

NEWS TODAY

Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change notified Environment Protection (End-of-Life Vehicles) Rules, 2025

Notified under **Environmental Protection Act, 1986**, the rules will come into force from **1st of April, 2025**.

➤ **End-of-Life Vehicles (EoLV)** means all vehicles which are no longer validly registered or declared unfit through Automated Fitness Centres or their registrations have been cancelled.

Key Highlights

- **Applicability:** Apply to **producer, registered owner of vehicles, Registered Vehicle Scrapping Facility (RVSF), automated testing stations** etc. involved in testing of vehicles, handling, processing and scrapping of EoLV.
- **Exception:** Not apply to
 - ⊕ **Waste batteries** covered under **Battery Waste Management Rules, 2022**.
 - ⊕ **Plastic packaging** covered under **Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016**.
 - ⊕ **Waste tyres and used oil** covered under **Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management and Transboundary Movement) Rules, 2016**.
 - ⊕ **E-waste** covered under **E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2022**.
- **Responsibilities of Producer:** Fulfil **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)** either through purchase of EPR certificate generated by its own RVSF or by any entity having RVSF.
- **EPR certificate:** Issued by **Central Pollution Control Board** through **centralised online portal** in favour of RVSF.
- **Responsibilities of registered owner and bulk consumer:** They must **deposit EoLV** at any of the **producer's designated sales outlet or designated Collection Centre or RVSF** within **180 days**.
- **Implementation Committee:** Constituted by Central Government and **chaired by CPCB Chairman** for effective implementation of rules.

India's Renewable Energy Growth surpassing 209 GW in 2024: Ministry of New & Renewable Energy

India's Renewable Energy (RE) growth has **increased by approx. 16%** from about 181GW in December, 2023, reflecting a strong progress towards its **goal of 500 GW from non-fossil sources by 2030**.

Key Contributors to Growth

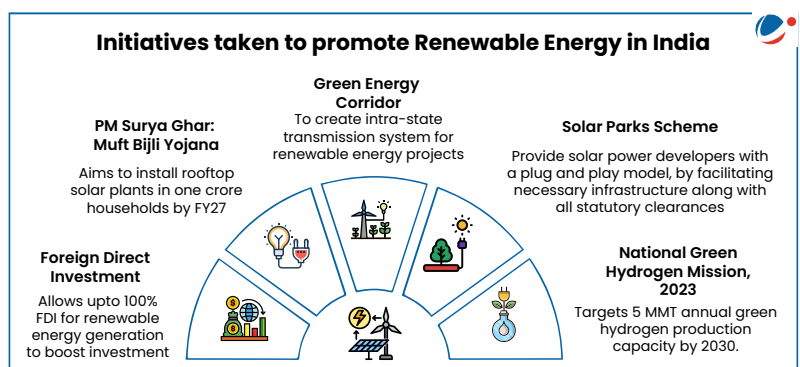
- **Solar Energy:** Cumulative installed capacity **increased** from about 73 GW in 2023 to **about 98 GW in 2024**.
- **Wind Energy:** Increased by 7.64% from 2023 to **approx. 48 GW**.
- **Bioenergy:** Installed capacity **rose** from **~11 GW in 2023 to 11.35 GW in 2024**.

Significance of Renewable Energy

- **Climate Change Mitigation:** Reduces reliance on fossil fuels and lowers greenhouse gas emissions. Eg. India aims to cut carbon intensity by 45% by 2030.
- **Energy Security:** Decreased dependence on coal imports from countries like Australia, Indonesia etc.
- **Sustainable Development Goals:** Supports SDGs, including Clean Energy (SDG 7), Climate Action (SDG 13), etc.

Challenges wrt renewable Energy

- **High Costs:** High upfront investment for renewable energy infrastructure, such as solar panels, wind turbines, and energy storage.
- **Environmental Concerns:** Adverse impact on biodiversity such as, habitat loss, direct species mortality, disturbance etc.
- **Legacy Infrastructure:** Existing fossil fuel-based infrastructure complicates integration with renewables.
- **Grid Stability:** Variability in solar and wind energy challenges grid stability.



Niti Aayog seeks balance between Government and Corporate Debt Markets

Niti Aayog recently highlighted that Government debt market is well developed in comparison to the Corporate Debt Market.

- ▶ **Debt Market** is part of the **securities market** where **debt securities** (also known as 'fixed income securities') are issued and traded.
- ▶ Major Issuers in this market include Central and State Governments, private companies, etc.

Status of Corporate Debt Markets

- ▶ It constitutes more than 20 % of the Indian fixed-income universe (as per **IMF (2023)**).
- ▶ It is the **second largest** segment, following **government securities** (68 %) (as per IMF (2023)).
 - ⊕ **Government securities** are a key instrument of the Government debt market.
- ▶ **Key Instruments: Bonds and Commercial Paper**
 - ⊕ **Commercial paper** is an unsecured, short-term debt instrument issued by corporations to meet their immediate financial requirements.
- ▶ **Primary Regulator: SEBI**
- ▶ **Opportunities:** Provides borrowers an alternative to **bank finance** and can lower the cost of long-term funding.

Key reason behind the less development of Corporate Debt Markets

- ▶ **Limited Investor Base**, largely dominated by domestic institutions such as insurance companies, mutual funds etc.
- ▶ Dominance of **private placement** (securities are issued to a select group of people)
- ▶ **Other:** Corporate's preference for **Bank Lending**, more risk of default in comparison to government securities etc.

Initiative taken to Promote Corporate Debt Markets

- ▶ **Electronic Book Platform (EBP)** by SEBI promotes private placement of bonds to ensure transparency and price discovery.
 - ⊕ Also introduced **Specialized Investment Fund (SIF)**.
- ▶ **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has allowed banks to provide **partial credit enhancement (PCE)** to bonds issued by corporate entities to enhance credit rating.

Tropical Flora showed significant resilience during the Deccan Volcanism on Indian Plate as per study

Study has been conducted by the Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences (BSIP).

Key Findings:

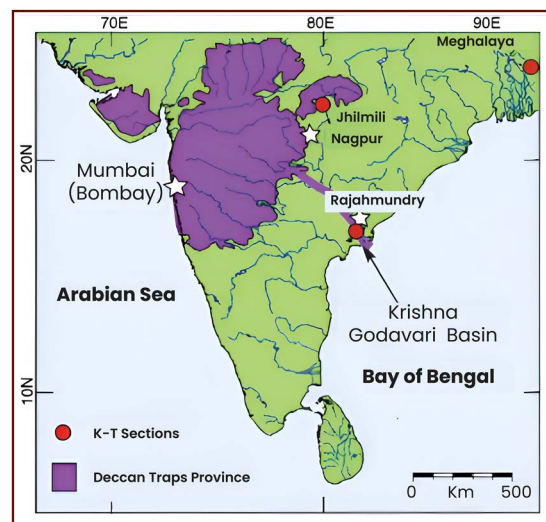
- ▶ **Higher resilience of Tropical flora to climatic stresses:** Deccan Volcanism did not have such negative impact on tropical flora.
 - ⊕ However, **toxic greenhouse gasses into the environment** due to volcanism affected the **Cretaceous-Paleogene (K-Pg) mass extinction** due to rise in global temperatures.
 - ◆ **K-Pg mass extinction** is the most recent of the **Phanerozoic 'Big Five'** mass extinctions.
 - ◆ Occurred at the end of the **Cretaceous** and the beginning of the **Tertiary period**.
 - ◆ It has devastating consequences for terrestrial faunas (**dinosaurs**, in particular).
- ▶ **Relevance:** If left undisturbed, **tropical rainforests** may quickly recover under favorable climatic conditions.

About Deccan Volcanism

- ▶ It was a major event of volcanic eruptions which **occurred ~66 million years ago**.
- ▶ It continued for several hundred thousand years before and beyond the K-Pg boundary.

Deccan Trap

- ▶ **Deccan volcanism** produced the **longest lava mega-flows (basalt lava) on Earth**, spanning over 1500 km.
- ▶ It formed during India's northward migration as it passed over the **Reunion hotspot** (which is today the Reunion Island).
 - ⊕ This hotspot is still active today and last erupted in 2007.
- ▶ It covers an area of **500,000 km² of the west-central Indian subcontinent**.
- ▶ Weathering of Basalt has led to the formation of **Black or Regur soil**.



National Livestock Mission (NLM) Operational Guidelines 2.0 released

Guidelines have been released by the **Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying (FAHD)**.

- NLM has been implemented by the Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying, since 2014-15.
- It was revised and realigned starting in FY 2021-22 to address current sector needs.

Key Features of NLM 2.0

- **Objective:** Foster entrepreneurship, increase per animal productivity, and boost production of meat, milk (goat, camel, donkey, sheep), eggs, and wool under the umbrella Development Programme.
- **Sub-components:**
 - ⊕ Breed Development
 - ⊕ Feed and Fodder Development
 - ⊕ Innovation and Extension
- **Funding:** Consist of **Centrally Sponsored components** and **Central Financial Assistance components**.

Status of Livestock Sector in India

- India has the **world's largest livestock** population.
- Ranks first in milk production, second in egg production, and fifth in meat production globally.

➤ Contribution of livestock to the total agriculture and allied sector
Gross Value Added (GVA) increased from 24.38% in 2014-15 to 30.23% in 2022-23 (at current prices).

Other Initiative taken by government to promote Livestock Sector

- Rashtriya Gokul Mission, 2014**, focuses on conserving and upgrading indigenous breeds through selective breeding.
- Kisan Credit Card (KCC) & Animal Health Infrastructure Fund**
- Launched genomic chip **Gau chip** for cattle and **Mahish chip** for buffalo
- National Animal Disease Control Programme** for FMD and Brucellosis

Odisha becomes 34th state to implement Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY) scheme

AB PM-JAY will be implemented in convergence with existing Gopabandhu Jan Arogya Yojana in Odisha.

- It will provide a cover of **Rs. 5 lakh per family per annum** with an **additional Rs. 5 lakh for women members**.
- PM-JAY is one of the components of **Ayushman Bharat**, other component is **Health and Wellness Centres (renamed in 2023 as Ayushman Arogya Mandir)**.

Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY

- **About:** World's largest health insurance/assurance scheme.
- **Ministry:** **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** launched in 2018 under **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoH&FW)**.
- **Purpose:** Achieve vision of Universal Health Coverage.
- **Target:** 12 crore families (approximately 55 crore beneficiaries).
- **Implementing Agency:** **National Health Authority**, an autonomous body under MoH&FW.
- **Funding pattern:** **Fully financed by government.**
 - ⊕ 60:40 for states (**90:10 for North Eastern States and three Himalayan States** (Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and J&K)) and **UTs with legislature.**
 - ⊕ Central share is **100% for UTs without legislature.**
- **Benefit:** Provides **cashless hospital cover of Rs. 5 lakhs/family/ year for secondary and tertiary care** across public and private empanelled hospitals.
 - ⊕ Covers up to **3 days of pre-hospitalization and 15 days post-hospitalization** expenses such as diagnostics and medicine.
- In 2024, Union Cabinet approved an **expansion of it to all senior citizens aged 70 and above.**

Status of PM-JAY

- Fully digitized and covers approximately **45% of India's population.**
- Since its inception, **8.19 crore hospital admissions** have been recorded, with **Rs. 1.13 lakh crore spent on providing healthcare** to marginalized sections of society.
- **Increased access to healthcare for cancer patients by 33%.**

Also In News



Telecom Technology Development Fund (TTDF)

Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) and IIT Mandi has signed agreement for '**Developing Semiconductor Chip of Wideband Spectrum Sensor for Dynamic Spectrum Access**' under TTDF scheme.

About TTDF Scheme

- Launched in 2022 by **Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF)**, a body under **Department of Telecommunications**.
 - ⊕ USOF has been renamed as **Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN)**.
- It is, designed to **fund Indian startups, academia, and R&D institutions**, a crucial enabler for designing, developing, and commercializing telecommunication products and solutions.
- Aims to **enable affordable broadband and mobile services**, playing a significant role in **bridging digital divide** across India.



Ring of fire

A strong earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 6.9 has hit southwestern Japan.

About Ring of Fire (Circum-Pacific Belt)

- Horseshoe-shaped **string of volcanoes and earthquake sites** which runs along Pacific Ocean.
- It is the **result of plate tectonics** as it traces **meeting points of numerous tectonic plates**, including Pacific, Juan de Fuca, Cocos, Indian-Australian, Nazca, North American, and Philippine Plates.
- A **stretch of Ring of Fire - border between Pacific and North American Plates** - is a **transform boundary**, where plates move sideways past one another.
 - ⊕ This boundary generates **large number of earthquakes** as tension in Earth's crust builds up and is released.



Z Morh Tunnel (Sonamarg Tunnel)

Prime Minister has inaugurated **Z-Morh tunnel** in **Ganderbal's Sonamarg** area in **J&K**.

About Z Morh Tunnel

- Initially started by BRO in 2015 and evolved with National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited.
 - ⊕ **APCO Infratech** firm has been instrumental in executing the project.
- Situated at an **altitude of 8,650 feet**, it is a **two-lane road tunnel** equipped with **parallel 7.5-metre-wide escape passage**.
- **Spanning 12 km** that includes **main 6.4 km main tunnel**, an egress tunnel, and approach roads.
- **Significance:**
 - ⊕ **Enhance all-weather connectivity** between **Srinagar and Sonamarg** enroute to **Leh**.
 - ⊕ **Ensure safe and uninterrupted access** to **Ladakh** region.
 - ⊕ **Promote tourism** by transforming **Sonamarg**, boosting winter tourism, adventure sports, and local livelihoods.



Anti-Tank Guided Missile (ATGM)- Nag Mk 2

DRDO has announced that field evaluation trials of **ATGM- Nag-Mk 2** were successfully conducted recently at Pokhran Field Range in Rajasthan.

About ATGM- Nag Mk 2

- Indigenously-developed **third-generation ATGM**.
- It uses **advanced fire-and-forget technology**, allowing operators to **lock onto targets before launch** and **strike with pinpoint accuracy**, even in complex battlefield environments.
- It is **capable of neutralising modern armoured vehicles** equipped with explosive reactive armour.
- **Guidance:** Passive Homing through IIR Seeker.
 - ⊕ An **Imaging Infra-Red (IIR) seeker** is a system that **uses infrared to detect and track targets**.
- **Range:** 500 metres- 4000 metres
- **Operation :** Day & Night



Atomic Energy Commission (AEC)

The Union government has re-constituted the **Atomic Energy Commission (AEC)**.

About AEC

- **Establishment:** First set up in August 1948 within the Department of Scientific Research, later it was brought under the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE)
- **Mandate:** To plan and implement the various measures required for the expansion of the atomic energy programme and responsible for formulating the policy of the DAE.



Kerch Strait

Russia forms an emergency task force for Kerch Strait oil spill.

About Kerch Strait

- **Location:** Connects the inland **Sea of Azov** to the **Black Sea**.
 - ⊕ Separates the Russia-occupied Crimean Peninsula from the Krasnodar region
- **Significance:** It is an important global shipping route



Pink Fire Retardant (Phos-Chek)

Recently, Los Angeles authorities used pink fire retardant to combat wildfires.

About Pink Fire Retardant (Phos-Chek)

- Fire retardant is a **mix of chemicals** used to **extinguish or slow down** spread of fires.
- **Phos-Chek** mostly contains **ammonium phosphate-based slurry**.
 - ⊕ Typically, it is **made of salts** such as **ammonium polyphosphate**, which **does not evaporate easily** like water and stays for longer.
 - ⊕ It is **pink** because it **most visible** by firefighters against the landscape.
- Spraying fire retardant using planes is **ineffective, expensive and a growing source of pollution** for rivers and streams.



Kumbh Mela

Maha Kumbh (or Poorna Kumbh) 2025 is being held in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh.

About Kumbh Mela

- It is the **world's largest public gathering**.
- It is a religious pilgrimage that is celebrated **four times over a course of 12 years**.
- Site keeps rotating between one of the **four pilgrimages:**
 - ⊕ **Haridwar(Uttarakhand)**, Ganges.
 - ⊕ **Ujjain (Madhya Pradesh)**, Shipra River.
 - ⊕ **Nashik (Maharashtra)**, Godavari River.
 - ⊕ **Prayagraj** at the confluence of **Ganges, Yamuna**, and the **mythical invisible Sarasvati**.
- **Other key Facts:**
 - ⊕ It has been listed as an **Intangible Cultural Heritage** under **UNESCO** in **2017**.
 - ⊕ Chinese traveller **Hiuen Tsang** (visited India in the 7th century during the reign of King **Harshavardhana**) was the first to mention Kumbh Mela in his diary.
 - ⊕ **Saint Shankaracharya** gave Kumbh Mela its final shape in 9th century.

Place in News



Angola (Capital: Luanda)

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18 people died due to spread of cholera in Angola.

Political features

- Located in **southwestern Africa**.
- **Neighbouring countries:** Republic of the Congo (Northwest), Democratic Republic of the Congo (North and northeast), Zambia (Southeast) Namibia(South).
- Shares coastline with Atlantic Ocean(West).

Geographical features

- **Major rivers:** Cuango and Cuanza
- **Highest Peak:** Mount Moco



AHMEDABAD



BENGALURU



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



GUWAHATI



HYDERABAD



JAIPUR



JODHPUR



LUCKNOW



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