

April - 24

## TNPSC BITS

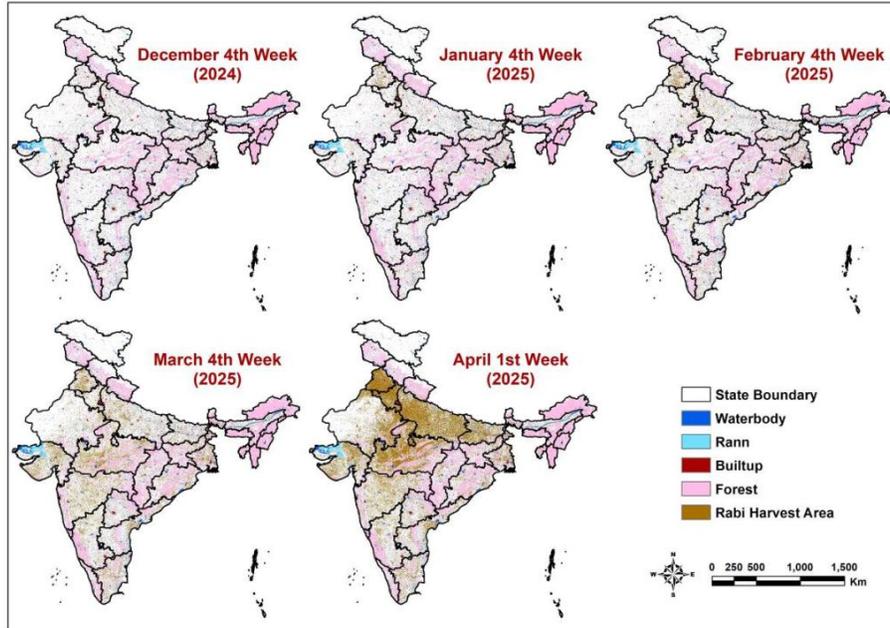
- ❖ Indian Army has concluded ARMEX-24, a high-altitude adventure expedition, involving journey from the dense jungles of North Bengal to the snow-clad heights of Sikkim.
- ❖ Amaravati, the planned capital of Andhra Pradesh, is set to create history as it targets to become the world's first city to be powered entirely by renewable energy.
- ❖ The Indian Air Force participates in Exercise Desert Flag-10 along with Australia, Bahrain, France, Germany, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Republic of Korea, Turkey, UAE, UK, and USA which is being hosted by the UAE.
- ❖ India participated in Africa's largest tech and startup show, GITEX Africa 2025, held in Morocco.
- ❖ The 9<sup>th</sup> edition of the Global Technology Summit (GTS), a flagship event co-hosted by the Ministry of External Affairs, and Carnegie India, took place in New Delhi.
- ❖ The 2025 World Press Photo of the Year has been awarded to Samar Abu Elouf, a Doha-based Palestinian photographer, for her poignant image of a young boy who severely injured while fleeing an Israeli attack in Gaza.
- ❖ The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has facilitated the first ever commercial sea shipments of the Indian pomegranates from Maharashtra to USA.
- ❖ Osmania University's iconic heritage arts college building in Hyderabad, become the third building in the country to get its facade trademark registered in the Trade Marks Registry of the govt of India.
  - India already has two trademarked buildings – the Taj Mahal Palace Hotel and the Bombay Stock Exchange building in Mumbai.

## NATIONAL NEWS

### Forecast of wheat production 2025

- ❖ ISRO has estimated that the total wheat production from the eight major wheat growing States of India would be 122.724 million tonnes as on March 31, 2025.
- ❖ It used Optical and Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) remote sensing datasets from EOS-04 (RISAT-1A), EOS-06 (Oceansat-3), and the Resourcesat-2A, for the Rabi season, 2024-25.
- ❖ The sowing progress of the wheat crop is being monitored across the eight major wheat-growing States of India during the 2024-25 Rabi season.

- ❖ The eight major wheat-growing states are Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Bihar, Gujarat and Maharashtra.



## Revamped Microdata Portal



- ❖ Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation (MOSPI) launched a revamped Microdata Portal.
- ❖ The new portal serves as a centralized repository for the extensive statistical data collected from national surveys and economic census.

- ❖ The website of the National Statistical System Training Academy was also launched recently.

### **Bridge Inventory and Condition Rating System**

<b>Condition Rating</b>	<b>Description</b>
9	Excellent Condition
8	Very Good Condition
7	Good Condition
6	Satisfactory Condition
5	Fair Condition
4	Poor Condition
3	Serious Condition
2	Critical Condition
1	Imminent Failure Condition

- ❖ The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has launched a ranking mechanism.
- ❖ It aims to rate its infrastructure assets to determine their structural safety and look for remedial measures for their upkeep and regular monitoring.
- ❖ The new arrangement, the Bridge Inventory and Condition Rating System (BICRS), mandates comprehensive documentation, assessment, and inspection of bridges twice a year.
- ❖ As part of the rating system, the agency aims to prepare a unified repository of all its structures, and each of the property will be assigned a union assessment identification number.

## **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

### **Brics Land Restoration Partnership 2025**

- ❖ The second meeting of the BRICS Working Group on Agriculture took place in the capital of Brazil.
- ❖ It aims to discuss the key initiatives in the field of food security, sustainable agricultural production, and rehabilitation of degraded areas.
- ❖ They have launched the “BRICS Land Restoration Partnership” to address land degradation, desertification and soil fertility loss.

- ❖ The initiative aims to coordinate efforts to restore degraded land, conserve soil, and use water resources more efficiently, based on scientific solutions and innovative financing mechanisms.
- ❖ With a focus on the Global South, the partnership seeks to engage governments, the private sector, and local communities in long-term restoration strategies.



### **Balikatan joint military exercise 2025**



- ❖ Philippines is set to host the Balikatan joint military exercise involving the United States, Australia and Japan.
- ❖ The Exercise Balikatan is an annual training exercise conducted between the Philippines and United States since 2002.
- ❖ Japan is set to formally participate for the first time in this exercise.

- ❖ It will mainly focus on defending the islands of Palawan and Luzon, which are close to tense areas in the South China Sea and the Luzon Strait.
- ❖ Balikatan means “shoulder-to-shoulder” in Tagalog, a prominent Austronesian language.
- ❖ Moreover, nineteen countries have sent the observers for this year’s Balikatan exercises
- ❖ Canada, Germany, United Kingdom, Czech Republic, Poland and Colombia were the first to confirm sending observers.

### **India–Norway Marine Pollution Initiative**

- ❖ The India–Norway Marine Pollution Initiative (INMPI) is a key bilateral effort by the governments of India and Norway to address marine litter and microplastics (MPs).
- ❖ It was launched in 2019, under the India–Norway Ocean Dialogue.
- ❖ Multiple projects have been undertaken to reduce marine plastic pollution from land-based sources.
- ❖ Now, INMPI has helped Agra improve waste circularity and reduce plastic leakage into the Yamuna River, with successful interventions in managing petha and the footwear waste.



### **Ras Isa attack**

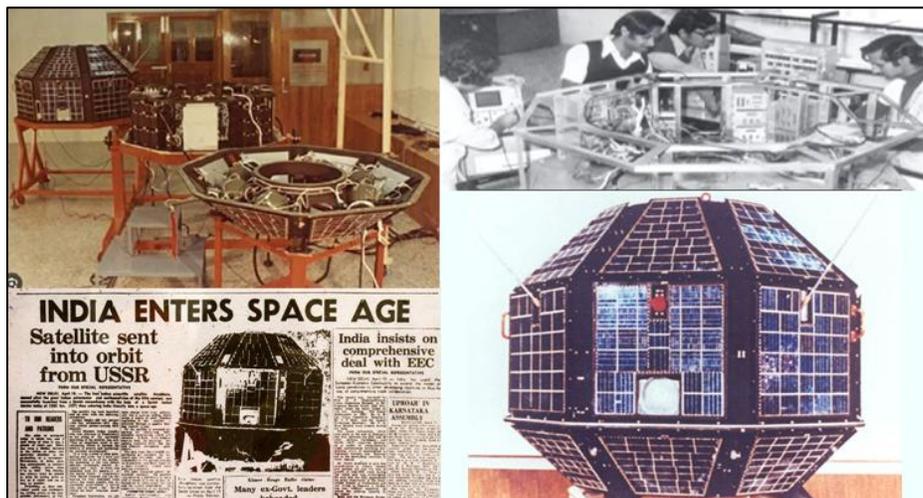
- ❖ The US carried out an airstrike on the Ras Isa oil port in Yemen, according to the Houthi rebels.

- ❖ This marks the deadliest known strike so far in President Donald Trump's new military campaign against the Houthis.
- ❖ The strike on Ras Isa is a major escalation, targeting oil infrastructure for the first time.
- ❖ From November 2023 to January 2024, the Houthis attacked over 100 ships, killing four sailors and disrupting trade in the Red Sea.



## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY NEWS

### 50 years of Aryabhata satellite



- ❖ On April 19, 1975, India launched its first satellite, Aryabhata.

- ❖ Designed and built indigenously by ISRO, an Aryabhata was launched aboard a Soviet Kosmos-3M rocket from USSR.
- ❖ The mission aimed to conduct the experiments in X-ray astronomy, solar physics, and aeronomics.
- ❖ But five days after entering orbit, Aryabhata suffered a power failure.
- ❖ Communication was lost, and the scientific objectives were cut short.

### **ChaSTE instrument**



- ❖ Chandra's Surface Thermophysical Experiment (ChaSTE) has become the first instrument to measure temperatures in situ near the moon's south pole.
- ❖ It also became the first mission to successfully penetrate the soil of a celestial body to deploy a thermal probe after two previous missions had fallen short.
- ❖ In November 12 of 2014, the European Space Agency's Philae lander, hitchhiking on the Rosetta spacecraft, landed on comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko.
- ❖ It also contains same kind of instrument, but they couldn't deploy it due to the awkward landing position.

### **HANSA-3 (NG) Trainer Aircraft**

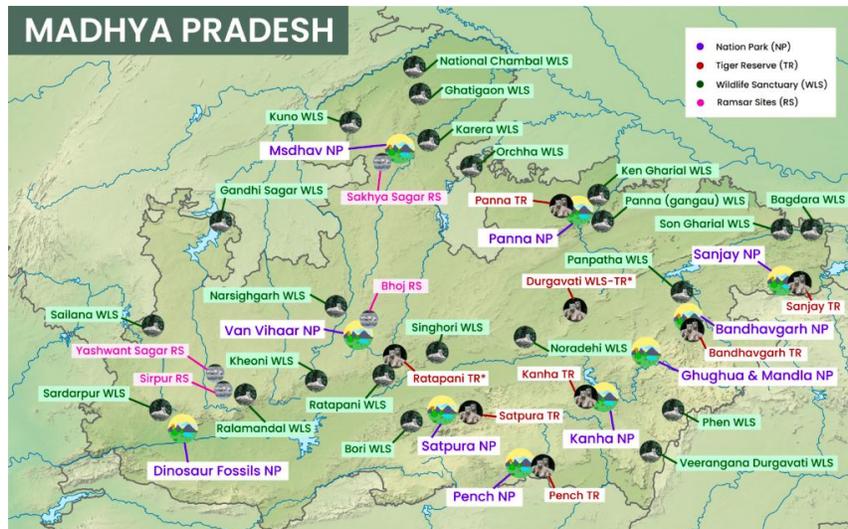
- ❖ In a first, the National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL) has signed a technology transfer agreement with a private company to manufacture trainer airplanes in India.
- ❖ This would be the first time that aircraft would be manufactured in India based on technology fully designed and developed indigenously.

- ❖ The Hansa-3 NG aircraft is a two-seater aircraft and is the latest iteration of the HANSA planes that have been made by NAL since 1998.
- ❖ At present, all of the aircraft being used in India's flying training organisations are imported.



## ENVIRONMENT NEWS

### Cheetahs in Gandhi sagar sanctuary



- ❖ Two cheetahs were released into the Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary in the Mandsaur district of Madhya Pradesh (MP).
- ❖ The cheetahs, six years old males named Pawak and Prabhash, had been brought from South Africa in February 2023.
- ❖ They were also stationed at the Kuno National Park before being moved to the sanctuary.

- ❖ After Kuno, Gandhi Sagar Sanctuary has become the second place in not only the state but the country where cheetahs are being relocated.
- ❖ The Kuno National Park currently houses 26 cheetahs.

## REPORTS AND INDICES

### Global trade outlook and statistics 2025

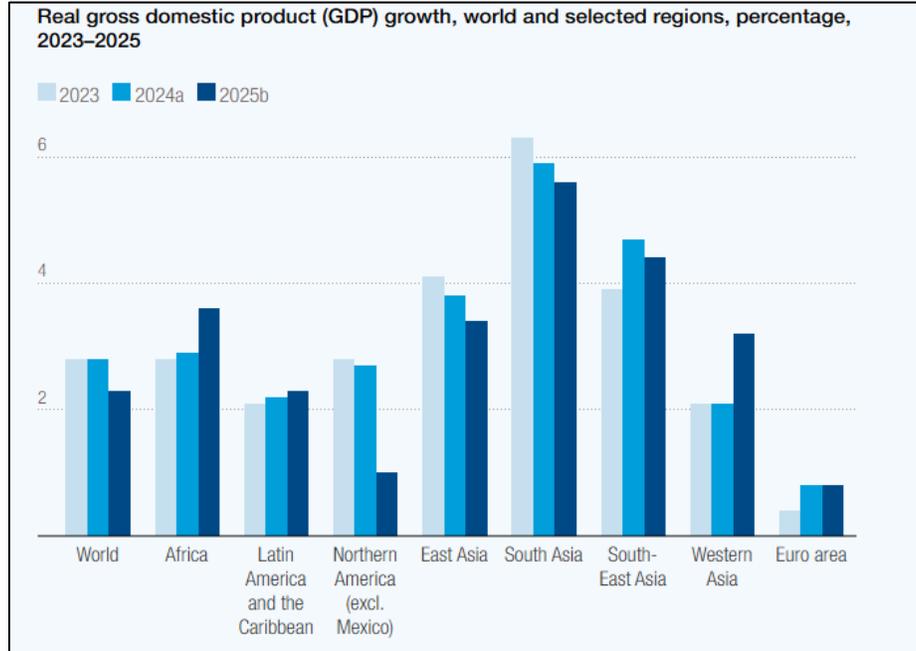
- ❖ Geneva-based World Trade Organization revised sharply its global merchandise trade volume growth forecast for 2025.
- ❖ The volume of world merchandise trade is expected to decline by 0.2% under current conditions.
- ❖ Trade could shrink even further, to 1.5% in 2025, if the situation deteriorates.
- ❖ This will be in sharp contrast to 2024 when the volume of world merchandise trade grew by 2.9%.



### “Trade and Development Foresights 2025” Report

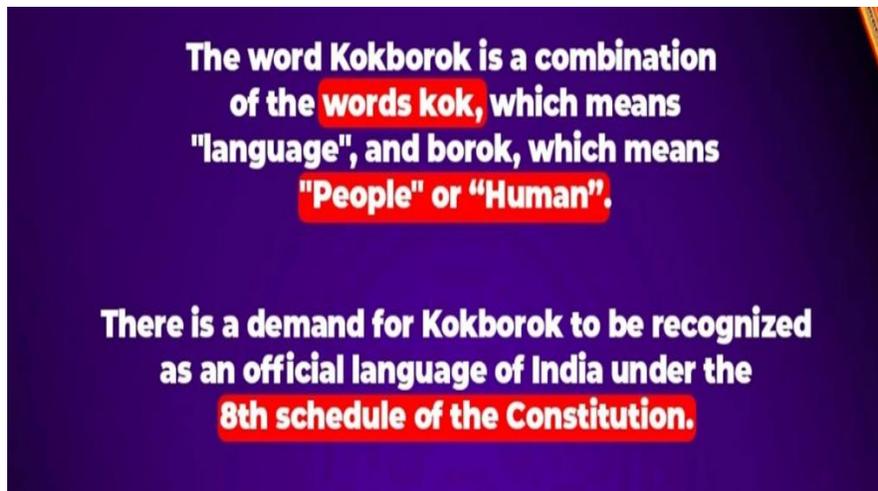
- ❖ This report was titled “Trade and Development Foresights 2025 – Under Pressure: Uncertainty Reshapes Global Economic Prospects”.
- ❖ It was released by the UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD).
- ❖ The global level growth is expected to decline to just 2.3 per cent.
- ❖ 35 out of 68 low-income countries are in or near debt distress.
- ❖ India has been listed among the countries that are propelling growth with higher government expenditure and monetary policy stimulus.

- ❖ South-South trade (among developing nations) now makes up ~1/3 of global trade.
- ❖ The report projected China's growth rate at 4.4 per cent, while the US economy is expected to grow at 1 per cent.



## STATES' NEWS

### Kokborok - 8th schedule



- ❖ Kokborok Sahitya Parishad, Tripura have sought the inclusion of the Kokborok language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.



- ❖ The tribal literary body stated that the script for the Kokborok language can either be Bengali or Devanagari.
- ❖ Kokborok is one of the oldest and most widely spoken languages among the indigenous communities of Tripura.
- ❖ Kokborok can be written with either Devanagari or Bengali script correctly and appropriately.

### **Maharashtra's New Education Policy 2025**

## **NEP IMPLEMENTATION**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The three-language formula for Classes 1 to 5 is a part of the new curriculum implementation under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Maharashtra school education department has declared a phase-wise implementation plan of the new curriculum designed as per NEP 2020 recommendations</li></ul>
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- ❖ The Maharashtra school education department has now made Hindi a mandatory third language in both Marathi and English-medium schools in classes 1 to 5.
- ❖ It is aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
- ❖ The new syllabus as per NEP will be implemented for Class 1 in 2025-26.
- ❖ For Classes 2, 3, 4, and 6, the policy will be implemented in 2026-27, for Classes 5, 9, and 11 from 2027-28, and for Classes 8, 10, and 12 from 2028-29.
- ❖ Until now, only Marathi and English have been mandatory from Classes 1 – 10 in government schools.
- ❖ While Marathi was always an integral part, the English was introduced as a compulsory subject around the year 2000, 25 years ago.
- ❖ As of now, Hindi is already compulsory from Class 5 in government schools.
- ❖ Hindi is taught for Classes 5, 6, and 7.
- ❖ From Class 8 onwards, Hindi can either be continued or replaced with Sanskrit or a foreign language.

- ❖ Maharashtra State Board also runs the schools in multiple mediums like Bengali, Tamil, Kannada, Gujrat, Urdu, Hindi and Telugu and textbooks for these are developed by Balbharti.
- ❖ In all these schools, Marathi and English are already compulsory along with their language of medium as first language.

### **Training to Booth Level Agents (BLAs)**

- ❖ In a first, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has begun training booth-level agents (BLAs) belonging to political parties from Bihar in view of the forthcoming Assembly election in the State.
- ❖ The commission said the training programme would help them to fulfil their responsibilities as delineated in the Representation of the People Act, 1950 and 1951; the Registration of Elector Rules, 1960; the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961.
- ❖ The BLAs are appointed by recognised political parties and play an important role in ensuring error-free electoral rolls as per the provisions of the RP Act, 1950.
- ❖ The BLAs were trained in the use of the provisions of first and second appeals under sections 24(a) and 24(b) of the RP Act 1950 in case they are aggrieved at the final electoral rolls as published.



## **PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS**

### **Pope Francis**

- ❖ Pope Francis, head of the Catholic Church and sovereign of the Vatican City State has passed away recently.

- ❖ Francis, born Jorge Mario Bergoglio in Argentina, made history in 2013 as the first Jesuit pope, the first from the Latin America.
- ❖ He is the first non-European pontiff in over 1,200 years.
- ❖ He became the archbishop of Buenos Aires in 1998 and was created a cardinal in 2001 by Pope John Paul II.
- ❖ He was the first pope since Pope Pius X to live outside the papal apartments.
- ❖ Francis became the first pope to celebrate the Mass on the Arabian Peninsula in 2019.
- ❖ He called protection of migrants a "duty of civilisation" and criticised the anti-immigration politics.
- ❖ In 2022, he also apologized for the Church's role in the "cultural genocide" of the Canadian Indigenous peoples.
- ❖ Francis committed the Catholic Church to support the worldwide abolition of the death penalty.
- ❖ He appointed women to several positions previously held only by men in Vatican.
- ❖ Pope Francis is also the first Pope since Leo XIII to be buried outside the Vatican.



### **WAVES 2025 - Anti-Piracy Challenge**

- ❖ Anti-Piracy Challenge is a pioneering initiative under the Create in India Challenge Season 1 of WAVES (World Audio Visual & Entertainment Summit) 2025.
- ❖ WAVE Summit is being organized by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India on May 1-4, 2025 in Mumbai.
- ❖ Top seven finalists were announced for the Anti-Piracy Challenge.

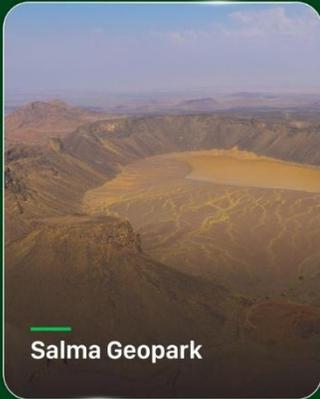
❖ Finalists and Their Solutions

ANTI-PIRACY CHALLENGE		ANTI-PIRACY CHALLENGE	
THE FINALISTS AND THEIR BREAKTHROUGH SOLUTIONS		THE FINALISTS AND THEIR BREAKTHROUGH SOLUTIONS	
<b>Aezowie Infotech</b>	<b>StealthGuard</b> Offline watermarking tool resilient to format changes	<b>Hummingbird</b>	<b>Tryambaka</b> Blockchain-backed blind watermarking with cryptographic hashing
<b>Atomstate</b>	<b>Monk DB</b> AI-native vector database for real-time content verification	<b>CipherCore</b>	<b>SFSS</b> Fingerprint steganography using cryptographic techniques
<b>Nuronics</b>	<b>NuroTrace</b> Comprehensive suite for encryption, access control, and watermarking	<b>WhiteHatLovers</b>	<b>Shadow Stamp</b> Real-time tracking via invisible, identifiable markers
<b>Guardians of Originality</b>	<b>PirateX</b> Advanced DRM system against unauthorized content access		

**MISCELLANEOUS NEWS**

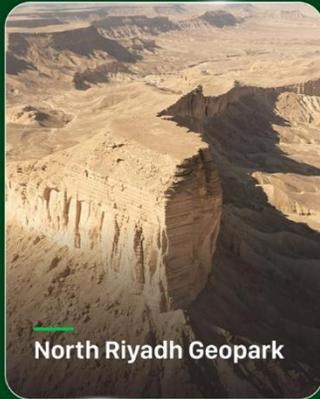
**16 New Global Geoparks – UNESCO**

The inclusion of "Salma Geopark" and "North Riyadh Geopark" in the **UNESCO Global Geoparks list**



**Salma Geopark**

**1** in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



**North Riyadh Geopark**

**1** among the Arabian Gulf countries

**2** in the Arab world

❖ The UNESCO added 16 new sites across 11 countries to its Global Geoparks Network, which marks its 10th anniversary this year.



- ❖ The newly featured geoparks are located in China, North Korea, Ecuador, Indonesia, Italy, Norway, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Spain, the UK, and Vietnam.
- ❖ North Korea recorded its historic first with the inclusion of its site in the Network.
- ❖ While Saudi Arabia has made its debut on the list with two newly designated geoparks.
- ❖ With the new entries, the Network now comprises 229 sites across 50 countries.
- ❖ India does not have any site featured on the UNESCO Global Geoparks list.

