7. Shortnews

1. Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari Award

Bidar district has won the Centre's Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari Award under the Jal Shakti Abhiyan - Catch the Rain campaign, recognising its outstanding water conservation efforts. The award carries a ₹25 lakh cash prize.

About Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari (JSJB) Initiative

Launch - Introduced on 6 September 2024 in Surat, Gujarat, as a community-driven extension of the Jal Shakti Abhiyan - Catch the Rain campaign, inspired by Gujarat's Jal Sanchay model.
Awarding body - Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation.
Objective - Ensure "every drop is conserved" through a whole-of-society, whole-of-government approach, fostering community ownership.
Collaboration - Implemented through partnerships with government, CSR funds, industries, civic bodies, and community groups to strengthen water security.
Core Aim - Construction of 1 million recharge structures (check dams, percolation tanks, recharge wells/shafts) to improve groundwater replenishment; ~25,000 already built.

Bidar's Model

1. Construction of check dams, gabion structures, gully plugs, percolation ponds, soak pits.
2. Revival of traditional systems such as taankas and stepwells.
3. Desilting works under MGNREGA and trenches in agricultural fields to improve recharge.
4. Strong focus on community participation.

2. Motok Community

The Members from the Motok community, held a massive Protest in Sadiya, Tinsukia district, demanding Scheduled Tribe (ST) status and the upgradation of their autonomous council under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.
About Motok Community - It is one of Assam's indigenous ethnic groups, asserting a distinct cultural and social identity rooted in the region. Primarily agrarian, concentrated in Upper Assam districts such as Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, and Sivasagar. Presently classified under OBC (Other Backward Classes) in Assam. Autonomy - In 2020, Assam passed a bill for the formation of a Matak (Motok) Autonomous Council to address development and administrative needs of the community.

Key Demands of the Motok Community

Scheduled Tribe status - Protesters demanded recognition of the Motoks as an ST, highlighting that such a promise was made nearly a decade ago.
Autonomous council upgrade - The community called for their council to be brought under the Sixth Schedule framework, which provides constitutional safeguards for self-governance and autonomy of tribal areas.

3. Sabki Yojana, Sabka Vikas Abhiyaan

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj will launch the People's Plan Campaign (PPC) 2025-26 - Sabki Yojana, Sabka Vikas Abhiyaan on 2nd October 2025, to prepare Panchayat Development Plans (PDPs) for FY 2026–27.

About the People's Plan Campaign (PPC)

Purpose - Enables Panchayats to prepare evidence-based, convergent, and inclusive PDPs aligned with both local priorities and national development goals.
Implementation mechanism - Conducted through Special Gram Sabhas, ensuring participatory democracy.
Progress so far - Over 18.13 lakh PDPs have been uploaded on the eGramSwaraj Portal since 2019–20. These include Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDPs), Block Panchayat Development Plans (BPDPs), and District Panchayat Development Plans (DPDPs). More than 2.52 lakh plans have been uploaded under the ongoing 2025–26 cycle.

Features of PPC 2025–26 - Sabki Yojana, Sabka Vikas

Digital monitoring - Gram Sabhas to review previous GPDPs via eGramSwaraj, Meri Panchayat App, and Panchayat NIRNAY.

Resource utilization - Prioritisation of unfinished works using unspent Central Finance Commission grants.

Guidance tools -

1. Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI) for benchmarking performance.
2. SabhaSaar as a planning and review tool.

Financial strengthening - Focus on enhancing Own Source Revenue (OSR) of Panchayats.

Community engagement - Wider participation of Panchayat representatives, community members, line Departments, and frontline workers.

Tribal empowerment - Special emphasis under Adi Karmayogi Abhiyaan.

4. Gokul Jalashay and Udaipur Jheel Added to Ramsar List

Bihar's Gokul Jalashay and Udaipur Jheel have been declared Ramsar sites, raising India's total Ramsar Sites to 93. India is ranked first in Asia and third globally, after the United Kingdom (176) and Mexico (144) in terms of the number of Ramsar sites.

About Gokul Jalashay

An oxbow lake located on the southern edge of the river Ganga. Acts as a natural buffer during floods, protecting nearby villages. Habitat for 50+ bird species. In the 2025 Water Bird Census, Gokul Jalashay and the adjacent Buxar stretch of the Ganga recorded nearly 3,500 water birds across 65 species. Supports local livelihoods through fishing, farming, and irrigation. Maintained annually during a traditional festival, when villagers clean the catchment and remove weeds.

About Udaipur Jheel

Udaipur Jheel is located in West Champaran district, Bihar. The wetland lies within the Udaypur Wildlife Sanctuary. Also an oxbow lake, encircling a village. Rich in biodiversity with 280+ plant species, including Alysicarpus roxburghianus (a perennial herb endemic to India). Serves as a key wintering ground for ~35 migratory bird species, including the vulnerable common pochard.

5. Engels' Pause

Recently, Geoffrey Hinton (AI pioneer, Nobel Laureate) warned AI will make a few people rich and the rest of us poorer likened to an Engels' pause

About Engels' Pause

The term 'Engels' Pause' was popularised by Robert Allen (2009) based on Friedrich Engels' 19th-century observation in Britain - industrial boom but stagnant wages.

Definition - It is an economic phase where productivity rises but average wages and welfare remain stagnate, increasing inequality. For example, in Philippines AI boosts productivity in sectors like BPOs and call centers (30%-50% efficiency gains), but wages remain largely stagnant

Historical basis - 19th Century Britain, when the industrial output rose, but food costs and stagnant wages trapped workers in poverty.

Examples - PwC estimates that AI could add $15.7 trillion to global GDP by 2030. But the benefits will be concentrated in the U.S., China, and a handful of firms controlling foundational models. The IMF (2024) estimates that 40% of jobs worldwide and half in advanced economies are exposed to AI where high-skilled substitution is likely.

Indian case - IT job losses, growing wage inequality with stricter IPR. IT firms cut 12,000 jobs pivoting to AI.

Policy Measures to Mitigate AI Engels' Pause

Skills and Reskilling Programs - Singapore's SkillsFuture and Abu Dhabi's MBZUAI offer continuous AI-focused education and training.

Redistribution Mechanisms - Robot taxes, Universal Basic Income, and philanthropic initiatives can channel AI rents for public benefit.

AI as a Public Good - Affordable access to compute and data ensures productivity gains translate into welfare improvements.

6. ASTROSAT

India's first multi-wavelength space observatory, AstroSat, completed 10 years of successful operations on September 28, 2025, surpassing its designed 5-year mission life.

About AstroSat

AstroSat is India's first dedicated astronomy satellite, designed to study celestial sources in X-ray, ultraviolet (UV), and optical spectral bands simultaneously.

Multi-wavelength Observations - Enables simultaneous observations across UV, optical, and X-ray bands (0.3–100 keV) with a single satellite.

Launch Details - Launched on September 28, 2015, by PSLV-C30 from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota, into a 650 km orbit at 6° inclination.

Mass & Mission Life - Satellite weighed 1,515 kg with a minimum expected life of 5 years, now operating for 10 years.

Operations - Managed by ISRO's Mission Operations Complex (MOX) at Bengaluru, with data processed and archived at Indian Space Science Data Centre (ISSDC), Byalalu, near Bangalore

Achievements - Enabled discoveries from black holes to neutron stars and observed Proxima Centauri, the nearest star. First-time detection of far-ultraviolet (FUV) photons from galaxies 9.3 billion light-years away. Provided groundbreaking insights across the electromagnetic spectrum, enhancing India's presence in global space astronomy. Collaborative mission involving ISRO, IUCAA Pune, TIFR Mumbai, IIAP, RRI Bengaluru, and institutions from Canada and the UK. AstroSat continues to provide valuable scientific data, highlighting India's capabilities in multi-wavelength space astronomy and establishing a decade-long legacy of space-based astrophysical research.

7. Integrative Oncology Research and Care Centre

Recently, the Ministry of Ayush inaugurated India's first Integrative Oncology Research and Care Centre at the All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA), Goa.

About the Integrative Oncology Research and Care Centre (IORCC)

Definition - A first-of-its-kind multidisciplinary centre designed to integrate traditional Ayush systems with contemporary oncology to provide holistic rehabilitation for cancer patients. Developed in partnership with ACTREC – Tata Memorial Centre, a premier cancer research and treatment institute.

Key Features - Combines Ayurveda, Yoga, Panchakarma, physiotherapy, and diet therapy with chemotherapy, radiation, and surgery. Focuses on recovery, side-effect reduction, immune strengthening, and psychosocial well-being. Functions as a hub for clinical services, advanced research, training, and innovation in integrative oncology.

Global Parallel - Integrative oncology centres are emerging in the U.S., Europe, and Japan, blending complementary therapies with mainstream cancer treatments.

Significance

1. **Healthcare Innovation -** Demonstrates Ayush's role as a catalyst in bridging traditional systems and modern medicine.
2. **Patient Benefits -** Expected to improve recovery, reduce side effects of cancer treatment, enhance quality of life, and provide affordable care.
3. **Broader Scope -** Beyond oncology, integrative rehabilitation models will also extend to neurological and developmental disorders.
4. **National Replication -** Serves as a model for nationwide adoption of integrated healthcare centres.

8. Typhoon Bualoi

Typhoon Bualoi bringing winds of up to 133 kph (83 mph) hit Vietnam

About Typhoons

A typhoon is a tropical cyclone that develops over the Northwest Pacific Ocean (especially between 180° and 100°E)". A cyclone is a rapid inward circulation of air around a low-pressure area, characterized by a spiraling motion of winds accompanied by thundering storms and bad weather. The center of the cyclone is known as the eye of the storm, and the Coriolis force causes the winds to rotate counter-clockwise in the Northern Hemisphere and clockwise in the Southern Hemisphere.

Mechanism - When warm, moist air rises from the ocean surface, it creates a low-pressure area, leading to rapid inward air circulation (Anticlockwise in the Northern Hemisphere, Clockwise in Southern Hemisphere).

Regional Names

1. **Typhoon -** Pacific/China Sea
2. **Hurricane -** Caribbean/Atlantic
3. **Tornado -** S. USA/West Africa
4. **Willy-willies -** NW Australia
5. **Tropical Cyclone -** Indian Ocean

Why Frequent in Southeast Asia?

1. **Rising Sea Surface Temperatures** - Global warming energises storm formation.
2. **Atmospheric Circulation Shifts** - Changes in Walker circulation influence storm paths.
3. **ENSO Events (El Niño/La Niña)** - Alter storm frequency & intensity in Pacific.
4. **Increased Atmospheric Moisture** - More evaporation = stronger, wetter storms.
5. **Geography -** Long coastlines and proximity of Southeast Asia to the warm Pacific currents make the region a natural hotspot for typhoon formation.
6. **Marine Heatwaves -** Climate-driven Ocean warming boosts typhoon strength.

Weaker Land–Sea Temperature Gradient - Slower storm dissipation, longer impacts.