

7. Short News

1. Bail Jurisprudence

The Supreme Court recently ruled that criminal antecedents alone cannot be a ground to deny bail, particularly when the accused have already undergone long periods of incarceration as undertrials.

Case Background - The case pertained to the 2021 murder of K.S. Shan, a Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) leader. A Sessions Court granted bail to five of the accused in 2022. The Kerala High Court cancelled their bail in 2024, citing their criminal history and the risk of witness intimidation. The Supreme Court restored the bail in 2025, noting that the accused had already been on bail for nearly two years without issue before the High Court's cancellation.

Key Supreme Court Observations

Golden Rule of Bail - The Court reaffirmed Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer's foundational principle that "Bail is the rule and jail is the exception."

Trial Integrity - While bail can be revoked to prevent witness tampering, a mere criminal history is not an automatic justification for its denial or cancellation.

Length of Incarceration - The Court highlighted that a long period of detention as an undertrial is a valid and significant factor in favor of granting bail.

Significance of the Ruling

1. It strengthens the legal principle that bail should not be denied solely based on a person's prior criminal record.
2. It protects the fundamental rights of undertrials against prolonged imprisonment without a trial.
3. It underscores the need for courts to balance individual liberty with the necessity of ensuring a fair trial and protecting witnesses.

2. Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission (TN-SHORE)

Under the Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission (TN-SHORE), the World Bank will provide direct funding to village mangrove councils. This initiative aims to strengthen coastal bioshields through mangrove plantations.

About the Mission

Approval - Approved in September 2025.

Outlay - ₹1,675 crore, with ₹1,000 crore from the World Bank and the remainder from the state government.

Objectives

1. Restore 30,000 hectares of seascapes.
2. Conserve endangered species like sea turtles and dugongs.
3. Promote eco-tourism and better plastic waste management.
4. Enhance the climate resilience of coastal ecosystems.

About Mangroves

Definition - Salt-tolerant trees and shrubs that grow in coastal intertidal zones where freshwater and saltwater mix.

Characteristics

1. **Vivipary** - Seeds germinate while still attached to the parent tree.
2. **Aerial Roots (Pneumatophores)** - Specialized roots that grow upwards to absorb oxygen from the air.
3. **Succulent Leaves** - Waxy leaves that help reduce water loss and manage salt stress.

Significance of Mangrove Plantation

1. **Climate Resilience** - Act as natural bioshields, protecting coastlines from cyclones, storm surges, and erosion.
2. **Carbon Storage** - They are powerful carbon sinks, capturing and storing vast amounts of carbon dioxide in the soil for centuries.

3. **Livelihood Support** – Support local communities through fishing, aquaculture, and honey collection.
4. **Biodiversity Hotspots** – Serve as critical nursery and breeding grounds for a diverse range of fish, birds, and other wildlife.

3. 'Cold Start' Drill

India is set to hold a mega tri-service drone and counter-drone drill, named 'Cold Start', in Madhya Pradesh in October 2025.

About the Drill

Participants – A joint exercise involving the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force, along with industry partners, R&D agencies, and academic institutions.

Aim – The primary goal is to evaluate India's operational readiness against modern aerial threats.

Objectives – To test and validate drone and counter-drone technologies and to identify and address gaps in the nation's current air defence capabilities.

4. Direct Broadcast Network (DBNet)

India's National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF) and New Space India Limited (NSIL) signed an MoU in September 2025 to establish two Direct Broadcast Network (DBNet) stations under Mission Mausam.

About DBNet – It is a global framework for the real-time acquisition of satellite data from Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites. This data is crucial for enhancing Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP), which uses mathematical models to forecast weather.

Applications – Supports accurate weather forecasting, cyclone monitoring, and long-term climate research.

About Mission Mausam

Launch – Launched by the Prime Minister in January 2025 to mark the IMD's 150th Foundation Day.

Aim – To make India a "weather-ready" and "climate-smart" nation by upgrading weather forecasting and modeling capabilities.

Nodal Ministry – Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).

5. Mohenjodaro 'Dancing Girl'

A replica of the famous Mohenjodaro 'Dancing Girl' was recently reported stolen from the National Museum in Delhi.

About the Figurine

Description – A 10.5 cm tall bronze figurine of a young dancing girl, dating back to c. 2500 BCE.

Technique – Created using the lost-wax casting method, demonstrating the advanced metallurgical skills of the Indus Valley Civilization (IVC).

Features – Depicts a nude female figure with a confident and naturalistic pose, adorned with a necklace and numerous bangles on one arm.

Cultural Significance – Considered a masterpiece of Harappan art, reflecting the civilization's sophisticated aesthetic sensibilities and secular artistic expression.

About Mohenjodaro – A major urban center of the IVC, located in present-day Sindh, Pakistan. It is renowned for its advanced town planning, grid-pattern streets, elaborate drainage systems, and the Great Bath.

6. Oju Hydroelectric Project

The Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) of the MoEFCC has cleared the Oju Hydroelectric Project (2,220 MW) on the Subansiri river in Arunachal Pradesh, near the China border.

About the Project

Type – A combination of run-of-the-river and storage-based hydropower.

Capacity – It will have a main plant of 2,100 MW and a smaller dam-toe plant of 120 MW.

Significance – It is the largest approved hydropower project in the Subansiri basin and will contribute to renewable energy generation, grid stability, and border infrastructure development.

Risks – The project faces environmental and geological risks, including potential Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs), seismic vulnerability, and biodiversity loss.

About the Subansiri River – It is the largest tributary of the Brahmaputra River. It is a trans-Himalayan river that originates in Tibet and flows through Arunachal Pradesh and Assam. It is also known as the “Gold River” because of the presence of gold dust in its waters.

7. Super Typhoon Ragasa

Super Typhoon Ragasa, an intense Category 5-equivalent storm, struck Hong Kong and Guangdong, China, in September 2025, with wind speeds exceeding 200 km/h.

Intensity and Impact – The storm's severity prompted the Hong Kong Observatory to issue the No. 10 signal (highest alert) for the second time in 2025, an event not seen since 1964.

Climate Change Link – Scientists attribute the increasing frequency and intensity of such super typhoons to climate change. Warming Pacific waters (which have warmed by +1.5°C over the last century) provide more energy for storms to form and rapidly intensify. The increasing frequency of powerful storms has led scientists to propose a new Category 6 classification for tropical cyclones. Similar trends of rapid intensification are being observed in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea.

8. Mukhya Mantri Mahila Rozgar Yojana

The Prime Minister is set to transfer ₹10,000 each to 75 lakh women in Bihar under the Mukhya Mantri Mahila Rozgar Yojana.

About the Scheme

Objective – A Bihar government initiative to promote women's entrepreneurship and economic empowerment, especially in rural areas.

Financial Support – An initial, non-repayable grant of ₹10,000 is provided via Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT). After a six-month performance review, an additional grant of ₹2 lakh can be given to eligible entrepreneurs.

Implementation – Managed by the Rural and Urban Development Departments, with active participation from Jeevika Self-Help Groups (SHGs).

Eligibility – Open to women aged 18–60 from nuclear families who do not pay income tax, with priority for economically weaker sections.

9. Quasi-Moon

Astronomers have discovered a tiny quasi-moon, named 2025 PN7, that has been orbiting near Earth for approximately 60 years.

About Quasi-Moons – A quasi-moon is a small celestial body, like an asteroid, that orbits the Sun in close synchronization with a planet. While it appears to accompany the planet, it is not a true moon because it is not gravitationally bound to it.

Features of 2025 PN7 –

Size – Measures only about 62 feet (19 meters) in diameter, making it the smallest known quasi-moon near Earth.

Orbit – Its orbit around the Sun closely mirrors Earth's path, taking roughly one year to complete. It is expected to remain in this stable quasi-orbit for another 60 years.

Significance of the Discovery – Enhances scientific understanding of near-Earth objects (NEOs).

Contributes to planetary defence strategies by improving the tracking of potential asteroid threats. Its proximity makes it a potential target for future space missions and resource studies.