of Srinagar**, Jammu and Kashmir.
- ✦ The national park **covers an area of 9.07 square kilometres**, making it a compact yet ecologically significant habitat.
- ✦ Authorities **established the park in 1986** as a protected area to conserve its unique flora and fauna.
- ✦ Initially known as the City Forest National Park, it was later **renamed to honour Dr. Salim Ali**.
  - ✍ The renaming paid tribute to **Dr. Ali's pioneering work in Indian ornithology** and his lifelong commitment to **bird conservation**.

#### Ecological Significance:

- ✦ The park stands out for its ecological richness, particularly as a haven for bird species.
- ✦ It continues to serve as a vital green space within an urban setting, contributing to environmental stability and biodiversity conservation in Srinagar.

## Himalayan Climate Research Centre in J&K

### Why in News?

The Union Minister of Earth Sciences inaugurated the first-ever “Himalayan High Altitude Atmospheric & Climate Research Centre” in the elevated region of Nathatop, located in **Udhampur district** of Jammu and Kashmir.

### Key Points

#### Collaborative Efforts:

- ✦ The centre is the result of a multi-tier collaboration of the Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of J&K and **Swiss National Science Foundation**.

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### ⚡ A Strategic Location for Critical Research:

- ✦ The Nathatop site was chosen for its **clean air and low pollution levels**—ideal conditions to study **cloud formation**, **aerosol interactions**, and **weather patterns**.
- ✦ Researchers will be able to **observe atmospheric processes in free tropospheric conditions**, a rarity in most parts of India.

### ⚡ Launch of ICE-CRUNCH:

- ✦ During the ceremony, the union minister also flagged off **ICE-CRUNCH—a joint Indo-Swiss research project** involving Indian scientists and researchers from university in Zurich.
- ✦ The study will explore **ice-nucleating particles and cloud condensation nuclei** in the **north-western Himalayas** both critical for **understanding precipitation and climate behaviour**.

### ⚡ Tapping Himalayan Potential:

- ✦ The minister also cited national initiatives like the **Aroma Mission** and **Floriculture Mission**, which are helping unlock the Himalayas' economic and ecological potential.
- ✦ These missions aim to **boost local livelihoods** while contributing to India's broader climate goals.

#### Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF)

- ⚡ The SNSF, **established in 1952**, is a **public funding organization** that evaluates research proposals and allocates public research money based on a competitive principle, ensuring **high-quality research in Switzerland**.

#### Aroma Mission

##### ⚡ Objectives:

- ✦ To **promote the cultivation of aromatic crops for essential oils** that are in great demand by the aroma industry.
- ✦ To enable Indian farmers and the aroma industry to **become global leaders** in the production and export of some other essential oils on the pattern of menthol mint.
- ✦ To **provide substantial benefits** to the farmers in achieving higher profits, utilization of waste lands and protection of their crops from wild and grazing animals.

### ⚡ Nodal Agencies:

- ✦ The nodal laboratory is **CSIR-Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (CSIR-CIMAP)**, Lucknow.
- ✦ The participating laboratories are CSIR-Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (CSIR-IHBT), Palampur; CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (CSIR-IIIM), Jammu etc.

#### Floriculture Mission

### ⚡ Floriculture:

- ✦ It is a branch of **horticulture** that deals with the cultivation, processing and marketing of ornamental plants vis-à-vis landscaping of small or large areas, and maintenance of gardens so that the surroundings may appear aesthetically pleasant.

### ⚡ Objectives:

- ✦ To focus on commercial floral crops, seasonal/annual crops, wild ornaments and cultivation of flower crops for honey bee rearing.
- ✦ Some of the popular crops include Gladiolus, Canna, Carnation, Chrysanthemum, Gerbera, Lilium, Marigold, Rose, Tuberose etc.

### ⚡ Implementing Agencies:

- ✦ Along with **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)**, other implementing agencies involved are:
  - 📎 **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)**
  - 📎 **Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)**
  - 📎 **APEDA and TRIFED**
  - 📎 **Fragrance and Flavour Development Centre (FFDC), Kannauj, and**
  - 📎 **Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME).**

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## GI Tag for Kashmir Products

### Why in News?

In recognition of **Jammu and Kashmir's cultural heritage**, authorities have granted **Geographical Indication (GI) status** to **eight traditional crafts**, enhancing their authenticity and boosting their presence in global markets.

### Key Points

#### 🔦 Crafts Honored with GI Tags:

- ✦ The newly recognized crafts include:
  - ✎ **Kashmiri Pashmina** – Renowned for its unmatched softness, made from the fine wool of Changthangi goats.
  - ✎ **Kani Shawls** – Woven with intricate patterns using small wooden sticks, showcasing artisans' precision.
  - ✎ **Sozni Embroidery** – Features delicate needlework with vibrant floral motifs on shawls and garments.
  - ✎ **Kashmir Hand-Knotted Carpets** – Celebrated for durability and exquisite artistry.
  - ✎ **Papier Mâché** – Transforms everyday objects into hand-painted artistic pieces.
  - ✎ **Khatamband Woodwork** – Intricate geometric ceiling patterns used in traditional Kashmiri homes and mosques.
  - ✎ **Walnut Wood Carving** – Produces finely detailed furniture and décor using rich walnut timber.
  - ✎ **Kashmir Saffron** – Grown in Pulwama and Budgam, known for its deep red stigmas, intense aroma, and organic cultivation.

#### 🔦 Protecting Artisans and Promoting Economic Growth:

- ✦ The GI status ensures that only products crafted in their designated regions using authentic methods can bear these prestigious labels.
- ✦ It **safeguards artisans from counterfeit products** and **enhances the credibility** of these crafts in global markets.

- ✦ The move follows efforts like introducing a new GI logo for Kashmir carpets to differentiate hand-knotted originals from machine-made imitations.

- ✦ The Jammu and Kashmir government, along with initiatives like the World Crafts Council, is promoting these crafts through e-commerce platforms and global exhibitions.

#### 💡 Positioning Kashmir as a Global Craft Hub:

- ✦ Recently recognized as a **World Craft City**, Kashmir continues to be a **center of artistic excellence**.
- ✦ As demand for authentic handmade products grows, these GI tags will help preserve traditions while driving economic empowerment for local communities.

### Geographical Indication (GI)

- 💡 A geographical indication (GI) is a designation applied to products originating from a specific geographical area, indicating that the qualities or reputation of the products are inherently linked to that particular origin.
- 💡 Article 22 (1) of **Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)** defines GIs as “indications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a member, or a region or locality in that territory, where a given **quality, reputation or other characteristic** of the good is essentially attributable to its geographic origin”.
- ✦ In many EU nations, GI is classified in two basic categories **Protected GI (PGI)** and **Protected Destination of Origin (PDO)**. **India only has the PGI category.**
- 💡 This certification is also extended to **non-agricultural products**, such as handicrafts based on human skills, materials and resources available in certain areas that make the product unique.
- 💡 GI is a powerful tool for *protecting traditional knowledge*, culture and can boost socio-economic development.

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## India's Tulip Revolution

### Why in News?

Scientists in Kashmir have launched an **ambitious project to indigenize tulip bulb production**, aiming to make **India self-reliant and compete with the Netherlands**—a leading global exporter.

### Key Points

#### Economic and Agricultural Impact:

- ✦ India **imports 20-25 lakh tulip bulbs and cut flowers annually**, mainly from the Netherlands.
- ✦ Establishing **sustainable tulip production** will help meet domestic demand and create opportunities for international exports.
- ✦ Pulwama's Bonera station, spread over 60 hectares at 5,400 feet, is emerging as a **key hub for this initiative**.
  - 📌 Over one lakh tulips are in full bloom at the **CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine's research centre** in Pulwama's Bonera area.

#### Vision for Expansion:

- ✦ The Ministry plans to develop **theme-based tulip gardens and production centers** in regions with suitable **agro-climatic conditions**.
- ✦ J&K is expected to become a major hub for tulip bulb production, potentially rivaling the Netherlands in research and development.

#### Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden:

- ✦ **Srinagar's Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden**, Asia's largest, attracts thousands of tourists every spring.
- ✦ The region **imports 15 lakh bulbs annually** from the Netherlands to maintain its floral display.
- ✦ Over five lakh tulip bulbs have also been planted in other parts of India, mainly in New Delhi.

#### Need for Indigenous Production:

- ✦ India's floriculture sector faces **economic and logistical challenges** due to reliance on expensive imported tulip bulbs.
- ✦ Imported bulbs are vulnerable to global market fluctuations, trade restrictions, and supply chain disruptions.

#### Scientific Trials and Adaptability:

- ✦ Since 2022, CSIR-IIIM has been conducting **trials to optimize agro-technological protocols** for large-scale cultivation.
- ✦ Researchers are evaluating resilience against pests, diseases, and climatic stresses to develop robust tulip varieties for Indian conditions.

#### Agriculture 4.0

- 📌 Agriculture 4.0, also known as smart farming or digital farming, represents the **fourth major revolution in agricultural practices**, leveraging cutting-edge technologies to optimize food production and resource management.
- 📌 This innovative approach integrates advanced digital technologies such as the **Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, big data analytics, robotics, and precision farming techniques** into traditional agricultural practices.

## Himalayan Ibex

### Why in News?

Authorities rescued a **Himalayan Ibex** with a gunshot injury and arrested four **poachers** in a remote area between **Leh and Kargil districts in Ladakh**.

### Key Points

#### Himalayan Ibex:



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### ✦ Scientific Classification & Habitat:

- ✎ The Himalayan Ibex is a **subspecies of the Siberian Ibex**, scientifically named *Capra sibirica hemalayanus*.
- ✎ It is **native to the Himalayan region**, including **India, Pakistan, Tibet, and Nepal**.
- ✎ These ibexes inhabit high-altitude regions, **typically found between 3,000 and 5,800 meters** in the Trans-Himalayan region.

🏠 In India, they are primarily found in **Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand**.

### ✦ Physical Features:

- ✎ An **adult ibex weighs around 90 kg** and stands about **40 inches tall**.
- ✎ **Males are larger than females** and possess massive **curved horns** with annual growth notches.
- ✎ Their coat ranges from **light brown to reddish-brown**, with a **white belly and black-and-white leg markings**.
- ✎ During winter, their thick woolly coat provides insulation, which they **shed in early summer**.
- ✎ They exhibit a darker dorsal stripe, with coat color varying from pale to dark brown.

### ✦ Behavior & Adaptations:

- ✎ Himalayan Ibexes are **usually found in small herds**, sometimes forming groups of up to 50 individuals.
- ✎ They are **highly agile and can run at speeds of up to 50 km/h**, enabling them to navigate rugged mountainous terrain.

### ✦ Conservation Status:

- ✎ According to the **IUCN Red List**, the Himalayan Ibex is classified as **Near Threatened**, facing threats from **habitat loss, poaching, and climate change**.

## LG Pays Obeisance at Vaishno Devi Shrine

### Why in News?

Jammu and Kashmir **Lieutenant Governor** Manoj Sinha visited the **cave shrine of Mata Vaishno Devi** to offer prayers.

### Key Points

#### 💡 Vaishno Devi Temple:

- ✦ The temple is located at 5,200 feet in the Trikuta mountains, sees over one crore visitors annually, with a 12 km trek from Katra.
- ✦ **Key Landmarks:** Darshani Deodhi, Banganga, Chara Paduka, Indraprastha, Adhkuari, Garbha Joon, Himkoti, Haathi Matha, Sanji Chhat Bhavan, Sher ka Panja and Bhairon Mandir.
- ✦ According to officials from the **Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board**, around one lakh pilgrims have visited the shrine since the start of **Chaitra Navratri**.

#### 💡 Security Measures:

- ✦ Authorities have implemented tight security arrangements to manage the heavy influx of pilgrims.
- ✦ **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**-enabled CCTV cameras and **drones** have been deployed at the base camp, the bhawan, and along the pilgrimage route.

## Free Bus Service for Women in J&K

### Why in News?

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister launched the **Zero-Ticket Travel Initiative**, enabling **free bus travel for women** across Jammu and Kashmir.

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- He flagged off the initiative at the **Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC)**, taking a significant step toward gender-inclusive mobility.

### Key Points

- Significance of the Initiative:**
  - This initiative allows women to travel free of cost on **Smart City e-buses** and **J&K Road Transport Corporation (JKRTC)** buses across the Union Territory.
  - The CM also inaugurated **zero-ticket travel for schoolgirls**, highlighting the government's commitment to ensuring safe and convenient transport for young students.
  - The Zero-Ticket Travel Initiative is **part of a broader set of pro-women and pro-poor initiatives** aimed at **social and economic empowerment**.
- Financial Sustainability of the Scheme:**
  - He also clarifies that transport operators would not suffer financial losses under this scheme.
  - The government will compensate JKRTC and Smart City bus services from the state budget.

#### PM-eBus Sewa

- About:**
  - It aims to enhance urban **transportation efficiency** and promote **Environmentally-Friendly Practices**.
- Segment A: Augmenting City Bus Services (169 cities):**
  - This segment is dedicated to **strengthening urban transportation by 10,000 e-buses** under the PPP model.
  - The initiative recognizes that efficient operations require the development or upgrading of **depot infrastructure**, alongside the creation of essential **behind-the-meter power infrastructure** like substations to accommodate the electric buses.

#### Segment B: Green Urban Mobility Initiatives (181 cities):

- This segment includes **enhancing bus priority, improving infrastructure, establishing multimodal interchange facilities, implementing NCMC (National Common Mobility Card)-based Automated Fare Collection Systems**, and building necessary charging infrastructure.
- By integrating these sustainable practices, the **scheme aims to transform urban mobility landscapes**.

## PM to Inaugurate Vande Bharat Train

### Why in News?

**The Prime Minister of India** is going to inaugurate the first **Vande Bharat train** to Kashmir in April 2025. The train will cover the journey from **Katra to Srinagar** in just three hours, significantly reducing travel time.

### Key Points

#### Expanded Railway Connectivity in Kashmir:

- Currently, railway services **operate between Baramulla-Srinagar and Sangaldan** in the **Kashmir Valley**.
- Officials confirmed that with the new connection between Sangaldan and Katra in Jammu, trains can now run across the entire stretch.
- The inauguration will mark the completion of the 272-km **Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project**.

#### Climate-Specific Features of Kashmir's Vande Bharat Train:

- The train is equipped with **advanced heating systems to withstand sub-zero temperatures**.
- The driver's front look-out glass includes **embedded heating elements** for defrosting and maintaining visibility in harsh winters.

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### 💡 Anji Khad Bridge:

- ✦ On the Katra-Banihal section, the train will traverse **the Anji Khad Bridge**, an engineering marvel.
- ✦ It is **India's first cable-stayed rail bridge** located in Jammu and Kashmir's **Reasi district**. It is part of the **Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL)** project.
- ✦ The bridge spans **725.5 meters** with a **331-meter-high pylon**, built to withstand winds up to **213 km/h** and support trains traveling at **100 km/h**.
- ✦ It utilizes **96 cables** of varying lengths (82 to 295 meters) and an **innovative hybrid foundation** to stabilize the mountain slopes.

### Vande Bharat Trains

- 💡 It is an **indigenously designed and manufactured semi high speed**, self-propelled train that is touted as the **next major leap for the Indian Railways** in terms of speed and passenger convenience since the introduction of Rajdhani trains.
- 💡 The first Vande Bharat was manufactured by the **Integral Coach Factory (ICF)**, Chennai, as part of the **'Make in India' programme**, at a cost of about Rs. 100 crore.
- 💡 The Vande Bharat was **India's first attempt at adaptation of the train set technology** compared with conventional systems of passenger coaches hauled by separate locomotives.
  - ✦ The **train set configuration, though complex**, is faster, easier to maintain, consumes less energy, and has greater flexibility in train operation.



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**Key Points**

**Details**


**Summary**

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## Key Points

## Details

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## Summary

**Summary**