

7. Short news

1. Baratang Mud Volcano

India's only mud volcano at Baratang in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands erupted on October 2, 2025 after 20 years.

Mud Volcanoes – Mud volcanoes are geological formations where mud, water, and gases from deep beneath the Earth's surface are expelled, creating craters and bubbling mounds. Sidoarjo Mudflow is located in Indonesia and it is the world's largest mud volcano.

Difference from Lava Volcanoes – Unlike lava volcanoes, mud volcanoes do not erupt molten rock. Their activity is driven by gas pressure from decaying organic matter rather than magma from the mantle. Eruptions are generally cooler and less explosive compared to lava volcanoes.

About Baratang Mud Volcano

Location – Situated on Baratang Island in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, a popular tourist destination in the Bay of Bengal. It is part of the Andaman group of islands which lies between the Middle and South Andaman Islands.

Feature – The mud volcano forms craters and bubbling mounds when gases push mud to the surface. It is a unique geological feature in India, attracting tourists and researchers alike.

2. Compressed Bio-Gas and Potash Granule Project

India's first cooperative-based Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) and Spray Dryer Potash Granule Project was inaugurated at Kopergaon, Maharashtra, promoting circular economy practices.

About the Project

First Cooperative Initiative – The project is set up at the Sahakar Maharshi Shankarrao Kolhe Cooperative Sugar Factory, marking India's first cooperative-run CBG and potash initiative.

Capacity – It will produce 12 tons of CBG daily and 75 tons of potash from jaggery, reducing the import of these products from abroad

Circular Economy Model – It produces Compressed Bio-Gas and potash granules from sugar factory waste, exemplifying sustainable resource utilization and energy efficiency.

Expansion Plan – Similar units will be established in 15 cooperative sugar factories across India, with Maharashtra expected to lead the effort.

About Potash Granules – Potash granules are fertilizers rich in potassium, produced using spray dryer technology from sugar factory by-products. They enhance soil fertility, improve crop yield, and contribute to sustainable agriculture practices in rural areas.

About Compressed Bio-Gas – Compressed Biogas (CBG) is a renewable gaseous fuel produced through the anaerobic digestion of organic matter like agricultural residues, animal dung, food waste, and municipal solid waste. It serves as a clean fuel alternative, reducing dependency on fossil fuels and lowering carbon emissions.

Significance – The project boosts rural economy, empowers farmers, promotes circular economy and ethanol diversification, strengthens primary credit societies and women's self-help groups, supported by National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) and higher Minimum Support Prices (MSP).

3. 150 Years of National Song 'Vande Mataram'

The Union Cabinet has approved nationwide celebrations to mark 150 years of the national song "Vande Mataram", recognizing its historic role in India's freedom struggle.

About National Song – Vande Mataram

Composer & Language – Written by Bankimchandra Chatterji in Sanskrit, and first published in Bengali script.

Official Status – The Constituent Assembly, in its session of 24 January 1950 accorded *Vande Mataram* the status of National Song, placing it on par with the National Anthem (*Jana Gana Mana*).

Origin & Context – The song was first included in Bankimchandra's 1882 novel *Anandamath*, set during the Sannyasi Rebellion. It comprises six devotional stanzas dedicated to the motherland, blending themes of divine worship and patriotic zeal.

Symbolism and Meaning – The song personifies *Bharat Mata* (Mother India) as a divine figure, embodying strength, compassion, and the spirit of freedom.

Historical Significance of “Vande Mataram”

Role in the Freedom Movement – The song became an anthem of the Indian National Movement, symbolising resistance, unity, and national pride.

Rabindranath Tagore’s Contribution – Rabindranath Tagore popularised the song by singing it at the Indian National Congress session in Calcutta in 1896. A historic recording of Tagore’s voice singing “Vande Mataram” continues to be preserved as a cultural treasure.