

Prime Minister concluded his State Visit of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Prime Minister co-chaired the second leaders meeting of the India-Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership Council (SPC).

Key Outcomes

- Expansion of India-Saudi Arabia SPC to **include two new Ministerial Committees** – one on **Defence Cooperation** and another on **Tourism and Cultural Cooperation**.
 - ⊕ Earlier, SPC comprised of two Ministerial Committees – one on Political, Consular and Security Cooperation, and another on Economy, Energy, Investment and Technology.
- **Joint High Level Task Force on Investment (HLTF)**, constituted in 2024, agreed to collaborate on establishing two refineries in India.
- **Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs)** signed for cooperation in **space activities** for peaceful purposes, **health, and anti-doping education and prevention**.
- Agreed to expedite negotiations on **India-GCC FTA and Bilateral Investment Treaty**.

India-Saudi Arabia Relations

- **Economic Cooperation:** India is Saudi's **2nd largest trading partner** and Saudi is India's **5th**.
 - ⊕ **In FY 2023-24**, bilateral trade stood at **USD 42.98 billion** and Saudi investment in India has been about USD 10 billion.
 - ⊕ Partners in **India Middle East Europe Corridor** initiative.
- **Energy Partnership:** **3rd largest** crude oil and LPG supplier to India in FY 2023-24.
- **Diaspora:** Indian community in Saudi Arabia numbers at approximately 2.7 million.
- **Defence & Security:** Joint exercises (SADA TANSEEQ, AL MOHED AL HINDI) and defence manufacturing ties.

UNODC Report highlights expansion of Organized Crime Groups beyond East and Southeast Asia

The report by UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) highlights that the **transnational organized cybercrime groups in East and Southeast Asia** are spreading beyond the region as crack-down pressure increases.

Changing trends and highlights of UNODC Report

- **Transnational organized crime in Southeast Asia:** E.g. Shift to synthetic drug production (methamphetamine) in Myanmar.
- **Geographical Expansion:** From East and Southeast Asian to **Africa, South Asia (including India), Middle East, Pacific islands, Europe, North America, and South America**.
 - ⊕ E.g., large numbers of Indian nationals were sent back from scam centres in Myawaddy, Myanmar, in March 2025.
- **Emergence of new illicit online marketplaces:** E.g., **Huione Guarantee (Haowang)**, a telegram-based marketplace in Southeast Asia, emerges as one of the world's largest illicit online marketplaces.

Relation between Cyber Fraud and Organized criminal groups (OCG)

- **OCGs engaging in cybercrime:** E.g., Utilized ICT to exploit new online criminal markets (e.g., **Internet gambling**).
- **OCGs are also becoming more professional:** E.g. Using a range of **malware, deepfake and other AI-driven technology** services.

Recommendations: Raising political awareness and will; strengthening regulatory frameworks; enhancing operational capacity of enforcement agencies; advancing operational regional cooperation, etc.

Related News: Recently, NITI Aayog published an article titled '**Digital Arrest: The Modern-Day Cyber Scam**'.
What is Digital Arrest?

- Digital arrest is the **name given to a cybercrime technique**, which refers to a scam designed to extort money from victims using fear, deceit, and intimidation.
- Fraudsters impersonate law enforcement officials, using threats of arrest, frozen bank accounts, and passport cancellations to coerce victims into paying a "fine" or "security deposit" to avoid legal action.

Why does it happen?

- **Human Psychology & Social Engineering:** Exploit emotions like fear (threatening legal action), excitement (fake lottery wins), or urgency (fake emergency fund requests).
- **Weak Cybersecurity Practices:** E.g., weak password and credentials use.
- **Rapidly Evolving Cybercrime Techniques:** To stay ahead of security measures.
- **Digital Payments & Financial Fraud Risks:** Like fake UPI requests & QR codes, etc.
- **Dark Web & Cybercrime Networks:** Criminals buy and sell stolen data, etc.
- **Lack of Strong Cyber Laws & Enforcement.**

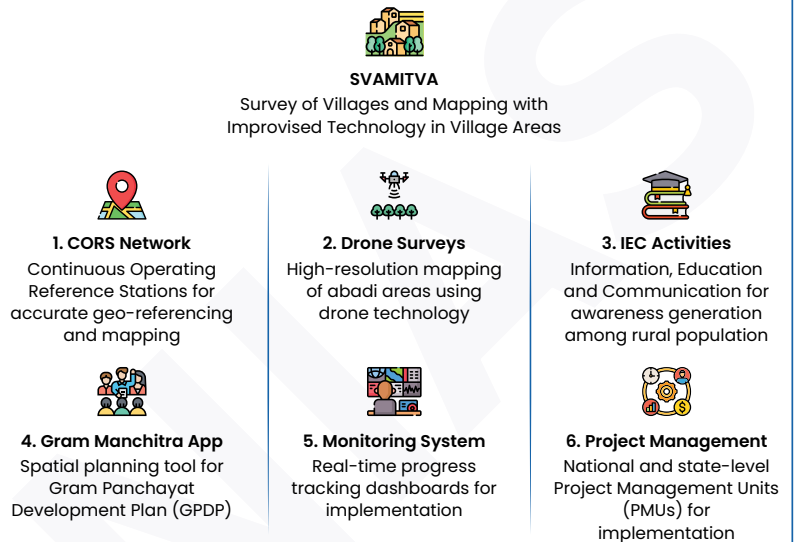
5 Years of SVAMITVA Scheme

SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas) Scheme was launched by the Prime Minister on **National Panchayati Raj Day (April 24)** in 2020.

About SVAMITVA Scheme

- **Nature:** Central Sector Scheme of Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj.
- **Objective:** To drive the economic transformation of rural India by providing property owners in village Abadi areas with a "Record of Rights."
 - ⊕ To bring **financial stability to the citizens in rural** India by enabling them to use their property as a financial asset for taking loans and other financial benefits.
- **Key Features**
 - ⊕ **Legal ownership:** Issuance of property cards to residents of abadi areas.
 - ⊕ **Dispute resolution:** Reduces land conflicts through accurate mapping.
 - ⊕ **Digital Governance:** Promotes transparent, tech-enabled rural land governance.
 - ⊕ **Village planning:** Supports Gram Panchayat Development Plans via GIS data
- **Key achievements**
 - ⊕ **Drone Surveys:** Completed in 3.20 lakh villages over 68,122 sq km.
 - ⊕ **Property Cards Issued:** Over 2.42 crore cards for 1.61 lakh villages.
 - ⊕ **Full Coverage achieved in:** Lakshadweep, Ladakh, NCT of Delhi, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh.
 - ⊕ **Ladakh & Rajasthan** among best performers in timely implementation.

Components of SVAMITVA Scheme



Government of India suspends Indus Water Treaty

Following the **Pahalgam terror attack**, the **Cabinet Committee on Security** has decided to put the **Indus Water Treaty in abeyance with immediate effect**, until Pakistan credibly and irrevocably abjures its support for cross-border terrorism.

About Indus Water Treaty

- **Genesis:** Signed in **1960** between the then **Indian Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru** and **Pakistani President Mohammad Ayub Khan**, brokered by the **World Bank**.
- **Key provisions**
 - ⊕ **Water Right Usage:**
 - ◆ **Eastern Rivers (Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej)** for India's unrestricted use.
 - ◆ **Western Rivers (Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab)** are allocated to Pakistan, with India allowed for specific non-consumptive uses like navigation, floating of timber or other property, flood protection or flood control, fishing or fish culture.
 - ⊕ **Exchange of Data:** With respect to the flow in, and utilisation of waters, to be transmitted monthly by each Party.
 - ⊕ **Implementation Mechanism:**
 - ◆ **Creation of a Permanent Indus Commission:** With a commissioner from each country, in order to maintain a channel for communication and to try to resolve questions about implementation of the treaty.
 - ◆ **Settlement of Differences & Dispute:** 3-level Graded mechanism through **Permanent Indus Commission, Neutral Expert, and Court of Arbitration** for handling distinct issues.
 - ⊕ **Modification:** Provisions of the Treaty may be modified by a **duly ratified treaty** concluded for that purpose between the two Governments.



Cabinet Committee on Security

- **Functions:** To deal with issues related to Defence; Law and order, and internal security; Foreign affairs having internal or external security implications, review the manpower requirements relating to national security, etc.
- **Composition:** Prime Minister (Chair), Minister of Defence, Minister of Home Affairs, Minister of Finance, and Minister of External Affairs.

84% of the world's coral reefs impacted in the fourth global coral bleaching event

Scientists have confirmed the ongoing fourth global coral bleaching event is the most intense and widespread on record, continuing from early 2023 through March 2025.

- This bleaching-level heat stress **impacted 84% of the world's reefs** while previously first event (1998) affected 21% reefs, second event (2010) affected 37% reefs and third event (2014-17) affected 68% reefs.

About Corals and Coral Bleaching

- Corals are **invertebrate animals** that live in **colonies of polyps** formed by a process called **budding** (original polyp growing copies of itself).
- Corals are generally classified as either **hard coral (reef-building corals)** or **soft coral**.
 - ⊕ Hard corals build massive reef structures through **calcium carbonate secretion**.
- Corals have a symbiotic **relationship with algae called zooxanthellae** that provide them with nutrients through photosynthesis.
- **Coral bleaching occurs** when corals expel their **colorful zooxanthellae due to environmental stress (primarily rising ocean temperatures)**, leaving them white and deprived of their main food source.
 - ⊕ This can lead to **mass coral death if prolonged**.

Significance of Coral Reefs

- **Biodiversity Hotspots:** Support approximately 25% of all marine species.
- **Coastal Protection:** Act as natural breakwaters **protecting coastlines from storms, erosion, and flooding**.
- **Economic Value:** Estimated \$10 trillion in **economic benefits globally through tourism, fisheries, and coastal protection**.

Coral Conservation Technologies

- **Biorock Technology:** Uses a low-voltage electrical current on submerged metal frames to stimulate the deposition of calcium carbonate.
- **3D-Printed Reef Structures:** Mimic the complexity of natural reefs, providing habitat for marine life and a foundation for coral growth.
- **Coral Cryopreservation:** Cryobanking coral larvae and genetic material preserves biodiversity and allows for future restoration.



Also In News



International Lunar Research Station (ILRS)

China and Russia are planning to build a **nuclear power plant on the Moon to power their joint International Lunar Research Station (ILRS)**.

- The plan also aims to create the **"555 Project"**, inviting 50 countries, 500 international scientific research institutions, and 5,000 overseas researchers to join the ILRS.

About ILRS

- **Objectives:** Lunar geology, lunar-based astronomical observation, space environment observation of the Sun-Earth-Moon system, lunar-based fundamental science experiments, and lunar in-situ resource utilization.
- 17 countries and **international organizations, as well as more than 50 international research institutions have joined ILRS**.
- ILRS will possess **capabilities such as Earth-Moon transportation, energy supply, centralized control, communication, navigation, and ground support capabilities**.



Vaikom Satyagraha

100 years ago, Travancore Government gave full effect to the agreement of Vaikom satyagraha.

About Vaikom satyagraha

- Vaikom Satyagraha took place in Vaikom village, Kottayam district, Kerala in 1924-25.
- Vaikom Satyagraha focused on **elimination of untouchability and freedom of movement in public spaces**.
 - ⊕ Dalits were prohibited from entering the Vaikom temple premises or even using the road that encircled the temple, leading to the Satyagraha.
- **Prominent leaders: K. Kelappan, T. K. Madhavan, K. P. Kesava Menon.**
- **Mahatma Gandhi** supported the movement and **visited Vaikom in 1925**.
- Satyagraha ultimately **succeeded in opening the temple roads to everyone**.



IMF-ENV

Using multi-country computable **general equilibrium model (IMF-ENV)**, IMF has examined how AI-driven data center growth affects electricity consumption, electricity prices, and carbon emissions.

About IMF-ENV

- It is a global dynamic **Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) model developed by the IMF's Research Department**.
 - CGE models are large numerical models which combine economic theory with real economic data to derive the impacts of policies and shocks in the economy.
- The model features a **database of 160 countries and regions, along with 76 sectors**, and can be calibrated to a wide range of country-sector combinations.



Quantum Gravity Gradiometers

NASA is developing **first-ever space-based quantum sensor for measuring gravity**.

- Subtle changes in Gravity are measured using **Gravity Gradiometers**.
 - Gravity gradiometers track **how fast an object in one location falls compared to an object falling just a short distance away**.
 - The difference in acceleration between these two free-falling objects corresponds to **differences in gravitational strength**.
- Quantum sensors **utilize ultra-cold atom interferometry**, which is an established technique to perform absolute measurements of local gravity.
 - In atom interferometry, a free-falling cloud of atoms is split, mirrored, and recombined using timed laser pulses to measure the gravity.



Tax Collected at Source

Income Tax department has recently notified list of luxury items on which taxpayers will have to pay 1% Tax Collected at Source.

About Tax Collected at Source (TCS)

- It is a **tax payable by a seller which he collects from the buyer** at the time of sale of goods.
- Section 206 of the Income Tax Act** mentions the list of goods on which the seller should collect tax from buyers.
- Section 52 of the CGST Act, 2017** provides for Tax Collection at Source, by e-Commerce Operator in respect of the taxable supplies
- Seller is categorized as any individual or organization** authorized under TCS which includes Central Government, State Government, Local authority, Partnership Firms, etc.



Cholesterol

Researchers at the Institute of Advanced Study in Science and Technology in Guwahati have developed a **new optical sensing platform** for detecting cholesterol could indicate the probability of diseases.

- Platform can sense cholesterol in trace amounts, even below the preferred range. It can be an efficient tool for routine monitoring of cholesterol levels in the human body.

About Cholesterol types

- It is an **essential lipid in humans**, produced by the liver.
- It is necessary for animal tissues, blood, and nerve cells, and it is transported by blood in mammals.
- 2-types**
 - LDL (Low-Density Lipoprotein) Cholesterol**: Often referred to as 'bad' cholesterol because it can accumulate in the walls of arteries and contribute to severe diseases
 - HDL (High-density lipoprotein) Cholesterol**: Referred as 'good' cholesterol as it helps remove other forms of cholesterol from the bloodstream.



Quantum Communication over existing Infrastructure

For the first time, quantum messages have been successfully transmitted over 254 km in Germany, using existing commercial telecommunication infrastructure.

About the recent development

- The communication was **enabled through optical fiber cables**, without the need for cryogenic cooling.
- It used a **coherence-based twin-field quantum key distribution**, which facilitates the distribution of secure information over long distances.
- This demonstration indicates that **advanced quantum communications protocols that exploit the coherence of light** can be made to work over existing telecom infrastructure.



Sunrise Sectors

Union Finance Minister stated that **India aims to double the share of manufacturing in GDP** with the help of **sunrise sectors**.

About Sunrise Industry

- Sunrise industry is an inherent **concept that shows hope of a rapid boom for a developing sector or market in its infancy stage**.
- They are characterized by **high growth rates, numerous start-ups, and a wealth of venture capital funding**.
- Government has identified **14 sunrise sectors** - Semiconductors, Renewable energy components, Medical devices, Hydrogen mission, Batteries, etc., to strengthen manufacturing and introduced the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme to promote them.

Place in News



Costa Rica (Capital: San José)

Poás Volcano erupts in Central Costa Rica.

Political Features:

- Location**: Lies in Central America.
- Bordering Countries**: **Nicaragua** (North) and **Panama** (South-East).
- Bordering Water Bodies**: Caribbean Sea (East) and Pacific Ocean (West).

Geographical Features:

- Mountain Ranges**: **Cordillera Volcánica** and **Cordillera de Talamanca**.
- Cordillera de Talamanca** (along the border between Panama and Costa Rica) is a **UNESCO World Heritage site**.
- Other volcanoes**: Irazu, Arenal



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BENGALURU



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



GUWAHATI



HYDERABAD



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