

6. Shortnews

1. Amazon's 'Flying Rivers'

The Amazon rainforest plays a critical role in South America's water cycle through the phenomenon called "flying rivers".

About Flying Rivers

"Flying rivers" are massive streams of water vapour carried in the atmosphere, invisible to the eye. **Process** – Moisture originates from the Atlantic Ocean. Trade winds push moist air westward across the equator. Amazon trees act as a "biological pump" – absorb water from soil → transpire it back into the air → release huge amounts of water vapour. This recycled water forms clouds and rainfall further inland, supplying regions as far as the Andes and southern South America.

2. Sir Creek

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh warned Pakistan that any aggression in the disputed Sir Creek area will be met with a strong response.

Sir Creek region – Sir Creek is a 96-km-long tidal estuary or a "fluctuating tidal channel" between Gujarat's Rann of Kutch and Pakistan. The Rann lies on the border between Gujarat and the Pakistani province of Sind. It is considered a disputed region due to varying interpretations of maritime boundary lines by both sides. Sir Creek is a strategic and sensitive zone along the Gujarat coastline.

Disputes – The Sir Creek dispute between India and Pakistan revolves around the interpretation of the maritime boundary in the marshy estuarine region between Gujarat and Sindh. Originating from a pre-independence disagreement between the princely states of Kutch and Sind over territorial claims, the issue was addressed in a 1914 resolution invoking the thalweg principle—setting boundaries along the mid-channel of navigable waters.

Stand of both countries – India supports this principle, citing navigability during high tide and historical maps, while Pakistan argues that Sir Creek is a tidal estuary and not navigable, thus rejecting the thalweg's applicability. The dispute gained prominence post-1965 and was partially resolved by the 1968 Indo-Pakistani Western Boundary Case Tribunal, which upheld most of India's claims over the Rann of Kutch. However, the boundary from the mouth to the top of Sir Creek and eastward to the Western Terminus remains contested.

3. DigiLocker

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has announced that candidates' documents, including caste, income, and disability certificates, will now be verified through DigiLocker.

About DigiLocker – DigiLocker is a flagship initiative of the Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY) under Digital India programme. DigiLocker aims at 'Digital Empowerment' of citizens by providing access to authentic digital documents to citizen's digital document wallet. The issued documents in DigiLocker system are deemed to be at par with original physical documents as per Rule 9A of the Information Technology (Preservation and Retention of Information by Intermediaries providing Digital Locker facilities) Rules, 2016.

Benefits to Agencies

1. **It reduces the administrative overhead** by minimizing the use of paper and curtailing the verification process.
2. **Digital Transformation** – Issued Documents available via DigiLocker are fetched in real-time directly from the issuing agency.
3. **Secure Document Gateway** – Acts as a secure document exchange platform like payment gateway between trusted issuer and trusted Requester/Verifier with the consent of the citizen.

4. US Tomahawk Missiles

Ukraine has requested long-range Tomahawk cruise missiles from the United States.

Tomahawk missiles – Tomahawks are long-range subsonic cruise missiles that can be launched from

ships, submarines or ground launchers. They have long-range, deep-strike capabilities, and can hit targets 1,250km-2,500km away. They carry high-explosive warheads designed to penetrate hardened targets like military bunkers. They avoid radar detection by flying at high subsonic speeds while maintaining low altitudes.