

SHORT NEWS

1. SASCI Initiative

What – A scheme (Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment) by the Ministry of Tourism.

Aim – Develop iconic and lesser-known tourist spots to reduce congestion at popular sites.

Funding – 100% centrally funded for development; states handle operation and maintenance.

Selection – Based on a "challenge method" evaluating connectivity, sustainability, and project impact.

Examples – Bateshwar (UP), Gandikota (AP), Ponda (Goa).

2. Asian Palm Civet

Common Name – Toddy Cat.

Context – Rising human-civet encounters in Kerala's urban areas.

Features – Small, nocturnal mammal vital for seed dispersal.

Unique Trait – Produces the expensive Kopi Luwak coffee from digested beans.

Status – Least Concern (IUCN Red List) and protected under Schedule II of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

Civet Species in India

Total Species – India hosts four civet species.

Highest Protection – The Large Indian Civet is the only species in Schedule I (Near Threatened).

Endemic Species – The Brown Palm Civet is found only in the Western Ghats.

Major Threats – Habitat loss and hunting for musk.

3. Planting Trees in Tropics

Key Finding – Planting trees in tropical regions offers the strongest climate cooling benefits.

Reason – Trees in the tropics grow year-round, increasing cooling through "tree sweating" (evapotranspiration) and promoting cloud formation.

Higher Latitudes – In contrast, tree planting in higher latitudes can sometimes have a slight warming effect.

4. Mercator Projection

Context – The African Union is campaigning to replace it for distorting Africa's true size.

Problem – The map projection makes areas near the poles (like Greenland, Europe, North America) look disproportionately large while making Africa look smaller.

Advantage – It preserves angles, making it useful for navigation.

Alternatives – Gall-Peters Projection and Equal Earth Projection.

5. EI Settlement Plan

What – A controversial Israeli construction plan near East Jerusalem.

Location – In a corridor between East Jerusalem and the Ma'ale Adumim settlement.

Controversy – Critics say it would split the West Bank into two, making a contiguous Palestinian state unviable.

Global Reaction – Condemned by the UN and EU as a threat to the two-state solution.

6. Souda Bay, Greece

Context – India's new stealth frigate, INS Tamal, visited the bay after its commissioning in Russia.

Location – On Crete Island, Greece, in the Mediterranean Sea.

Significance – A major natural harbour that hosts Greek and U.S. naval bases and is strategic for NATO.

7. Khelo India Water Games

Debut – The first-ever event was held on Dal Lake in Srinagar, J&K.

Organizer – Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports under the Khelo India Scheme.

Sports – Included canoeing, kayaking, rowing, and traditional Shikara races.

Goal – Promote water sports and boost tourism in Kashmir.

8. Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR)

What – India's first indigenous fast breeder reactor (500 MWe).

Location – Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu.

Function – A nuclear reactor that generates more fuel ("breeds" Plutonium) than it consumes, using fast neutrons.

Timeline – Expected to achieve criticality (self-sustaining reaction) by March 2026.

Operator – BHAVINI.

9. Areca Nut Development

Common Names – Betel nut or supari.

Top Producer – India is the world's largest producer; Karnataka is the top producing state.

Climate – Tropical; requires well-distributed rainfall and temperatures of 14°C–36°C.

Key Varieties – White (sun-dried ripe nuts) and Red (boiled green nuts).

10. Direct Action Day

Date – August 16, 1946.

Who – Called by the Muslim League, led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Why – To press the demand for a separate nation of Pakistan.

Epicentre – The call led to widespread communal riots, with the worst violence in Calcutta, known as the "Great Calcutta Killings."

11. Madras Day

Date – August 22.

Commemorates – The purchase of the village of Madrasapatnam by the British East India Company in 1639.

Key Site – Fort St. George was established, which became the nucleus of the modern city.

Name Origin: The city grew by merging Madrasapatnam with the nearby settlement of Chennapatnam.

12. Lipulekh Pass

Location – A strategic tri-junction between India (Uttarakhand), Nepal, and China.

Significance – An ancient trade route and a key pilgrimage path for the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra.

Dispute – Nepal claims the Lipulekh–Kalapani–Limpiyadhura region.

India's Stand – The region is an integral part of Uttarakhand, and its use for trade and pilgrimage is a long-standing practice.

13. Brologarchs & New Words

Context – Internet-origin words added to the Cambridge Dictionary.

Brologarchy – A portmanteau of "Bro" + "oligarchy," referring to powerful and wealthy "tech bros."

Tradwife – Short for "traditional wife," a woman who embraces traditional gender roles.

Delulu / Skibidi – Slang for "delusional" and a nonsensical filler word, respectively, popularized online.

Significance: Shows how digital culture and AI-driven algorithms are rapidly shaping modern language.

14. Monsoon Session 2025

Outcome – Adjourned *sine die* (indefinitely) a day early with low legislative productivity (around 31-33%).

Key Bills Passed – Income-tax Bill, Online Gaming Bill, and five shipping bills.

Reason for Disruption – Opposition protests over the revision of electoral rolls in Bihar.

Parliamentary Sessions – The President summons sessions, with no more than a six-month gap between them. The three regular sessions are Budget, Monsoon, and Winter.

