

NEWS TODAY

Manuscripts of Bhagavad Gita and Natyashastra inscribed on UNESCO's Memory of the World Register

With the inclusion of Gita and Natyashastra, India now has 14 entries in the Register.

- ▶ India's **Rig Veda, Gilgit Manuscript, Manuscripts of Abhinavagupta (940-1015 CE), Maitreyayvarakarana**, (a manuscript of the Pala period) etc. have also been included in the Register.
- ▶ **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, proclaimed by the **United Nations General Assembly** in Paris in 1948, is also among the **new entries in the Register**.

About the Inscriptions

▶ Bhagavad Gita

- ⊕ Part of the Mahabharata, specifically within the **Bhīṣmaparva (Chapters 23–40)**.
- ⊕ Structured as a **dialogue between Lord Krishna and Arjuna** on the battlefield of Kurukshetra.
 - ◆ It is considered to be composed in the 2nd or 1st century BCE.
- ⊕ Comprises of **700 verses** across **18 chapters**.
- ⊕ **Relevance:** Considered a guide to living a meaningful and purposeful life.

▶ Natyashastra

- ⊕ Considered the essence of **Nāṭyaveda** – an oral tradition of performing arts comprising 36,000 verses, also known as the **Gāndharvaveda**.
 - ◆ It deals with **drama (nāṭya), performance (abhinaya), aesthetic emotion (rasa), feeling (bhāva), and music (saṅgīta)**.
- ⊕ Believed to have been codified around the 2nd century BCE by Bharatmuni in Sanskrit.
- ⊕ Laid the Foundation of Indian poetics, theatre, dance, and aesthetics.

UNESCO's Memory of the World Programme

- ▶ Launched in 1992 to preserve and provide access to documentary heritage of outstanding universal value.
- ▶ Recognises **documentary heritage** that has influenced human civilisation.
- ▶ Aims to **preserve and promote access** to historical texts, manuscripts, and archives.

Judiciary Can't Function as Super Parliament: Vice President

The Vice President criticized judiciary for overstepping its **constitutional boundaries** and attempting to function as a **"super Parliament"**.

- ▶ The criticism came in response to Supreme Court's recent ruling that set a **3-month deadline for President** to decide on bills forwarded by state governors & invoked article 142 to deem the 10 pending bills as having received assent.
- ▶ He also criticized **Article 142** of Indian Constitution as a **"nuclear missile against democratic forces**, available to the judiciary 24x7."

What is Article 142?

- ▶ Article 142 enables the SC to 'pass any decree or make any order as is necessary for doing **complete justice** in any cause or matter pending before it'.
- ▶ Originally envisioned as an extraordinary remedy, it was meant to fill gaps where laws were silent, or justice would otherwise be denied.
 - ⊕ **Example:** Bhanwari Devi and Ors. vs State of Rajasthan (2002), the SC provided '**Vishaka Guidelines**'.

Concerns about Article 142

- ▶ **Subjective Interpretation:** "Complete justice" under Article 142 lacks a clear definition, allowing broad judicial discretion and potential misuse.
- ▶ **Judicial Overreach:** It allows the judiciary to step into domains traditionally reserved for the legislature or executive.
- ▶ **Against separation of powers:** It blurs the line between **judicial activism and judicial legislation**, raising concerns about violating '**doctrine of separation of powers**'.

 Judicial Activism	 Judicial Overreach 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It refers to 'proactive role' played by judiciary in the protection of the rights of citizens & in the promotion of justice in society. • The concept of judicial activism is the bi-product of judicial review (Articles 32 & 226). • E.g. Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala (1973). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It refers to a situation where the judiciary crosses its constitutional boundaries and interferes in the functions of the executive or legislature. • The primary criticism of judicial overreach is that it creates "judge-made laws". • E.g. SC struck down National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC case, 2015).

BRICS Land Restoration Partnership launched

Partnership has been launched at the 15th BRICS Agriculture Meet, held in Brazil.

- India reaffirmed its commitment to **inclusive, equitable, and Sustainable Agriculture**.
- BRICS nations also reaffirmed commitment to a **sustainable agri-food system**.

About BRICS Land Restoration Partnership

- It will address **land degradation, desertification and soil fertility loss**.
- It would benefit small farmers, tribal communities, and local cultivators through the convergence of traditional knowledge and scientific innovation.
- **Need/Relevance:** High rate of land degradation. E.g. In India, approximately 32% of the land is degraded, and 25 % is undergoing **desertification** {Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)}.

Sustainable Agriculture

- It is a system of farming that strives to provide the **resources necessary for present human populations** while conserving the **planet's ability to sustain future generations**
- **Key Initiatives taken by India:**
 - ⊕ **Government Schemes and Initiatives:** E.g. National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA), Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF), etc.
 - ⊕ **Water and Resource Management Initiatives:** Per Drop More Crop and Watershed Development Programmes (component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY))
 - ⊕ **Technological and Digital Interventions:** Promotion of Climate-Resilient Crops, Precision farming, AgriStack, etc.

Need for Sustainable Agriculture



Carbon Emissions: Global agrifood systems emissions reached 16.2 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide (FAO) (as of 2022)



Reckless Resource Utilisation: E.g. Agriculture consumes about 80% of India's freshwater



Other: High pesticide use, water and soil pollution, etc.

India deserves permanent United Nations Security Council (UNSC) seat: Kuwait

Kuwait is currently co-chair of the Intergovernmental Negotiations on UNSC Reform.

- US, France and UK have also supported India's bid to become a permanent member of UNSC.

Why India deserves Permanent Seat in UNSC?

- **Demographics & Democracy:** Over 1 billion people (1/6th of global population) and world's largest functional democracy.
- **Emerging Economic Power:** 5th largest GDP and 3rd largest in terms of Purchasing Power Parity (PPP).
- **Strategic Global Relations:** India is the one of the large nation, which maintains close ties with both the **United States** and **Russia** and hence can be crucial for the maintenance of world peace.
 - ⊕ This may reduce use of Veto power in resolving key global issues.
- **Leadership Role:** India has emerged as **voice of Global South** and leads L-69 group (42 countries) advocating UNSC reforms.
- **Support for UN Goals:** Strong supporter of disarmament, anti-racism, and peaceful dispute resolution.

Hurdles in Inclusion

- **Opposition Groups:** Uniting for **Consensus/Coffee Club** against expansion of permanent seats.
- **Self-Interest of P5:** E.g. **China** is the only permanent member opposing India's bid.
- **Structural Barriers:** Requires UN Charter amendment with **two-thirds General Assembly approval and consent of all P5 (Permanent) members**.



About UNSC

- **Establishment and Role:** Established by the UN Charter in 1945, the UNSC is one of the six principal organs of the UN, responsible for maintaining international peace and security.
- **Membership:** The UNSC is composed of 15 members:
 - ⊕ **Permanent Members (5):** China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, United States
 - ⊕ **Non-Permanent Members (10):** Elected for two-year terms, with no veto power.
- **Authority:** The UNSC has the power to make binding decisions that all member states are required to implement under the UN Charter.

Finance Ministry Pushes for Farm Loans against E-NWRs

Union Finance Ministry has asked banks (public, private, regional, rural & cooperative banks) to register with **National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company (NCGTC)** & **e-Kisan Upaj Nidhi (e-KUN)** portal to boost lending against E-NWRs.

- NCGTC administers **Credit Guarantee Scheme for e-NWR based Pledge Financing (2024)** which provides credit guarantees to Eligible Lending Institutions against pledge finance of E-NWRs.
- e-Kisan Upaj Nidhi (part of **Jan Samarth portal**) provides the farmers, an online platform to obtain post-harvest loans from banks by pledging their e-NWRs.

What are Electronic- Negotiable Warehouse Receipts (E-NWRs)?

- It is a **digital version of traditional warehouse receipt**, governed by the Warehousing (Development and Regulation) Act of 2007. The issuance of NWR in electronic form is mandatory since 2019.
 - ⊕ It allows goods deposited in a registered warehouse to be transferred/sold through endorsement.
- **Issuer: Warehouses** registered with **Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA)** can issue e-NWRs against notified commodities deposited therein.
 - ⊕ WDRA is a **statutory body** under **Warehousing (Development & Regulation) Act, 2007**.
- **Validity:** Co-terminus with the shelf-life of the commodity or withdrawal of the commodity fully from warehouse, whichever is earlier.
- **Significance:** Enables farmers/depositors to seek **loans** easily from banks, encourages **scientific warehousing of goods**, avoids **distress sale** of agricultural produce by farmers.
 - ⊕ eNWRs can be traded off-market & used in commodity derivative exchanges for settlement of trade.



Also In News



Guindy National Park

Neglected grassland habitat in Guindy National Park set for revival to support blackbuck population.

- **Blackbuck**, or **Indian Antelope** (*Antelope cervicapra*) is native to Indian subcontinent.
- It's listed as **Least Concern** in IUCN red list & **Schedule I** of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

About Guindy National park (8th smallest national park in India)

- **Location:** Chennai (Near Raj Bhavan), Tamil Nadu
- It is one of the few national parks located within a city.
- **Fauna:**
 - ⊕ **Mammals:** Blackbuck, Spotted Deer etc.
 - ⊕ **Birds:** Over 130 species, including Crow Pheasant, Shrike, Tailor Bird etc.
- **Vegetation:** Thorn Forest, Tropical Dry Evergreen Forests, Grasslands etc.



PAIR Programme

Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) has announced the selection of 18 Hub institutions and 106 partnering Spoke institutions under its flagship **PAIR (Partnerships for Accelerated Innovation and Research)** programme.

About PAIR Programme (2024)

- **Objective:** To enhance research and innovation in Indian universities through a hub-and-spoke model, aligned with the goals of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
- **Structure**
 - ⊕ **Hub:** A top-ranked or nationally important institution (Top 25 NIRF or Top 50 Institutes of National Importance).
 - ⊕ **Spoke:** Central/State Public Universities and select NITs/IIITs needing research support.
 - ⊕ Each network includes 1 hub and up to 7 spokes
 - ⊕ **Hubs** provide guidance, expertise, and resources to spokes to build their research capacity.



Create in India Challenge (CIC)

Create in India Challenge (CIC) Season 1, launched as a flagship initiative under **World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES)** evolves into a global movement.

About CIC

- **Launch:** August 2024, initiated by the **Ministry of Information & Broadcasting**.
- **Aim:** Empower India's creators, enabling them to showcase their talents, monetize their skills, and contribute to the growth of the **media and entertainment industry**.
- **Focus:** Champions grassroots innovation while celebrating diverse purposes and participation.
- **Significance:** Enhances India's global **soft power** and provides a platform for emerging talent to gain international recognition.



Paste Fill Technology

South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL) becomes the first coal PSU in India to use Paste Fill Technology in underground mining.

About Paste Fill Technology

- It is a modern underground mining technique where:
 - ⊕ Voids created after coal extraction are filled with a specially prepared paste.
 - ⊕ **The paste consists** of crushed overburden from opencast mines, fly ash, Cement, Water and Binding chemicals.
- **Key benefits:** No need for surface land acquisition, prevents land subsidence, etc.



Security and Growth for All in the Region' (SAGAR)

INS Sunayna visited **Nacala Port, Mozambique**, under **SAGAR mission**, which is part of India's **SAGAR Vision**.

- **SAGAR mission** is aimed at fostering international cooperation between India & several African countries.

About SAGAR

- Unveiled by India in 2015, it is **India's strategic vision** for maritime cooperation in **Indian Ocean Region (IOR)**.
- **Objective:** To strengthen maritime ties, enhance stability, and promote economic prosperity, benefiting all nations within IOR.
- Building upon foundational principles of SAGAR, Indian Prime Minister recently announced '**Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions (MAHASAGAR) Vision**'.



Operation ATALANTA

European Union Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) Operation ATALANTA has proposed a joint exercise with the **Indian Navy**.

About Operation Atalanta

- **Objective:** It supports efforts for **peace, stability and Maritime security** such as **piracy, combating narcotics trafficking, illegal fishing etc.**
- It operates in the **Western Indian Ocean and the Red Sea region**.



Stegodon Ganesa

Rare fossils of the extinct Stegodon Ganesa have been found in the **Wardha-Penganga riverbed**.

- **Penganga River** (676 Km) originates in the **Ajantha ranges** in Aurangabad district in Maharashtra.
- It flows along State border between Maharashtra & Andhra Pradesh before converging into **Wardha River**.

About Stegodon Ganesa

- It is an ancient elephant species believed to be the ancestor of modern-day Asiatic elephants
- The fossils, believed to be 25,000 years old, belong to the **late Pleistocene period**.
- The **long tusks** of them were closely placed together, with no room for the trunk between them.



International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)

World Heritage Day, celebrated on April 18, under the 2025 theme: "Heritage under Threat from Disasters and Conflicts: Preparedness and Lessons from 60 Years of ICOMOS Actions."

About International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)

- ICOMOS is a **non-governmental organization** working to conserve and protect cultural heritage sites around the world.
- **Establishment:** 1965 in **Warsaw** one year after adoption of **Venice Charter** (at International Congress of Architects & Technicians of Historic Monuments) of 1964.
- It is the **only international NGO** that applies **scientific methods, and techniques** to safeguard both **tangible and intangible heritage sites**.



Lucy Mission

NASA's Lucy spacecraft is set to fly by **asteroid Donaldjohanson**.

About Lucy Mission

- Launched in 2021, the name Lucy was chosen in honor of the **fossilized human ancestor**, named "Lucy," that was found in Ethiopia in 1974.
- **Objective:** First space mission to explore Jupiter Trojan asteroids (remnants from the early solar system).
 - ⊕ **Trojan asteroids** orbit in two "swarms" that lead and follow Jupiter in its orbit around the Sun.
- **Mission duration:** 12 years
- **Significance:** It will help in understanding the solar system's origin and evolution.



Ras Isa Port

US airstrikes Houthi-controlled Ras Isa port in Yemen.

About Ras Isa Port/Terminal

- It is strategically located in **Kamaran Bay**.
- Marib-Ras Isa Pipeline runs between the Marib elds and the deep sea port of Ras Isa on the Red Sea.

Other key ports of Yemen: Aden, Al Hodeidah, Mocha (Al Mokha), etc.