

SHORTNEWS:

1.20% ETHANOL BLENDING IN PETROL

Context: India has successfully achieved **20% ethanol blending in petrol** in 2025, **five years ahead** of its 2030 target.

- This marks a major milestone in the country's **clean energy transition** and reflects progress under the **Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme**.

What is Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) ?

- EBP is a mixture of ethanol and petrol, aimed at reducing the **carbon footprint of fuel** consumption.
- **E20** petrol is a fuel blend consisting of **20% ethanol** and **80% petrol**.

Key Achievements

- **Rapid Progress:** Ethanol blending increased from **1.5% in 2014** to **20% in 2025**, a **13-fold growth in 11 years**.
- **Economic Impact:** **₹1.36 lakh crore** saved in **foreign exchange** by reducing crude oil imports.
- **Environmental Benefits:** Avoided **698 lakh tonnes of CO₂ emissions**, aligning with India's climate action goals.

Significance

- **Support for Agriculture:** Ethanol primarily derived from **sugarcane**, reinforcing its link to agricultural sustainability.
 - Enhances **farmers' income** and promotes **crop diversification**.
- **Strategic Advantages:** Reduces **energy import dependence**, enhancing **energy security**, while strengthening India's **bio-economy**.
- **Environmental:** Supports India's **carbon reduction targets** under the **Paris Agreement**.

Key Policy Framework

National Policy on Biofuels

- Advanced the **20% blending target** from **2030 to 2025–26**.
- Permits use of **surplus food grains** for ethanol, as approved by the **National Biofuel Coordination Committee (NBCC)**.
- Promotes use of diverse **feedstock** including:
 - **Sugarcane juice, molasses**
 - **Damaged food grains** (broken rice, rotten potatoes, etc.)
 - **Non-food biomass** (rice straw, cotton stalks, bagasse, sawdust, etc.)

Financial Incentives: Introduction of **Ethanol Interest Subvention Schemes (EISS)** (2018–22) to support ethanol units from molasses and grains.

2.PM VISIT TO MALDIVES

Context: Prime Minister Modi's visit to **Maldives**, as the **guest of honor on the country's 60th Independence Day**.

Key Highlights of the Visit

- **Symbolism:** PM Modi is the first **Head of State** to visit Maldives after Muizzu assumed office.
- **Diplomatic Significance:** The visit marks a diplomatic breakthrough after earlier tensions.
 - In Sep '2023, Mohamed Muizzu won the presidential election on an '**India Out**' platform, signaling a shift away from close ties with India.
 - **Feb 2024:** A viral '**Boycott Maldives**' campaign hits Maldivian tourism.
- **Expected Outcomes**
 - Finalisation of **Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** terms of reference.
 - Signing of MoUs in key areas: Renewable Energy, Fisheries, Digital Infrastructure

3.ICJ'S LANDMARK CLIMATE CHANGE RULING

Context: Recently , the **International Court of Justice (ICJ)** delivered a landmark advisory opinion that mandates urgent climate action, including fossil fuel phaseout, under international law.

Key Highlights of the ICJ Ruling

- **Legal Obligation to Act on Climate:** The ICJ affirmed that climate action is a **binding legal duty, grounded in international treaties, customary international law, and human rights obligations.**
- **Environmental Harm as Wrongful Act:** The Court declared that fossil fuel production, licensing, and subsidies may constitute "**internationally wrongful acts**", holding states accountable for their contributions to the climate crisis.
- **Global Cooperation as a Solution:** The judgment stressed that international cooperation and treaties are essential pathways to meaningful climate mitigation, reinforcing the need for mechanisms like the **Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.**

Significance of the rulings

- **A Lifeline for Vulnerable Nations:** Leaders from **Small Island Developing States (SID)** , such as **Vanuatu**, hailed the ruling as a "**lifeline**" for **Pacific communities**, many of which face existential threats from rising sea levels.
- **Youth and Community Voices Welcomed:** Climate activists from Pacific communities, such as the **Pacific Islands Students Fighting Climate Change**, called the **ruling historic for climate justice, bringing hope to future generations.**

About the International Court of Justice (ICJ)

- **Introduction:** The ICJ is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, providing advisory opinions and settling legal disputes between states under international law.
 - It is composed of **15 judges elected by the UN General Assembly and Security Council.**
- **Establishment:** The **ICJ was established in 1945** under the **UN Charter** and began functioning in **1946.**
- **Headquarters:** The Hague, Netherlands.

4.PRASAT TA MUEN THOM AND PRASAT PREAH VIHEAR TEMPLE

Context: Recently, Thailand's army launched strikes on Cambodian military sites along their disputed border near the Khmer Hindu temple, Prasat Ta Muen Thom, amidst recent deadly clashes.

About Prasat Ta Muen Thom Temple (Thailand)

- **Location:** On the border between Thailand's Surin province and Cambodia's Oddar Meanchey province.
- **Historical Significance:** Built around the **12th century by King Udayadityavarman II**, it is dedicated to **Lord Shiva** houses a Shivling made from natural rock formation.
- **Cultural Importance:** Part of a larger complex on the **ancient Khmer highway linking Angkor (Cambodia) and Phimai (Thailand).**

Prasat Preah Vihear Temple (Cambodia)

- **Location:** Situated on a plateau overlooking Cambodia's plain, the temple is a **UNESCO World Heritage site, dedicated to Shiva.**
- **Historical Context:** Dates back to the **early 11th century AD**, though its origins trace to the 9th century.
- **Cultural and Architectural Significance:** Recognized as an outstanding example of **Khmer architecture**, with exceptional planning and decoration integrated with the natural landscape.