

CURRENT AFFAIRS

UPSC CSE 2026



**DAILY CURRENT
AFFAIRS NOTES**

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Heat stress may have played a key role in Karur stampede, states study

- The **41 deaths** in the stampede during the Tamilaga Vетtri Kazhagam (TVK) rally in Karur were likely influenced by extreme heat stress.
- It found that **oppressive heat, high crowd density, and poor event planning** created conditions of mass thermophysiological stress.
- Researchers estimated that **heat generated by the dense crowd equaled the solar energy** falling on the same area, intensifying heat accumulation.
- **Instances of fainting** occurred even before the event began, indicating severe thermal strain among attendees.
- The collective recommended **restrictions on rallies between February and October, provision of shaded spaces and drinking water, integration of UTCI-based heat alerts, and recognition of extreme heat as a notified disaster under the Disaster Management Act.**
- **Tamil Nadu** has already recognised heat stress as a **State disaster** and issued **guidelines** for action, including drinking water kiosks, rescheduling outdoor work, ex gratia for victims, and urban planning measures like green spaces and cool-roof technologies.
- A **State Planning Commission** analysis found that rising temperatures due to urban sprawl, deforestation, and land-use changes are increasing risks to people, ecosystems, and infrastructure.

Fresh low pressure area may turn into a cyclone for T.N.

- The **potential cyclonic storm** is likely to be named '**Cyclone Montha**', a name suggested by Thailand for tropical cyclones in the North Indian Ocean.
- An **orange alert** has been issued, indicating the possibility of **very heavy rainfall up to 20 cm.**

Study says fat composition is the secret of civet coffee

- **Civet-processed robusta coffee (Kopi Luwak)** shows **distinct differences in fatty acid methyl esters and total fat content** compared to naturally harvested robusta beans.
- The findings provide **scientific evidence** supporting the **unique aroma, flavour, and nutritional qualities** of civet coffee, one of the **world's most exotic brews.**
- **Civet coffee** is produced from the **excreta of the Asian palm civet (Paradoxurus hermaphroditus)** after the animal **consumes ripe coffee cherries.**
- The **pulp is digested**, and the **beans undergo natural fermentation** in the civet's **gut**, before being **excreted intact and collected for processing.** The study found that **civet-processed beans are larger and have higher fat content than manually collected beans.**
- Researchers concluded that the **civet's digestive and enzymatic processes** cause **natural fermentation, altering the bean's chemical structure and enhancing its sensory profile.**

Respect the health rights of India's children

- The **Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO)** under the **Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**, regulates **large drug manufacturers and export approvals** in India.
- **State drug control officers** oversee the **regulation, care, manufacture, sale, and distribution** of drugs by **small- and medium-scale manufacturers.**
- India faces major **challenges in ensuring child protection** as guaranteed under **Article 39(f) of the Constitution**, a **Directive Principle of State Policy.**
- **Children under 18 years** constitute **39% of India's population**, making **paediatric healthcare** a critical concern.
- **Clinical trials of drugs** are usually conducted on adults, and rarely on children due to **ethical and safety concerns**, leading to a **lack of paediatric dosage and administration guidelines.**
- The **absence of specific paediatric pharmaceutical legislation** in India is a major gap; unlike the **European Union** (under the **Paediatric Use Marketing Authorisation**) and the **United States** (under the **Best Pharmaceuticals for Children Act – BPCA**), which incentivise paediatric drug research.

- India currently **operates on general drug guidelines** without **specific policies** for **paediatric formulations**.
- The **World Health Organization (WHO)** introduced the **Essential Medicines List for Children (EMLc)** to guide policymakers in updating national medicine lists.
- While the **Essential Medicines List (EML)** for adults is **periodically revised**, the **EMLc for children** in India is **not regularly updated**.
- There is a need for **education of caregivers and pharmacists** to ensure **correct dosage, label reading, and monitoring for side effects**, especially for **over-the-counter (OTC) medications**.
- **Regulation of OTC medicines for children**, particularly for **cough, cold, and fever**, is an **important aspect of public health care**.
- **India's paediatric medicine policy** must be based on **Indian genetic and clinical data**, not on **foreign research**, to ensure **safe and effective child healthcare**.

The mirage of port-led development in Great Nicobar

- The proposed **seaport at Great Nicobar's Galathea Bay** has drawn attention after several **critical commentaries** questioned its **strategic, economic, and ecological viability**.
- **Proponents** claim it will make **India a regional maritime hub** and boost **economic growth**, while **critics** argue it threatens **indigenous communities**, causes **ecological damage**, and rests on **weak commercial logic**.

Strategic and Economic Claims

- Supporters argue that India is **dependent on foreign ports** such as **Colombo and Singapore** for **transshipment**, and a **mega port at Galathea Bay** would help **capture regional container trade**. However, experience with the **Vallarpadam Port (Kerala)** shows that **infrastructure alone** does not ensure success.
- **Transshipment hubs** depend on **network connectivity, feeder links, cargo base, and carrier loyalty**, not merely port capacity.

Structural Limitations of Galathea Bay

- The port has **no hinterland, no urban or industrial base, and no logistics ecosystem** to sustain traffic.
- Every **container must be shipped in and out**, making the project **costly and logistically inefficient**.
- As a transshipment hub, it would rely on **feeder services** that currently **do not exist**.
- In contrast, **Colombo** benefits from a **dense web of regional routes** linking **South Asia, East Africa, and Southeast Asia**, which **Nicobar lacks**.
- Building such a network would require **massive subsidies** and **long-term state support**, unlikely to attract **commercial interest**.

Geographical and Operational Challenges

- **Galathea Bay** is **1,200 km from the Indian mainland**, making **feeder operations uneconomical**.
- **Containers, provisions, personnel, and fuel** must all be **shipped in**, sharply raising **operational costs**.
- **Shipping schedules** would need to be **reworked** to include this **remote location**, making it **less attractive** to global carriers.
- **High handling and port-calling costs** — already seen at Indian terminals such as **Krishnapatnam Port (Andhra Pradesh)** — further reduce competitiveness.

Strategic Rationale and Military Dimension

- Proponents argue that the project would **enhance India's maritime domain awareness** and **deterrence posture** in the **eastern Indian Ocean**.
- However, **INS Baaz**, the **existing naval facility**, already supports **surveillance operations**, making the **strategic justification limited**. **Military presence** need not depend on **large-scale commercial port infrastructure**.

Connectivity and Integration Concerns

- Claims that **Galathea Bay will integrate with Vizhinjam (Kerala) and Vadhavan (Maharashtra)** are **unrealistic**, as Great Nicobar is **cut off from major industrial corridors**.
- The region **lacks any organic cargo base**, and its **distance from trade routes and production hubs** undermines its **feeder potential**.

Prime Minister will lead parade on 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

- The nation is celebrating the **150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**, the **first Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister of India**.
- The event is themed '**Unity in Diversity**' and will be held at **Ekta Nagar**, located between the **Satpura and Vindhyachal mountain ranges in Gujarat**, where the **Statue of Unity** was inaugurated in **2018**.
- **Rashtriya Ekta Diwas (National Unity Day)** on **October 31** commemorates **Sardar Patel's pivotal role in uniting 562 princely states** and shaping **independent India**.
- The celebration will also feature a **demonstration by indigenous dog breeds — Rampur hounds and Mudhol hounds**— showcasing their **skills and agility**.

Gyan Bharatam Mission to ink pact with institutes

- **Gyan Bharatam** is a **flagship initiative of the Ministry of Culture** aimed at **identifying, documenting, conserving, digitising, preserving, and promoting India's vast manuscript heritage**.
- The initiative was **announced during the Union Budget** of the current year.
- Its key objective is to **preserve manuscripts** and establish a **dedicated digital platform — the National Digital Repository (NDR) — to share India's manuscript heritage globally**.
- The Ministry has signed **Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs)** with **around 20 institutes across India** for the **conservation, upkeep, and digitisation of manuscripts**.
- The participating institutes are **categorised as cluster centres and independent centres**.
- A **cluster centre** will be responsible for **executing manuscript-related activities** of its own centre and up to **20 designated partner centres**.
- An **independent centre** will handle **manuscript-related activities only for its own collection**.
- **Gyan Bharatam** will provide the **overall framework, guidance, monitoring, and support** for the implementation of activities under this partnership.
- It will also provide **funding, equipment, and budgetary allocations** to centres, based on **approved work plans, milestones, and quality verification**.
- Each centre must establish a **dedicated Gyan Bharatam Cell**, staffed with **experts in various domains**, to ensure **effective communication, coordination, and voluntary participation**.
- **Funds** will be **released in phased instalments** according to the **implementation schedule and milestones** mentioned in the **approved work plan**.

Manipur Nagas declare restrictions ahead of Muivah's visit to Senapati

- The **Nagas in Manipur** have declared a '**Genna**' to honour **Thuingaleng Muivah**, leader of the **National Socialist Council of Nagalim (NSCN)**, ahead of his **visit to Senapati**.
- In **Naga culture and traditions**, '**Genna**' refers to **restrictions imposed to ensure maximum participation** during an **important community event or national observance**.
- The **NSCN**, also known as the **Isak-Muivah faction (NSCN-IM)**, is a **key organisation in the Naga political movement**.
- **Senapati**, the **headquarters of the Naga-majority district** with the same name, is located about **60 km north of Imphal**, the **capital of Manipur**.