

# NEWS TODAY

## 44% of sitting Member of Parliament (MPs) face criminal charges, 5% are billionaires: Association of Democratic Reforms (ADR)

### ➤ ADR report also highlights that

- ⊕ **50% of MPs facing criminal charge** are from **Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Himachal Pradesh.**
- ⊕ Among sitting MPs with criminal charges, **29% face serious criminal cases** including allegations of murder, attempt to murder, crime against women etc.

### ➤ About Criminalisation of Politics

- ⊕ Refers to **infiltration of criminals, lawbreakers, and corrupt individuals into political system**, who then use their influence to further their own interests at cost of country and its citizens.

#### ⊕ Reasons

- ◆ Growing nexus between political parties and criminals.
- ◆ **Lack of laws and rules** for governing elections procedure.
- ◆ Money power i.e. **Buying votes** for another illegitimate purpose.

#### ⊕ Impact

- ◆ Against free and fair elections.
- ◆ Affects good governance and integrity of public servants.
- ◆ Corrupt activities like taking bribes, embezzling public funds etc. damages social fabric of society.

### ➤ Supreme Court (SC) judgements related with Criminalization of Politics

- ⊕ **Lily Thomas Vs UOI (2013)**: MPs, State Legislatures convicted of crime with a minimum sentence of 2 years imprisonment would cease to be members of the house.
- ⊕ **Public Interest Foundation v UOI (2018)**: A person cannot be disqualified from membership in a legislative body on mere framing of criminal charges against them.

## United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) released Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction (Buildings-GSR) 2024

### ➤ Report was published jointly by **UNEP and Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC).**

### ➤ Key findings

- ⊕ Building and Construction Sector (BCS) accounts for about **21% of global Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions.**
- ⊕ In 2022, buildings were responsible for **34% global energy demand and 37% of energy and process-related carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions.**
- ⊕ India is attributing **40% of its CO2 emissions to buildings.**
- ⊕ **Need to Decarbonise BCS:**

- ◆ **Limit global warming to 1.5°C (Paris agreement) and achieve net zero by 2050** by reducing embodied carbon in building materials.

### ➤ Initiatives taken for Sustainable BCS

#### ⊕ Global:

- ◆ **Declaration de Chailot** (adopted at first ever Buildings and Climate Global Forum): Document aimed at fostering international cooperation to address climate challenges within building sector.
- ◆ **Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (European Union)**: Zero emission standards for new buildings by 2030.
- ◆ **Buildings Breakthrough initiative** (by France and Morocco at COP 28): Near-zero emission and resilient buildings by 2030.
- ◆ **Clean Heat Forum** (initiated by UK).

#### ⊕ India:

- ◆ First city-specific **Zero Carbon Buildings Action Plan (ZCBAP)** launched in **Nagpur.**
- ◆ **Energy Conservation (Amendment) Act, 2022** provides for Energy Conservation and Sustainability Building Code.

#### About GlobalABC

- **Founded at COP21**, it is leading **global platform** for all built environment stakeholders committed to a common vision: A zero-emission, efficient and resilient buildings and construction sector.

#### Challenges in Decarbonising BCS

- **Poor building practices** can contribute to maladaptation, leading to increased energy consumption and GHG emissions.
- Continued construction of **carbon intensive new buildings in climate risk exposed areas.**

#### Recommendations

- Developing **building energy codes** aligned with **Zero-Emissions Building principles.**
- **Providing financial incentives** for greater investment in decarbonizing BCS.

## World's first ever Nuclear Energy Summit held in Brussels


- Summit was jointly organized by the **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)** and **Belgium** to promote nuclear energy.
  - ⊕ It was organised in the wake of the historic inclusion of nuclear energy in the **Global Stocktake** agreed at the **UN Climate Change Conference (COP28)**, 2023.
  - ⊕ Inclusion in **Global Stocktake** called for accelerating its deployment.
    - ◆ Currently, nuclear energy is responsible for around 25 % of global low carbon electricity production.
- Summit was attended by more than 30 nations (including India) and European Union.
- **About IAEA**
  - ⊕ **Genesis:** Established in 1957 as an autonomous international organization within the **United Nations system**.
  - ⊕ **Objective:** Works with its Member States and multiple partners worldwide to **promote safe, secure and peaceful nuclear technologies**.
  - ⊕ **Safeguard Mechanism:** The global **Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)** and other treaties against the spread of nuclear weapons entrust the IAEA as the nuclear inspectorate.
    - ◆ IAEA has also evolved **additional Protocol mechanism**; it enables IAEA to verify the peaceful use of all nuclear material in States.
    - ◆ India is part of this protocol.
  - ⊕ **Members:** 178 (Including India)
  - ⊕ **Key Initiative:** Atoms4NetZero
  - ⊕ **HQ:** Vienna, Austria

### Relevance and Challenges of Nuclear Energy

- Clean source of electricity with **minimal Carbon Footprint**.
- Technological advancement in the form of **Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)** will make it more feasible.
  - ⊕ **SMR's** are advanced nuclear reactors that have a power capacity of up to 300 MW(e) per unit.
- Perennial Availability.
- **Challenges:** Safety concerns post-Fukushima nuclear disaster and Vulnerable to cyber-attacks , High upfront cost of building a nuclear power plant, Long delays, etc.


## United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) highlights India's rising role in Global Crisis Response System

- India's response to global crisis is aligned with the **ethos of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam** it means 'The world is one family'.
- Earlier, India has joined the **Champions Group of the Global Crisis Response Group (GCRG)**, set up in 2022 by **United Nations Secretary General (UNSG)**.
- **India's Role in Global Crisis Response**
  - ⊕ **Swift response to natural disasters:** Emerged as a first responder. It has enhanced **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)** capabilities in the recent time.
    - ◆ Launched **Operation Dost** in the aftermath of the **devastating earthquakes that struck in Turkey**.
    - ◆ '**Operation Karuna**' to assist **Myanmar** during **Cyclone Mocha**.
  - ⊕ **Helping people in Conflict Zones:** Supplied shipments of wheat, medicines, and other essential supplies in **Afghanistan & Ukraine**.
  - ⊕ **Health Emergencies:** During COVID-19 Pandemic, provided vaccine under the initiative "**Vaccine Maitri**". Also, provided other important equipments.
  - ⊕ **Strengthening multilateral cooperation:** India is collaborating with UN agencies, including the World Food Programme to deal with issues like food insecurity etc.
  - ⊕ **Anti-Piracy Operations:** Recently, Indian Navy successfully rescued hijacked Iranian fishing vessel in Arabian Sea.



**United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)**

Geneva, Switzerland



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**Genesis:** Set up in 1999

**Mission:** To provide leadership and support to accelerate global efforts in disaster risk reduction to achieve inclusive sustainable development and the goal of the **Sendai Framework**.

## Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) extended Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 (AFSPA) in Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh

- Assam government has also extended AFSPA 1958 in four districts for another six months.
- **About AFSPA, 1958**
  - ⊖ It gives armed forces power to maintain public order in "disturbed areas".
  - ⊖ Act gives special powers to armed forces like:
    - ◆ To prohibit a gathering of five or more persons in an area.
    - ◆ Can use force or open fire if they feel a person is in contravention of law.
    - ◆ Can also arrest a person without a warrant; enter or search a premises and ban possession of firearms.
- **Powers to Declare Areas to be Disturbed Areas**
  - ⊖ Disturbed area are declared under Section 3 of AFSPA when a part or whole State/ Union Territory (UT) is in such a condition that the use of armed forces in aid of civil power is necessary.
  - ⊖ Central Government or Governor of State or administrator of UT can declare whole or part of State/UT as a disturbed area.
- **Issues with AFSPA**
  - ⊖ Violates right to life and right to remedy; Misuse of powers by armed forces; Violates International law like Universal Declaration of Human Rights, etc.

### Immunity under AFSPA

- No prosecution, suit or any other legal proceeding can be instituted, except with previous sanction of Central Government, against anything done or purported to be done in exercise of powers conferred by Act.

### Supreme Court (SC) Judgement related to AFSPA

- In **Extra Judicial Execution Victim Families Association v Union of India case (2016)**, SC held that there is **no concept of absolute immunity** from trial by criminal court even when an offence is committed by army personnel.

## Ukraine's Foreign Minister paid official visit to India

- Foreign Minister visits amid efforts to seek a peaceful resolution to the more than two-year-old Russia-Ukraine conflict.
- Ukraine expects India to participate in the **Peace summit** to be hosted by Switzerland based on Ukrainian President's 10 points peace formula.
  - ⊖ **10 points peace formula** aims to bring lasting peace to Ukraine and put an end to war.
- A Review meeting of the **Inter-governmental Commission (IGC)** was also held to restore cooperation prior to war level.
- **About India- Ukraine Relationship**
  - ⊖ **Political:** India was one of the first countries to recognise Ukraine.
  - ⊖ **Trade and Economic Cooperation:** India was Ukraine's major export destination in the Asia-Pacific (2020).
  - ⊖ **Cultural:** Elements of India's soft power such as dances, yoga, philosophy, Ayurveda and spirituality have considerable impact in Ukraine
    - ◆ People to people connect through training programs by India such as ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations) scholarship; Kendriya Hindi Sansthan Scholarship program was quite good before War.
  - ⊖ **Education:** One of the most preferred destination for medical education, about 18,000 Indian students were studying in Ukraine before the conflict.

### India's stand on Ukraine-Russia Conflict

- India advocates **peaceful resolution** of the conflict through **dialogue** and **diplomacy**.
- It is open to engaging all ways and means that would end the war.
- Also, it is providing continuous **humanitarian assistance** to Ukraine.

## Also in News



### 1MYAC (One Million Youth Actions Challenge)

- **1MYAC (One Million Youth Actions Challenge)** is promoted by the UN Climate Change Learning Partnership (UN CC:Learn).
- **About 1MYAC**
  - ⊖ Aims to encourage youth aged 10 to 30 years old to take concrete actions for a more sustainable future.
  - ⊖ It works to **promote** four Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
    - ◆ It includes SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation), SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production), SDG 13 (climate action) and SDG 15 (life on land).
- **UN CC: Learn** is a collaborative initiative of 36 multilateral organizations working together to help countries build the knowledge and skills they need to take action on climate change.



### Mohiniyattam

- Kerala Kalamandalam has lifted gender restrictions for boys to learn Mohiniyattam.
- **About Mohiniyattam**
  - ⊖ It is the **classical solo dance form of Kerala**.
  - ⊖ **References of Mohiniyattam** can be found in **texts Vyavaharamala** written in 1709 by Mazhamagalam Narayanan Namputiri and in **Ghoshayatra**, written later by poet Kunjan Nambiar.
  - ⊖ **Major themes:** Love and devotion to God usually Lord Vishnu or his incarnation Lord Krishna as lead character.
  - ⊖ **Characteristics**
    - ◆ 40 different basic movements called **adavukal**.
    - ◆ Graceful, swaying body movements with **no abrupt jerks or sudden leaps**.
    - ◆ Lays emphasis on **acting**.

**Government e-Market (GeM)**

- Procurement of goods and services through GeM has crossed Rs 4 lakh crore.
- **About GeM**
  - ⊕ It is **Public Procurement Portal for goods and services for all Central Government and State Government Ministries, Departments, Public Sector Units etc.**
  - ⊕ Launched in 2016 by **Ministry of Commerce and Industry.**
- **Advantages of GeM**
  - ⊕ **Listing of products** for individual, prescribed categories of Goods/ Services of common use.
  - ⊕ Ease of procurement through an **open and transparent procurement platform.**
  - ⊕ **Promotes Innovation and Social Inclusion.**
  - ⊕ **Online grievance redressal mechanism** for quick resolution.

**Tholu Bommalata**

- Sangeet Natak Akademi is reviving an ancient theatre performance of Tholu Bommalata puppetry which is on the brink of extinction.
- **About Tholu Bommalata**
  - ⊕ Also known as the dance of **leather dolls.**
  - ⊕ It is mainly performed in the **Godavari region of Andhra Pradesh.**
  - ⊕ Made from animal skin, they are projected on a small screen, like colour photographic transparencies.
  - ⊕ **Major screen characters:** Animals, birds, gods, and demons.
  - ⊕ **Major themes:** Ramayana and Mahabharata.

**Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas Mark 1A**

- First flight of Made in India indigenous LCA Tejas Mark 1A fighter aircraft has been completed in Bengaluru.
- **About LCA Tejas Mark 1A**
  - ⊕ Developed by **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited**, it is an **advanced variant of LCA Mk-1**, which has already been inducted by Indian Airforce.
  - ⊕ Features **advanced mission computer**, high performance Digital Flight Control Computer (DFCC Mk1A), **Smart Multi-Function Displays (SMFD)**, **Advanced Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) Radar**, Advanced Self-protection Jammer, Electronic Warfare Suit etc.

**Afar Triangle**

- Geologists predict potential emergence of a new ocean at the Afar Triangle (also known as the Afar Depression), located in the Horn of Africa.
- **About Afar Triangle**
  - ⊕ It represents the **northernmost portion of the Great Rift Valley.**
  - ⊕ It is on one of the most geologically active regions on earth, where Nubian, **Somali** and **Arabian** Plates converge.
  - ⊕ It will be inundated by Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden when new ocean basin will be formed. This could lead to the birth of a distinct continent in East Africa.
  - ⊕ It encompasses **sections of Eritrea, Djibouti, and Ethiopia.**
  - ⊕ **Awash River** is the main river that flows through the Afar Triangle.

**International Court of Justice (ICJ)**

- ICJ orders Israel to address famine in Gaza and ensure unhindered supply of food.
- **About ICJ**
  - ⊕ **Principal judicial organ of UN**, established in **1945 by UN Charter.**
  - ⊕ **HQ: Peace Palace in The Hague (Netherlands).**
  - ⊕ **Composition: 15 judges**, who are elected for **nine years** by United Nations General Assembly and Security Council.
  - ⊕ **Official languages:** English and French.
  - ⊕ **Role: Settle legal disputes** as per International law and to provide advisory opinions.
    - ◆ **Judgment is binding on parties** to a case and without appeal (subject to interpretation or revision).

**Clean Energy Transitions Programme (CETP)**

- **International Energy Agency (IEA)** released **Clean Energy Transitions Programme (CETP)** Annual report 2023.
- **About Clean Energy Transitions Programme (CETP)**
  - ⊕ It was launched in 2017 by IEA.
  - ⊕ It is leading the global fight against climate change by **accelerating clean energy transitions.**
    - ◆ Under CETP, IEA provides **technical assistance, insights etc. for energy transition.**
  - ⊕ Its objectives are aligned with **2015 Paris Agreement** and the **Sustainable Development Goals.**

**Places in News**



**North Korea (Capital: P'yŏngyang)**

- Russia has vetoed a United Nations Expert Panel that has been monitoring sanctions against North Korea.
- **Political features**
  - ⊕ Known as Democratic People's Republic of Korea, it is an **East Asian country** occupying Northern part of Korean Peninsula.
  - ⊕ Bordered by **China and Russia** to north and **Republic of Korea (South Korea)** to south.
  - ⊕ **Water bodies:** East Sea (Sea of Japan) and Yellow Sea in west.
- **Geographical features**
  - ⊕ **Highest Peak:** Mount Paektu.
  - ⊕ **Major Rivers:** Yulu (Yalu), Tumen, Taedang, and Imjin.



**Errata:** In 'News Today' dated **28th March, 2024**, in 'Also in News' on "Eturnagaram Wildlife Sanctuary", it was incorrectly mentioned that 'It lies on border of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh.'  
The **correct information** is '**Eturnagaram Wildlife Sanctuary** lies on border of **Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Telangana.**'

