

NEWS TODAY

Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways inaugurated the Inland Waterways Terminal at Jogighopa, Assam

Located near Bhutan and Bangladesh, the terminal holds **strategic importance**, crucial for India's **bilateral trade** and promotes **Neighbourhood First Policy**.

About Inland Water Transport

- **Meaning:** It refers to the **movement** of people and goods on **navigable waterways** like rivers, canals, lakes, and other inland water bodies.
- **Legislative Frameworks**
 - ⊕ **Inland Waterways Authority of India Act, 1985:** It created **Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI)** in 1986.
 - ◆ It is an autonomous organization responsible for development, maintenance and regulation of **National Waterways (NWs)**.
 - ⊕ **National Waterways Act, 2016:** It has declared **111 inland waterways** as '**National Waterways**' (NWs)
 - ◆ **E.g., NW-1** (Haldia – Allahabad on Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly River System), **NW-2** (Dhubri – Sadiya on River Brahmaputra), etc.
 - ⊕ **Inland Vessels Act, 2021:** It replaced over 100 years old **Inland Vessels Act, 1917** to facilitate harmonised regulation of the inland vessels and their safe navigation.

About IWT Jogighopa

- **Location:** On **Brahmaputra River, Assam**.
- **Port of Call:** Under **Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (PIWT&T)** between India and Bangladesh.
 - ⊕ **Port of call** is an **intermediate port** where **ships customarily stop** for supplies, repairs, or transshipment of cargo.

Significance of Inland Water Transport

- **Aids Logistics sector:** Cargo traffic on NWs has witnessed an **exponential growth** in the last decade.
- **Boosts Tourism sector:** E.g., **Cruise Bharat Mission** aims to significantly increase **sea and river cruise travellers by 2029**.

Ragging incidents surge amid weak enforcement of Anti-Ragging Guidelines

In recent times, **multiple ragging deaths and complaints** have been reported in college campuses from different parts of the country.

- **Ragging** is any act—verbal, written, or physical—that harasses, intimidates, or humiliates juniors, causing psychological or physical harm. (**UGC**)
- It may be rooted in **senior-junior rivalry, romantic conflicts, sexuality, and sadistic dominance**.

Important Statistics on Ragging in India

- **Suicides/Deaths:** **78** cases linked to ragging (Jan 2012–Oct 2023).
- **UGC Helpline Complaints:** **8,000+** cases, with a **208% rise** (2012–2022).







Challenges in Eradicating Ragging

- **Weak enforcement:** Weak and ineffective oversight by the UGC, resolution of majority of cases internally, token implementation of Supreme Court guidelines, etc.
- **Fear of retaliation:** Victims often hesitate to report ragging due to fear of reprisals from seniors.
- **Lack of awareness and sensitization:** Many students are unaware of the psychological and legal consequences of ragging as orientation programs on anti-ragging are often formalities.

Anti-Ragging framework in India

- **UGC Regulations:** Students must submit **three anti-ragging affidavits** during a three-year course.
- **Raghavan Committee (2007):** Advocated for **strict enforcement, criminalization of ragging, and institutional accountability**.
- **Other Recommendations:** Enhance monitoring with **complaint boxes, CCTV, and ID-based dashboards**; extend regulations to **all institutions**; enforce **strict legal compliance**.

SC Guidelines on Ragging (2009)

 <p>Display Contact Details Display contact information of anti-ragging officers</p>	 <p>Put Up Posters Install posters detailing ragging penalties</p>	 <p>Install CCTV Set up CCTV cameras in strategic locations</p>	 <p>Inform Parents Notify parents about regulations and consequences</p>	 <p>Form Committees Establish committees for awareness and action</p>	 <p>Conduct Inspections Perform surprise inspections in key areas</p>
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CCI issues Draft Regulations on Cost of Production

Draft issued by **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** seeks to reform methodology for determining costs associated with allegations of **predatory pricing**, a type of anti-competitive practice.

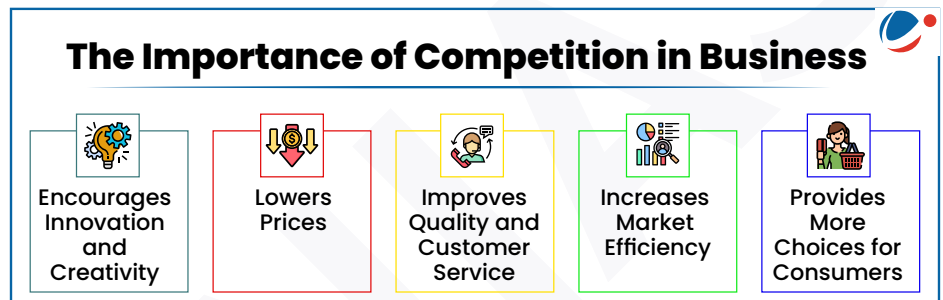
➤ **Predatory pricing** is the sale of goods or services “below the cost of production”, with the intent to reduce or eliminate competition.

Other forms of anti-competitive Practices

- **Price fixing:** When competitors agree to set prices at a certain artificially high level instead of competing on price.
- **Patent misuse:** Use of patents to block competition, like buying patents just to sue other companies.
- **Collusive bidding:** Companies collude to control the outcome of bidding processes, often in government or large corporate contracts.
- **Tying and bundling:** A company might require customers to buy one product only if they also buy another product to leverage market power in one product to gain advantage in another.
 - ⊕ E.g., Bundling of MS Word, MS Excel, etc. under the Microsoft Office.

Governance framework to uphold Competition in India

- **Legislations:** Competition Act (2002), Consumer Protection Act (2019), Intellectual Property Laws (Patents Act, 1970 & Copyright Act, 1957), etc.
- **Institutions:** Competition Commission of India, sectoral regulators such as TRAI, SEBI, IRDAI, etc.



World Day of Social Justice observed by the United Nations

Observed annually since 2009, the day emphasizes that social justice cannot be attained **without peace, security, and respect for all**.

About Social Justice

- **Definition:** An underlying principle for **peaceful and prosperous coexistence** within and among nations (**United Nations**).
- **Five key principles:**

Principle	Meaning	Examples (Indian Constitution/Global Initiatives)
Equity	Recognises that different people have different needs .	Article 46 mandates special educational and economic promotion for SCs, STs, and weaker sections .
Access	To the resources and opportunities to succeed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 39A (free legal aid for the disadvantaged). • Access to Quality Education (SDG 4).
Participation	Enabling all individuals to play a role in the political, economic and social life .	Social, economic, and political justice mentioned in the Preamble .
Rights	Protecting the human rights of all individuals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundamental Rights through Article 23 (prohibits human trafficking and forced labour) and Article 24 (bans child labor in hazardous occupations), etc. • Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
Diversity	Valuing differences such as race, gender, and sexual orientation.	UN Women aims to eliminate discrimination against women and girls.

Related Government Schemes

- **Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM-AJAY):** Uplift **SC communities** through skill development, etc.
- **National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE):** For **Safety** of sanitation workers.
- **Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood & Enterprise (SMILE):** Rehabilitation of transgenders and persons engaged in begging.

Study raises Ethical and Ecological concerns over Project Cheetah

Study titled 'Delineating the environmental justice implications of an experimental cheetah introduction project in India' uses Project Cheetah as a case study to exemplify broader issues applicable to rewilding and restoration projects.

- **Project Cheetah** aims to establish African cheetahs in India, where the Asiatic subspecies went extinct.
- 20 cheetahs were introduced to **Kuno National Park (KNP)**, but **high mortality rates (40% adult, 29.4% cub)** and health concerns have impacted the project.

Key issues highlighted with Project Cheetah

- **Ecological mismatch:** Significant differences in climate, prey, and habitat between India and Africa pose challenges for long-term cheetah survival.
- **Stressful conditions:** Frequent chemical immobilizations induce severe stress in cheetahs.
 - ⊖ Most survivors remain captive; no established free-ranging population exists in KNP.
- **Unsustainable Cheetah imports:** African cheetah populations are already vulnerable (approx. 6,500 mature individuals).
 - ⊖ Reliance on **annual imports of 12 cheetahs** is unsustainable and raises ethical concerns.
- **Unfair social impacts:** Due to minimal involvement of local communities and past displacements of indigenous people for conservation.

Key Recommendations

- Study calls for **Justice-informed approach** for a more **participatory and inclusive conservation model**.
 - ⊖ **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework** emphasizes equity and justice in conservation.
- **Local knowledge: Respect local knowledge systems** to focus on **sustainable coexistence** between humans and wildlife.

RBI clamped severe restrictions on New India Cooperative Bank owing to Supervisory Concerns

This has led to **intensified scrutiny on UCBs**, raising concerns about their governance and stability.

Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs)

- **About:** It refers to **primary cooperative banks** located in **urban and semi-urban areas**.
- **Legal Status:** They are registered as **cooperative societies** under the **State Cooperative Societies Act** or the **Multi State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002**.
- **Regulation and Supervision:** The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** regulates and supervises the banking functions under the **Banking regulation Act, 1949**.

Key Issues with UCBs

- **Low Capitalization:** Many UCBs suffer from **low capital adequacy**, making them vulnerable to financial shocks.
- **Governance Concerns:** Cases of fraud and mismanagement have led to **depositor anxiety**.
- **High Non-Performing Assets (NPAs):** **High levels of NPAs** erode profitability and weaken the financial health of UCBs.

Measures taken for the Reform of UCBs

- **New Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) Framework:** RBI **regulatory mechanism** that imposes restrictions on **financially weak UCBs** to restore their financial health.
- **National Urban Co-operative Finance and Development Corporation (NUCFDC):** National level Umbrella organization for the UCBs to enhance their operational efficiency.
- **Banking Regulation (Amendment) Act, 2020:** RBI may supersede the Board of a cooperative bank under certain conditions.
- **Others:** Categorization of UCBs into four tiers, permission to issue shares etc.

Also In News



ICD-11

WHO announced 2025 update to the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11)

About ICD-11

- It is a **standardized global system by WHO for classifying diseases and health conditions**, now expanded to include **traditional medicine**.
- **Origin:** First introduced in 1893; currently in its 11th revision (ICD-11).
- **Significance:** Essential for global health monitoring, policymaking, and achieving health-related SDGs.
- **ICD-11 Update 2025:** Enhances **interoperability, accuracy, and multilingual support**, integrates with **Orphanet & MedDRA**, and introduces a **Traditional Medicine Module for Ayurveda, Siddha & Unani**.



National Commission for Scheduled Tribes

Recently, National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) celebrated its 22nd Foundation Day.

About National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)

- **Genesis:** It is a Constitutional body established under Article 338A introduced through **Constitution (89th Amendment) Act, 2003**.
 - ⊖ **89th Constitutional amendment** replaced erstwhile **National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes** by two separate Commissions, namely NCSC and NCST.
- **Members:** **Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson** and **three members** appointed by the **President by warrant under his hand and seal**.
- **Mandate:** To investigate, monitor, and inquire matters relating to Safeguards provided for STs under the Constitution and protect their interests.



International Organization of Aids to Marine Navigation (IALA)

India is elected to the **Vice Presidency** of IALA in Singapore, strengthening its commitment to maritime safety, navigation, and international cooperation.

About IALA (Hq: Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France)

- **Establishment:** 1957 as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO).
- **Transition to IGO:** In 2024, IALA transitioned from a NGO to an Intergovernmental Organization (IGO).
- **Aim:** Urges members to cooperate to standardize **Marine Aids to Navigation globally, ensuring safe, efficient, and environmentally friendly vessel movement.**
- **Member Categories:** Three types of IALA Members- National Member, Associate Member and Industrial Member.



Technology Adoption Fund (TAF)

Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe) launched the TAF.

- IN-SPACe is a single-window, independent, nodal and autonomous agency under **Department of Space (DOS)** to facilitate **private sector participation in space.**

About TAF

- **About:** **Funding scheme** to promote innovation and drive the commercialization of cutting-edge technologies in the space sector.
- **Total funding:** ₹500Cr.
- **Eligibility:** Non-Government Entity (NGE) in India.
- **Funding scheme:** Financial support of up to **60%** of the project cost for startups and MSMEs, and **40%** for larger industries, with a maximum funding cap of Rs 25 crore per project.



Lake Kivu

Lake Kivu displayed devastation and misery after an armed group captured the lakeside city Goma, **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).**

About Lake Kivu

- **Location:** Situated on the **border between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo.**
- **Volcanic Origin:** Lies in the **Albertine Rift**, a seismically active region.
- **Empties Into:** **Ruzizi River**, which flows into Lake Tanganyika.
- Contains **large methane and carbon dioxide deposits**, acting as a potential hazard for **limnic eruption.**
 - ⊕ A limnic eruption is a **rare natural disaster** occurs when a **lake releases large amounts of carbon dioxide (CO₂) gas.**



Article 142

Recently, the **Supreme Court (SC)** invoked its special powers under **Article 142** of the Constitution to grant divorce.

About Article 142

- It empowers the SC to **pass any decree or order necessary for doing complete justice** in any case or matter pending before it enforceable throughout the territory of India.
- It also grants **power** to SC to make any order for the purpose of securing the attendance of any person, discovery or production of any documents, investigation or punishment of its contempt.



Coalition for Environmentally Sustainable AI

Recently, many countries, tech companies, and international organizations have partnered to establish **Coalition for Environmentally Sustainable AI.**

About the Coalition

- **Overview:** A global initiative with **100+ partners**, including **37 tech companies, 11 countries, and 5 international organizations**, to promote AI's environmental sustainability.
- **Leadership:** Led by **France, UNEP, and ITU.**
- **Announcement:** Launched at the **AI Action Summit in Paris.**
- **Objectives:**
 - ⊕ Use AI for **decarbonization, pollution reduction, biodiversity preservation, and ocean protection.**
 - ⊕ Establish **standardized metrics, life cycle analysis frameworks**, and sustainable AI research.
 - ⊕ Foster collaboration among **governments, academia, civil society, and private sector.**



Accretion Disk

NASA's **James Webb Space Telescope** observed a constant flickering of light from the **Accretion Disk.**

- Webb was launched in 2021 to observe the region around the black hole - called **Sagittarius A*.**

About Accretion Disk

- **Definition:** A **swirling disk of gas** around a black hole, acting as its primary light source.
- **Formation & Structure:** Forms as **black holes consume matter (accretion)** from nearby stars or interstellar gas, creating a hot, bright, and rapidly spinning disk where gas moves inward toward the event horizon.

Personality in News



Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (1630 - 1680)

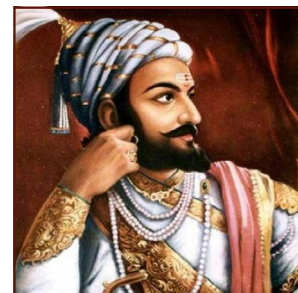
Recently, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was remembered on his birth anniversary. (Feb 19)

About Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj

- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was born at **Shivneri Fort.**
- **Raised by his mother Jijabai and mentor Dadoji Konddeo**, he was deeply influenced by Hindu and Sufi teachings.

Key Contributions

- **Military Achievements and Guerrilla Warfare**
 - ⊕ Began his conquests at 16 by capturing **Torna Fort.**
 - ⊕ Developed guerrilla warfare tactics, **defeating Afzal Khan in 1659.**
- **Administration and Governance**
 - ⊕ Implemented **progressive governance, focusing on revenue reforms**, a disciplined military and religious tolerance.
 - ⊕ His **coronation as Chhatrapati in 1674** formalized the Maratha Empire's independence.
- **Legacy**
 - ⊕ Shivaji Maharaj's vision of "**Hindavi Swarajya**" (self-rule) continued to inspire generations.
 - ⊕ Remembered as a **visionary leader, just ruler, and symbol of bravery** and independence.



AHMEDABAD



BENGALURU



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



GUWAHATI



HYDERABAD



JAIPUR



JODHPUR



LUCKNOW



PRAYAGRAJ



PUNE



RANCHI