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EN-BUZZER

Daily News Analysis

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1. Syria

- **Prelims** - Location of Syria
- **Mains** - GS 1 - Geography

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Syria

SYRIAN

Why in the news?

- Syria held its first parliamentary elections, nearly a year after a rebelled offensive unseated longtime autocratic leader Bashar al-Assad.

Syria

- **Location:** Syria is a Western Asian country located in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Levant.
- **Capital:** Damascus
- **Borders Countries:** Turkey, Iraq, Jordan, Israel and Lebanon.
- **Maritime Border Countries:** Cyprus lies to the west across the Mediterranean Sea
- **Major Rivers in Syria:** Euphrates, Tigris
- **Disputed Territories:** Golan heights with Israel

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2. Coral Triangle

- Prelims - Coral Triangle
- Mains - GS 3 - Environment

Why in the news?

- The Philippines is preparing to host Southeast Asia's first coral larvae cryobank which links research institutions in the Philippines, Taiwan, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand to create a network of cryobanks across the Coral Triangle.

Coral Triangle

- **What is it?:** The Coral Triangle (CT) is a roughly triangular marine region in the tropical waters spanning parts of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Timor-Leste.
- **Location:** It lies at the interface of the Indian and Pacific Oceans, encompassing diverse waters and coral reefs.
- **Other Name:** It is often called the "Amazon of the Seas" due to its staggering marine biodiversity.
- **Biodiversity & Ecological Importance:**
 - Contains ~76% of the world's coral species and ~37% of global reef fish species.
 - Home to 6 of the 7 marine turtle species.
 - Hosts the largest mangrove forests globally.
 - Supports the livelihoods of around 120 million people through fishing, tourism, and coastal ecosystem services.
- **Threats to the Coral Triangle:**
 - **Climate change:** Coral bleaching, ocean acidification, and rising sea temperatures.
 - **Overfishing and destructive fishing:** Use of explosives, cyanide, and bottom trawling.
 - **Pollution and coastal development:** Sedimentation, agricultural runoff, and industrial effluents.
 - **Oil and gas exploration:** Fossil fuel activities threaten marine ecosystems.
 - **Noise pollution:** From shipping and seismic surveys affecting marine life.

→ **Habitat fragmentation:** Disrupts ecological connectivity.

Coral Triangle





3. Critical Mineral Recycling Incentive Scheme

- **Prelims** - Critical Mineral Recycling Incentive Scheme
- **Mains** - GS 2 - Governance

Why in the news?

- The Ministry of Mines issued the guidelines for the Critical Mineral Recycling Incentive Scheme.

Critical Mineral Recycling Incentive Scheme

- **What is it?:**
 - It is to promote recycling of critical minerals from secondary sources such as e-waste, lithium-ion battery (LIB) scrap, and scrap from end-of-life vehicles (e.g. catalytic converters).
 - The scheme is part of the broader **National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM)**.
- **Scheme Duration:** The scheme will run over **six years**, from FY 2025-26 to FY 2030-31.
- **Objectives:**
 - To boost domestic recycling capacity of critical minerals, as a near-term strategy while exploration, mining, and processing projects ramp up.
 - To reduce import dependency for critical minerals (e.g. lithium, cobalt, nickel, rare earths) essential to clean energy, electronics, EVs, etc.
 - To catalyze investment, create jobs, and support a circular economy in the mineral sector.
- **Key Features:**
 - **Feedstock:** E-waste, LIB scrap, end-of-life vehicle scrap (e.g. catalytic converters)
 - **Beneficiaries:** Large, established recyclers; small/new recyclers & startups (1/3 of outlay earmarked for small/new ones)
 - **CapEx Subsidy:** 20% subsidy on plant & machinery, associated utilities, if production starts within the specified timeframe (a reduced subsidy applies beyond that)
 - **Cap to entities:**



★ **Large entities:** total incentive (CapEx + OpEx) capped at **₹50 crore**; OpEx subsidy cap ₹10 crore.

★ **Small entities:** total incentive capped at **₹25 crore**; OpEx subsidy cap ₹5 crore.

- **Significance:**

- Recycling offers a shorter lead time compared to mining and primary production, enabling earlier supply security.
- Supports resource efficiency, reduces waste, and lowers environmental footprint of raw material sourcing.
- Incentives could stimulate better extraction / separation technologies, process improvements, and scale in the recycling sector.
- The earmarking of one-third of funds for smaller/new recyclers helps avoid concentration and gives startups / SMEs access.

- **Challenges:**

- Extracting value from mixed waste streams is technically challenging, especially for rare earths, lithium, cobalt, etc.
- Ensuring consistent and sufficient volumes of suitable e-waste, battery scrap, and end-of-life vehicle scrap may be a constraint, especially in certain regions.
- Financial viability challenges to the recycling firms.
- Monitoring, validating incremental sales, ensuring compliance, disbursing subsidies efficiently, dealing with delays- all need institutional capacity.
- The CapEx subsidy is contingent on starting production within a timeframe; delays may reduce subsidy beneficially for too many.



4. PM-SETU Scheme

- Prelims - PM-SETU Scheme
- Mains - GS 2 - Governance

Why in the news?

- The Prime Minister launched the PM-SETU scheme at the Kaushal Deekshant Samaroh.

PM-SETU Scheme

- **What is it?:**
 - Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation through Upgraded ITIs (PM-SETU)
 - It is a scheme to modernize 1000 government ITIs across India into industry-aligned, technology-driven, and globally competitive skill training hubs that enhance employability and promote entrepreneurship.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)
- **Scheme Details:**
 - **Type:** Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS)
 - **Total Investment:** ₹60,000 crore
 - **Financial Partners:** World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB) (global co-financing)
- **Key Features:**
 - **Hub and Spoke Model:** 200 Hub ITIs linked to 800 Spoke ITIs.
 - ★ Hub: ITIs with advanced infrastructure & smart classrooms acting as innovation and incubation centres.
 - ★ Spokes: Ensure wider **access and outreach** to rural and semi-urban youth.
 - **Industry Collaboration:** Help to bridge the industry demand gap
 - ★ Formation of **Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs)** with **Anchor Industry Partners** to manage ITI clusters.
 - ★ Focus on **outcome-based training** aligned with current and emerging market demand.



- **Multiple Training tracks:** Long term diplomas, short term modular courses and Reskilling programmes for working professionals.
- Emphasis on future-oriented domains such as **AI, robotics, EV maintenance, green technologies, logistics, and advanced manufacturing.**
- **Centres of Excellence:** Five National Skill Training Institutes (NSTIs) to be strengthened as global Centres of Excellence.
- Phased implementation
- **Expected Outcomes:**
 - Up-skilling of over **1 crore youth annually.**
 - Enhanced **industry-employability linkages** and **higher job placements.**
 - Establishment of a **sustainable skilling ecosystem** integrated with the **Skill India Mission** and **National Education Policy (NEP 2020).**
 - Boost to **Make in India, Digital India, and Atmanirbhar Bharat** through skill competitiveness.

5. Exercise Konkan 2025

- Prelims - Exercise Konkan 2025
- Mains - GS 2 - International Relations

Exercise Konkan 2025



Why in the news?

- Exercise Konkan 2025, held off the Konkan coast in the western coast of India.

Exercise Konkan 2025

- **What is it?:** Exercise Konkan is annual bilateral maritime exercise between the Indian Navy and the UK's Royal Navy.
- **Facts:** First held in 2004, Exercise Konkan is an annual bilateral maritime exercise.
- **Participants:** The 2025 edition is the first-ever exercise to feature both nations' Carrier Strike Groups (the UK's HMS Prince of Wales and India's INS Vikrant).
- **Objective:** Reinforces the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership under the India-UK Vision 2035, and commitment to a free, open, and secure Indo-Pacific.
- **Activities Involved:** The exercise includes a Harbour Phase with professional exchanges and visits, and a Sea Phase featuring anti-air, anti-surface, and anti-submarine drills with flying operations.
- **Significance:** The exercise will help the Indian Navy and Royal Navy work together to improve maritime security and maintain a rules-based order in the region.
- **Other Exercises Between India and UK:** Exercise Cobra Warrior, Exercise Indradhanush (Air Force), AJEYA WARRIOR (Indian Army)



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6. Ethanol Blended Petrol Programme

- **Prelims** - Ethanol Blended Petrol Programme
- **Mains** - GS 3 - Economy

Why in the news?

- Union Home and Cooperation Minister hailed the ethanol blending programme as a transformative initiative for India's sugar cooperatives, crediting it with improving financial health and promoting rural prosperity.

Ethanol Blended Petrol Programme

- **Aim**: To blend ethanol with petrol to reduce reliance on fossil fuels, enhance energy self-sufficiency, and lower carbon emissions.
- **Launch**: 2014
- **Implementation**: Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, in coordination with the Ministry of Food Processing and Ministry of Agriculture.
- **Objectives**:
 - Reduce crude oil imports, thereby saving foreign exchange.
 - Support farmers by using surplus sugarcane and grains.
 - Promote clean fuels for climate action.
 - Boost the domestic ethanol industry and create rural jobs.
- **Key Features**:
 - Ethanol sourced from sugarcane juice, B-molasses, damaged grains.
 - OMCs (Oil Marketing Companies) procure ethanol at pre-fixed prices.
 - Recent Cabinet hike in ethanol procurement prices for Ethanol Supply Year 2024–25.
 - Dedicated ethanol distilleries and storage infrastructure being promoted under SATAT and PLI



7. Leprosy

- Prelims - Leprosy
- Mains - GS 3 - Science and Technology

Leprosy



Why in news?

- India's leprosy prevalence rate has fallen from 57.2 per 10,000 population in 1981 to just 0.57 in 2025.

Leprosy

- **Other Name:** Leprosy is also known as Hansen's Disease.
- **Fact:** Leprosy is one of the oldest diseases in recorded history.
- **Cause:** Bacteria called Mycobacterium Lepae
- **Areas of Infection:** Skin, Peripheral nerves, Upper respiratory tract and Lining of the nose.
- **Mode of Transmission:** Mainly by breathing airborne droplets from the affected individuals.
- **Symptoms:** Red patches on the skin, skin lesion, numbness in arms, hands, and legs, ulcers on the soles of feet, muscle Weakness and excessive weight loss.



Mycobacterium leprae

LEPROSY

- **Effect:** Disfigurement, permanent nerve damage in arms and legs and even loss of sensation in the body.
- **Treatment:** Leprosy is curable with the combination of drugs known as Multi-Drug Therapy (MDT).

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