

Justice Surya Kant sworn in as the 53rd Chief Justice of India (CJI)

Appointment Process for CJI

- **Procedure:** The **outgoing CJI recommends the successor**. The Law Minister forwards this to the Prime Minister, who advises the President.
- **Seniority Convention:** The **Second Judges Case (1993)** established that the **senior-most** Supreme Court judge must be appointed as CJI.
- **Constitutional Basis:** Appointed **by the President under Article 124(2)**.

Appointment of Other SC Judges

- **Collegium Recommendation:** Under **Article 124(2)**, Supreme Court judges are appointed by the **President** on the advice of the **Collegium (CJI + four senior-most judges)**.
 - ⊕ The Collegium System has evolved through the Three Judges Cases (1981, 1993, & 1998).
- **Eligibility Criteria for Supreme Court Judges :** He/She must be a **Citizen of India** and must have been:-
 - ⊕ an judge of High Court for 5 years OR
 - ⊕ an advocate for High Court for 10 years OR
 - ⊕ a distinguished jurist (in the opinion of the President's)
- **Tenure:** Holds office until **65** years of age.
- **Note:** A person who has been a Judge of the Supreme Court is debarred from practicing in any court of law or before any other authority in India.

Removal of a Supreme Court Judge

- **Grounds of Removal:** only on grounds of **"Proven misbehaviour, or Incapacity"**.
- The President can remove a judge only after both Houses of Parliament pass a special resolution.
 - ⊕ This resolution must be supported by:-
 - A majority of the total membership of each House, and at least two-thirds of the members present and voting.
- **Both Houses** must pass this resolution in the **same session**.
- The procedure for removal of judges is elaborated in the Judges Inquiry Act, 1968.

Key Roles & Powers of the CJI

- **Judicial Leadership:** Heads the **Supreme Court**, presides over Constitution Benches, and allocates cases.
- **Administrative Authority:** Controls the **roster**, supervises court administration, and ensures smooth functioning of the judicial system.
- **Judicial Vision:** Shapes priorities such as **reducing pendency**, promoting alternative dispute resolution, and strengthening constitutional governance.



Supreme Court's Centre for Research and Planning releases White Paper on Artificial Intelligence and the Judiciary

The paper reviews the safe use of AI in the judiciary, outlines key ethical challenges, offers recommendations, and draws on international case studies to illustrate emerging risks.

Key Highlights of the Report

Risks and Ethical Challenges of AI (Artificial Intelligence)

- **Overreliance and Loss of Human Judgement:** It can weaken judicial discretion and the opaque nature of models reduces accountability.
- **Hallucinations and Fabricated Content:** It may produce false information or non-existent citations. E.g. US case "Roberto Mata v. Avianca and Coomer v. Lindell".
- **Algorithmic Bias:** E.g. The US COMPAS tool, challenged in State v. Loomis showed potential racial bias.
- **Others:** Deepfakes and Evidence Manipulation, Privacy and Confidentiality Risks, Intellectual Property Concerns etc.

Key Recommendations

- **Create AI Ethics Committees:** Courts should establish bodies with technical and legal experts to review AI tools and set deployment standards.
- **Prefer Secure In-House AI Systems:** Developing internal tools reduces confidentiality, security and data-exposure risks.
- **Adopt a Formal Ethical AI Policy:** A clear framework must define authorised uses, responsibilities and accountability mechanisms.
- **Others:** Mandate Disclosure and Audit Trails, Provide Comprehensive Training etc.

Key Initiatives

➤ India:

- **e-Courts Mission Mode Project:** AI tools tackle case backlog, linguistic barriers, and administrative delays.
- **SUPACE (Supreme Court Portal for Assistance in Court Efficiency):** Helps judges analyse case records and generate summaries.
- **SUVAS (Supreme Court Vidhik Anuvaad Software):** Translated >36,000 Supreme Court judgments into 19 Indian languages.
- **Others:** TERES (AI-Based Transcription), LegRAA (Legal Research Analysis Assistant).

➤ Global Initiatives:

- **UNESCO:** Published Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence and Global toolkit on AI and Rule of Law.
- **OECD:** It published Principles on Artificial Intelligence (2019) which establishes the first intergovernmental standard for AI.
- **EU:** EU AI Act regulating high-risk judicial AI systems.
- **National Models:** Brazil's ATHOS, Singapore's LawNet AI.

Ethiopia's Long dormant Hayli Gubbi volcano erupted for the first time in more than 12,000 years

The eruption sent a massive ash cloud across Red Sea and South Asia, causing a thick ash cloud to reach India leading to diversion of several flights.

About Volcanic Eruptions

- **Meaning:** It is the **expulsion** of gases, rock fragments, and/or molten lava from within Earth through a vent onto the **Earth's surface or into the atmosphere**.
 - Earth's Mantle (higher density layer below the solid crust) contains a weaker zone called **asthenosphere**, from where the **molten rock materials called magma** escapes out.
 - Gasses dissolved in the magma expand causing a **massive increase in pressure** which pushes the magma up and forces its way through cracks/fissures in the volcano causing an eruption.
- **Key Eruption Materials:** Once magma starts moving towards the crust or it reaches the surface, it is called as **lava** (see infographic).
 - Other materials that reaches the ground include pyroclastic debris, volcanic bombs, ash and dust and gases such as nitrogen compounds, sulphur compounds, etc.
- **Recent Incidents:** Sabancaya (Indonesia, 2025), Ruang (Indonesia, 2025), Kilauea (USA, 2024), Etna (Italy, 2025), etc.
- **Major Consequences of Volcanic Eruptions:**
 - **Positive:** Acts as source of **obtaining direct information** regarding earth's interior, source of **geothermal energy**, **temporary cooling of atmosphere** due to shielding by aerosols, etc.
 - **Negative:** **Air Pollution and Acid Rain;** accompanied disasters like **earthquake** due to seismic disturbances, loss of property and life, etc.

Two Kinds of Lava



Acidic: Thicker with high silica content; does not travel far and forms steep sided volcanoes or cone volcanoes.



Basic/Basaltic: Has low silica content and is very fluid; travels far and forms gently sloped volcanoes or shield volcanoes.

Also In News



GAVI

Gavi and UNICEF have announced a new agreement to increase global accessibility of the R21/Matrix-M malaria vaccine.

About GAVI (Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation)

- Established in 2000 as a **global public-private partnership** to improve vaccine access in low-income countries.
- ⊕ **India is a member.** (USA has pulled out from funding Gavi (since June, 2025).
- **Mission:** Aims to immunise children against deadly diseases and strengthen national vaccination systems.
- **Impact:** Has protected over 1.2 billion children and averted more than 20 million deaths.
- **Market-Shaping:** Negotiates prices & uses innovative financing tools such as **IFFIm (International Finance Facility for Immunisation)**.
- **Challenges:** Faces funding gaps and coordination issues.



Article 51 of UN Charter

As countries like Russia in the Ukraine war and Israel in the Gaza conflict invoke 'self-defence' to justify aggression, Article 51 of the UN Charter risks being used to legitimize war rather than prevent it.

About Article 51

- Following World War II, the UN Charter legally obliged states to refrain from the threat or use of force (Article 2).
- ⊕ Article 51, which recognizes the right to self-defence, was originally intended as a narrow exception to this rule. Over time, however, its scope has been reinterpreted more expansively.
- **Two interpretations of Article 51:**
 - ⊕ **Restrictive:** The right to self-defence arises only after an **armed attack** has occurred.
 - ⊕ **Expansive:** Self-defence can arise in response to an **imminent threat** of armed attack and may extend even against **non-state actors**, as seen in the US-led **Operation Iraqi Freedom (2003)**.



A recent study revealed the presence of Uranium-238 in the breastmilk of lactating mothers in Bihar.

About U-238 Concentration and Toxicity

- **Nature:** Uranium-238 (U-238) is the **most abundant** uranium isotope in nature, forming about 99.3% of natural uranium.
- **Occurrence:** Found in soil, rocks and groundwater and in drinking water under natural conditions.
- **Toxicity Basis:** U-238 poses greater risk from **chemical toxicity** (as a heavy metal affecting kidneys) than from radioactivity.
- **Safe Limits:** The World Health Organisation sets a provisional limit of **30 micrograms per litre** for uranium in drinking water.



Biomass Pellets

Recently the Union Minister for New & Renewable Energy, inaugurated state-of-the-art Biomass Pellet Plant in Rewari, Haryana.

About Biomass pellets

- **Definition:** Small, cylindrical, condensed forms of organic material derived from renewable sources.
- **Raw Materials:** Agro-residues such as paddy, soya, cotton, gram, jowar stubble/straw/stalk/husk; as well as groundnut shell, coconut shell, bamboo, dry leaves, and similar biomass.
- **Applications:** Used for heat and electricity generation in power plants, and as bedding material for livestock.
- **Benefits:** Helps reduce pollution, cut carbon emissions, and generate new livelihood opportunities for rural communities.
- **Policy Mandate:**
 - ⊕ The National Biomass Policy mandates co-firing of 5% biomass pellets or torrefied municipal solid waste (MSW) charcoal in all coal-based thermal power plants while units in the Delhi-NCR region are required to achieve a 7% blend.
 - ⊕ **Incentives:** Biomass pellet manufacturing is recognized as an eligible activity under **Priority Sector Lending (PSL)**.





Abhujmadia Tribe

The Bastar region is witnessing growing participation of **Abhujmadia** youth in events like Bastar Olympics.

About Abhujmadia Tribe

- Belong to **Primitive Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG)** residing in Narayanpur, Dantewada, and Abujhmad areas of Bijapur district.
- They are **ancestral and patriarchal tribe**, divided into several dynasties, speaking the **Abujhbadia Gondi dialect**.
- Abujhmadia women consider (Godana) tattoo a **permanent jewel**.

Criteria for PVTG Recognition (Dhebar Commission (1960-61))

- Pre-agricultural level of technology,
- Low level of literacy,
- Economic backwardness,
- A declining or stagnant population.



HAMMER Precision Guided Weapon

India's BEL and France's Safran to Manufacture **HAMMER Precision-Guided Weapon** in India.

About Hammer

- **Purpose:** Combat-proven, **all-weather smart air-to-surface weapon** designed for **close air support** and **deep-strike missions**.
- **Key Features:**
 - ⊕ **Range:** 70+ km.
 - ⊕ **Fire-and-forget** with high accuracy even in GNSS-denied or jammed environments.
 - ⊕ Simultaneous **multi-target attack capability**.
 - ⊕ **Compatible with** 125, 250, 500 and 1000 kg **standard bomb bodies**.
 - ⊕ Can be launched from **low altitude and over rough terrain**.
 - ⊕ **Autonomous and highly resistant** to jamming.



Lake Urmia (Iran)

Iran has attempted **cloud-seeding** over the Lake Urmia basin to induce rainfall amid the country's worst drought in decades.

About Lake Urmia

- **Location & Size:** Located in **northwestern Iran**, fed by rivers like the **Zarīneh and Sīmīneh**.
- **Decline:** It has lost **>90% of its original water volume** due to damming, agricultural diversion and climate stress.
- **Environmental Impact:** Exposed lake-bed salts create wind-blown saline dust, damaging soil, health and livelihoods across the region.
- **Protection Status:** Ramsar Site, UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.



Tiger Reserves

Recently a Supreme Court appointed panel recommended notifying tiger reserve in Goa.

- It recommended **Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary and Netravali Wildlife Sanctuary** (contiguous to **Kali tiger reserve of Karnataka**) as the core and **Bhagwan Mahavir National Park** (home to Dudhsagar waterfall) as the buffer zone.

About Tiger Reserves

- **Notification:** By State Governments as per **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972** on advise of the **National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)**.
 - ⊕ NTCA is a **statutory body** under Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 with Minister of Ministry of Environment and Forests as Chairperson.
- India has **58 tiger reserves** (latest being Madhav in Madhya Pradesh).

Personality in News



About Lachit Borphukan

Prime Minister paid tributes to Ahom general **Lachit Borphukan** on his birth anniversary.

About Lachit Borphukan (1622-1672)

- **Birth:** 24 November 1622 at **Charaideo, Assam**.
- Held several positions in the **Ahom Kingdom** including the Commander-in-Chief.
 - ⊕ Founded by the Sukapha, **Ahom dynasty** ruled over much of Assam and the North East from 1228 to 1826 AD.
- Chosen as one of **five Borphukans of Ahom kingdom** and given administrative, judicial, and military responsibilities.
- **Battle of Saraighat (1671):** Defeated the Mughal forces, led by **Raja Ramsingh-I**.
- **Recognition:** **National Defence Academy (NDA)** gives **Lachit Barphukan Gold Medal** to best cadet since 1999; Lachit Divas on November 24; 125 feet Bronze statue.
- **Values:** Courage, Patriotism, Leadership.



AHMEDABAD



BENGALURU



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



GUWAHATI



HYDERABAD



JAIPUR



JODHPUR



LUCKNOW



PRAYAGRAJ



PUNE



RANCHI