Today's Prelims Topics

Appointment of Chief Justice of a High Court

Context
The SC Collegium recommended new CJs for 5 High Courts: Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Gauhati, Patna, and Jharkhand.

Appointment Process
- **Recommendation by Collegium**: The **Supreme Court Collegium** (headed by the CJI and comprising 4 senior-most SC judges) recommends names for CJ of a High Court.
  - Seniority, merit, and regional representation are key considerations.
- **Central Government's Role**: The Union Ministry of Law forwards the Collegium's recommendation to the Prime Minister.
  - The PM advises the President for formal appointments.
  - The government can **seek clarifications** but cannot reject the Collegium's recommendation indefinitely.
- **Oath & Tenure**: The appointed CJ takes oath under **Article 219**.
  - Retires at **62 years** (Article 217(1)).

Constitutional Provisions
- **Article 217**: Governs the appointment of High Court judges, including the Chief Justice (CJ).
- **Article 222**: Allows the transfer of judges (including CJs) from one High Court to another.

Key Points
- **Collegium System**: Evolved from the **Three Judges Cases** (1981, 1993, 1998), it is a judicial precedent, not mentioned in the Constitution.
- **Difference from CJI Appointment**: CJI is appointed solely by seniority, while HC CJs are appointed based on Collegium recommendations.
- **Controversies**: Lack of transparency, delays in appointments, and government-judiciary tussles.

Source: [The Hindu: SC Collegium recommends new CJ for 5 High Courts](#)

OPEC and OPEC+

Context
Despite low prices, OPEC+ is expected to **increase oil production**.

What is OPEC (Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries)
- **Formed**: 1960
- **Founding Members**: Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela
- **Objective**: Coordinate and unify petroleum policies among member countries to stabilize oil markets, ensure fair prices for producers, and a regular supply to consumers.
- **Current Members (12 countries)** include: Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, UAE, Nigeria,
  - **Angola withdrew its membership** effective 1 January 2024.

What is OPEC+?
It's an extension of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), formed in 2016, and includes both OPEC members and non-OPEC oil-producing nations.
- **Major Non-OPEC members**: Russia, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Oman, etc.
- **Reason for Formation**: To counter falling oil prices by coordinating production cuts or increases globally.
- **Key Role**: Together, OPEC+ controls over 40% of global oil supply and holds significant influence on international oil prices.
- Countries like **Kazakhstan and the UAE** are increasing production, risking friction with leaders like **Saudi Arabia**.

Source: The Hindu: OPEC+ groupings expected to open taps more despite price slumps

National Commission on Protection of Child Rights

Context
NCPCR has sent a notice to Haryana officials over the deaths of two Ashoka University students.

About NCPCR
● It is a **statutory** body constituted by the GoI under the Commission for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005.
● **Composition:** Chairperson **(Not necessarily Woman)** + 6 members **(At Least 2 Women)**
● **Appointment & Removal:** Central Government
● **Tenure:** 3 Years (Both Chairperson & Members)
   ○ Chairman and the members cannot hold office for more than **2 terms.**
   ○ **Maximum age to hold post:** Chairman (65 Years), Members (60 Years)
● NCPCR submits an **annual report to the Central Government.**
● NCPCR is responsible to ensure effective implementation of:
   ○ Right to Education Act,2005
   ○ Protection of Children from Sexual Offences(POCSO) Act,2012
   ○ Juvenile justice (care and protection of children) Act, 2015

A person between the ages of 0-18 is considered as a child by the Commission.

Initiatives by NCPCR to protect child rights
● **GHAR:** Go home and Reunite portal for repatriation of Children from child care homes to their families during Covid-19.
● **MASI portal:** Monitoring app for seamless investigation (for real time monitoring of child care institutions)
● **Bal Swaraj portal:** for online tracking and monitoring of the Children who are in need of protection and care
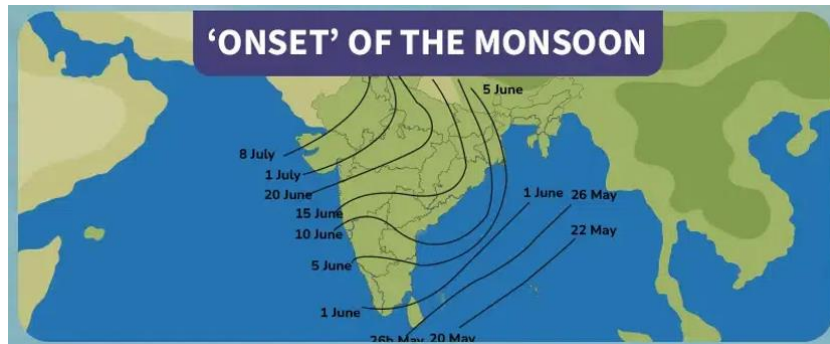**Source: Indian Express: NCPOPCR sends notice to Haryana top cop and education secretary**

What is Monsoon Onset, why it is early

Context

The southwest monsoon arrived in Kerala on May 24, 2025, eight days ahead of its normal date (June 1), making it the earliest onset since 2009, as per the India Meteorological Department (IMD).
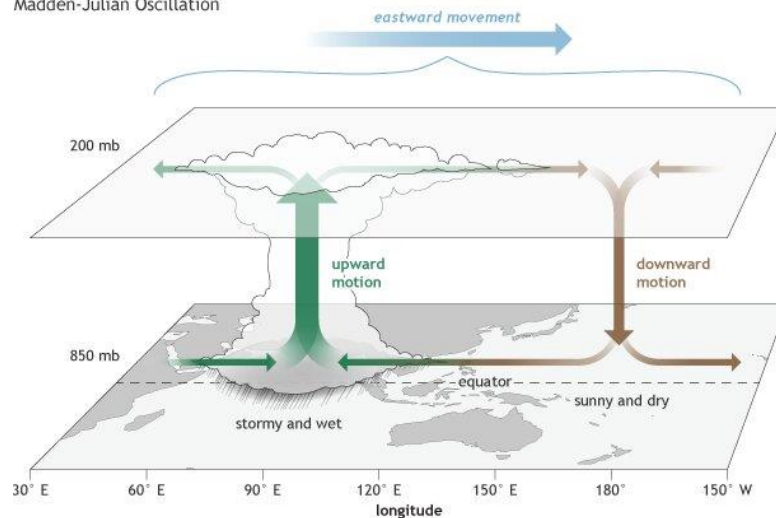
Onset of Monsoon

'ONSET' OF THE MONSOON

- The onset of monsoon refers to the **official beginning of the southwest monsoon season** over the Indian subcontinent.
- It marks the first significant and sustained rainfall over southern Kerala, driven by changes in atmospheric and oceanic conditions.
- **Declared by:** The India Meteorological Department (IMD) officially declares the monsoon onset based on specific meteorological criteria.
- **Scientific Criteria for Monsoon Onset:**
  - **Rainfall:** 60% of key stations in Kerala must record ≥2.5 mm rainfall for two consecutive days.
  - **Wind field:** Depth and speed of westerly winds at lower troposphere must meet criteria.
  - **OLR (Heat/Radiation):** Outgoing Longwave Radiation must be <200 W/m² in a specific box region.
- **Factors for Early Onset (2025):**
  - Higher sea surface temperatures in Arabian Sea & Bay of Bengal.
  - Active **Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO)**.
  - Stronger **Somali Jet** winds bringing in moisture early.
- Low-pressure systems accelerating monsoon flow.
- **Does Early Monsoon = Good Monsoon?**
  - No. Onset only marks **arrival**, not **intensity** or **distribution** of rainfall.
  - Early onset years can still witness droughts or skewed rainfall.

Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO) – In Short

Madden-Julian Oscillation

- **What it is:** A large-scale tropical atmospheric disturbance that moves eastward around the globe every **30–60 days**.
- **Key Features:**
  - Involves coupled patterns of **rainfall** and **winds**.
  - Originates over the **Indian Ocean** and moves toward the **Pacific**.
  - Affects weather globally, including **monsoons**, **cyclones**, and **El Niño/La Niña** patterns.
- **Impact on India:**
  - Strong MJO phases can **enhance monsoon rainfall**.
  - Weak or absent MJO phases may **suppress rainfall**, causing dry spells.
- **Why it matters:** MJO is crucial for **intra-seasonal weather forecasting**, especially for **monsoon prediction** and **cyclogenesis** in the Indian Ocean region.

Source: Indian Express: What is Monsoon Onset, why it is early

International Classification of Health Interventions (ICHI)

Context
India and WHO have partnered to globally mainstream AYUSH by launching a dedicated Traditional Medicine module within the International Classification of Health Interventions (ICHI).

About International Classification of Health Interventions (ICHI)
● **Definition:** ICHI is a standardized tool used globally to **report and analyze health intervention**s for both clinical and statistical use.
● **Purpose:** It complements WHO's **International Classification of Diseases- Eleventh Edition (ICD-11)** by providing a common framework to classify actions aimed at improving or maintaining health.
● **What is a Health Intervention?:** Any action performed **for, with, or on behalf of** an individual or population to assess, improve, maintain, promote, or modify health, functioning, or health conditions.
● **Developed by:** The **World Health Organization (WHO)** and the **WHO Family of International Classifications (WHO-FIC).**
● **Coverage:** ICHI includes interventions across all healthcare sectors:
    ○ Acute care
    ○ Mental health
    ○ Primary care
    ○ Rehabilitation
    ○ Prevention
    ○ Public health
    ○ Traditional medicine
● **Traditional Medicine Module in ICHI – Key Benefits:**
    ○ Enables **transparent billing** and **fair pricing** for Ayush services.
    ○ Facilitates **easier integration** of Ayush treatments in **health insurance coverage**.
    ○ Improves **hospital management**, clinical documentation, and health-related research.
    ○ Promotes **global recognition and accessibility** of Ayush interventions.

Source: PIB: India Partners with WHO to Mainstream Ayush Globally through a Landmark Agreement on Traditional Medicine Interventions
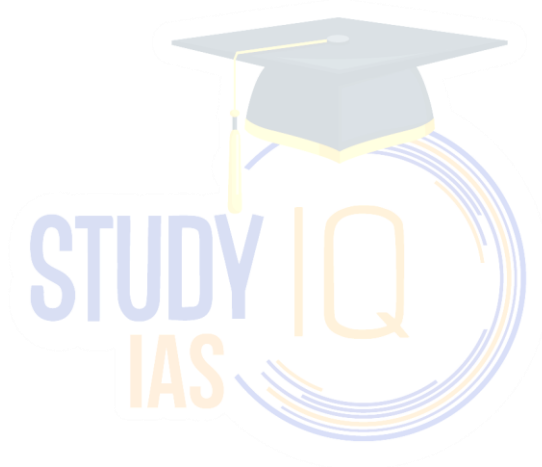
News in Short

D9 Locomotive
News? The Prime Minister inaugurated **India's first indigenous D9 locomotive** in Dahod, Gujarat.   **About D9 Locomotive**   ● **Power**: **9,000 horsepower (HP)** (2nd most powerful locomotive in India after **WAG-12B-** 12,000 HP)   ● **Manufacturer**: Siemens (under 'Make in India')   ● **Purpose**: **Electric freight locomotives** for heavy cargo transport.   **Source: Indian Express**

Places in News

Sao Paulo/Brazil

News? The **Virada Cultural** event was celebrated in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Sao Paulo

● Sao Paulo is a city in southeastern Brazil.

Brazil

● **Location**: South America.
● **Capital**: Brasillia
● **Border Sharing:** Brazil borders every South American country **(except Chile and Ecuador)** and the Atlantic Ocean.
● **Major Geographic Features:**
   ○ The Amazon Rainforest.
   ○ The Amazon River
   ○ The Brazilian Highlands (Planalto Brasileiro)
   ○ The Pantanal (World largest wetland)
   ○ The Cerrado (Tropical Savanna)
   ○ The Atlantic Forest (Mata Atlântica)
   ○ The Caatinga (dry shrubland ecosystem with drought-resistant vegetation).
   ○ Guiana Highlands(bordering Venezuela and Guyana and source of many Amazon tributaries and home to dramatic escarpments and waterfalls.)
   ○ Iguaçu Falls (Iguaçu/Iguazu).
   ○ Pico da Neblina (Highest peak of Brazil)

Source: The Hindu

Baltic Sea

News? Russia conducted a naval exercise in Baltic Sea.

About Baltic Sea

- **Location:** It is an extended arm of the **Atlantic Ocean in Northern Europe.**
- **Bordering Countries:** Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Sweden.
- It connects to the Atlantic Ocean through the **Danish Straits.**

Facts

- **Baltic Countries:** Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia.
- **Nordic Countries:** Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Iceland.
- **Scandinavian Countries:** Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

Source: Indian Express

Editorial Summary

AI And The Space Satellites

Context

AI is revolutionizing satellites but it also introduces novel risks, legal dilemmas, and geopolitical uncertainties which need urgent regulation.

Applications of AI in Satellites

● **Autonomous Operations:** Independent maneuvering, docking, in-orbit servicing, and debris removal (e.g., SpaceX uses AI for satellite collision avoidance).
● **Self-Diagnosis & Repair:** Detecting internal faults and executing fixes without ground control.
● **Optimized Route Planning:** Real-time orbital adjustments to avoid collisions or conserve fuel.
● **Geospatial Intelligence:** Real-time detection of disasters or events and intelligent coordination among satellites.
● **Combat Support:** Autonomous threat detection and tracking for defense and reconnaissance missions.

Challenges and Issues

● **AI Hallucinations and Misjudgments:** AI systems can misclassify harmless objects (e.g., commercial satellites) as threats, leading to unintended evasive or defensive actions. This may escalate tensions or cause near-collisions in orbit.
● **Legal Ambiguities:** Current treaties like the Outer Space Treaty (OST) and the Liability Convention assume human decision-making. They lack clarity on how to deal with actions taken by autonomous AI systems.
● **Accountability and Fault Attribution:** In case of a collision or damage caused by AI decisions, it is unclear who is liable — the operator, AI developer, launching state, or the country of registration.
● **Dual-Use Dilemma:** AI capabilities can serve both civilian and military functions. An autonomous satellite performing a routine function may be misinterpreted as a hostile act, especially in geopolitically tense regions.
● **Escalation of Geopolitical Conflicts:** Autonomous maneuvers in contested orbital zones may be seen as provocative, increasing the risk of misunderstandings, diplomatic standoffs, or even conflict.
● **Data Privacy and Ethical Concerns:** AI satellites collect vast amounts of Earth observation data. Without proper governance, this data may be misused or violate privacy norms, especially in surveillance applications.

Solutions and Way Forward

● **Categorize Autonomy Levels:** Regulate based on satellite intelligence and control levels.
● **Human-in-the-Loop Mandates:** Ensure critical decisions retain human oversight.
● **International Testing & Certification:** Establish global standards for AI behavior and safety in space.
● **Adopt Liability Models:** Use aviation/maritime templates like strict liability and pooled insurance.
● **Global Cooperation:** Foster international treaties and norms to prevent an AI-driven space arms race and ensure shared responsibility.

Source: The Hindu: The dawn of autonomous satellites and the legal vacuum above us

Focus on heat-resilience despite the monsoon

Context

- The national conference on *"India 2047: Building a Climate-Resilient Future"* highlighted the growing interlinkages between climate change and health.
- Experts across disciplines—from trade union leaders to climate scientists—stressed the need for **interdisciplinary and preventive healthcare frameworks** to deal with climate-induced stress like heatwaves.

What are the Key Issues?

- **Heatwaves and Public Health Stress:** India faces recurring and **intensifying heatwaves** due to climate change.
  - Health impacts include **heatstroke, dehydration, kidney failure, and worsened chronic illnesses** like diabetes and cardiovascular diseases.
- **Overreliance on Crisis Care:** India's health response is currently **reactive**, focused on **emergency admissions, IV fluids, and hospital beds** rather than **prevention and early intervention**.
- **Climate Unpreparedness of Primary Health Care:** Health and Wellness Centres, PHCs, and frontline workers like **ASHAs** are underutilized in **climate action**.
- **Clinical Gaps:** Many healthcare providers **do not screen for heat-related symptoms**.
  - Absence of **standardized clinical protocols** and **summer readiness drills** hampers timely response.
- **Equity and Vulnerability Mapping:** Heat impacts are **not uniform** – they disproportionately affect:
    - **Informal workers**
    - **Children in poorly ventilated schools**
    - **Elderly in slums**
  - "Stay indoors" is **not viable guidance** for daily wage earners or slum residents.
- **Minimal Health Integration in Policies**: India's **National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)** includes the **National Mission on Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change**, but **health integration is minimal**.
- **Lower Adoption of Heat Action Plans (HAPs):** Ahmedabad Heat Action Plan (2013) is a pioneering model—reduced heat-related mortality by 61% in vulnerable populations.
  - However, only a few Indian cities and states have functional or updated HAPs.

Way Forward

- **Need for Intersectoral Collaboration: Urban planners, labour departments, water authorities, and climate scientists** must coordinate with the health sector.
  - Examples:
    - Cool roofing in **Anganwadi centres**
    - Misting shelters in **urban slums**
    - Adjusted working hours for **outdoor labourers**
- **Recommendations for Preventive, Equity-Focused Health Policy:**
  - Link **meteorological early warning systems** with health infrastructure.
  - Mobilize ASHAs to disseminate heat alerts and hydration strategies.
  - Deploy **mobile hydration centres**, subsidized shelters, and **protective labour laws**.
  - **Co-design solutions** with grassroots voices, not just top-down interventions.

Source: The Hindu: Focus on heat-resilience despite the monsoon

Manage anaemia before pregnancy

Context
- Anaemia, especially **Iron Deficiency Anaemia (IDA)**, continues to be a silent yet deadly health issue among women of reproductive age in India.
- Over **57% of women** in this demographic are anaemic, often entering pregnancy with dangerously low haemoglobin levels.
- This severely affects **maternal and perinatal health outcomes**.

Challenges
- **Late Detection:** Anaemia is often **undiagnosed before conception**, leading to complications like **pre-eclampsia**, **low birth weight**, **postpartum hemorrhage**, and **preterm births**.
- **Over-reliance on Oral IFA:** Oral Iron-Folic Acid (IFA) supplementation is poorly absorbed, causes gastrointestinal issues, and has **low adherence**, especially during pregnancy.
- **Neglect of Other Causes of Anaemia: Vitamin B12 deficiency** (affecting ~49% of women), **thyroid disorders**, and **gestational diabetes** often go **unscreened**, reducing the efficacy of IFA-only treatments.
- **Lack of Focus on Preconception Health:** Health policies are mostly **pregnancy-centric** rather than **pre-pregnancy-focused**.
- **Social Disregard for Preconception Care:** Preconception check-ups are not culturally or systemically emphasised, leading to **missed opportunities** for early interventions.

Government Initiatives
- **POSHAN Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission):** Aims to reduce anaemia among women, adolescent girls, and children.
- **Anaemia Mukt Bharat (AMB):** Targets **3% reduction per year** in anaemia prevalence through a 6x6x6 strategy (6 beneficiaries × 6 interventions × 6 institutional mechanisms).
- **Weekly Iron and Folic Acid Supplementation (WIFS):** Targeted at **adolescents**, especially school-going girls.
- **RMNCH+A strategy (Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health):** Focus on continuum of care, but **still underemphasizes preconception health**.

Solutions
- **Reframe Maternal Health:** Move from **pregnancy-based care** to **preconception-based care** as a preventive strategy.
- **Adopt Intravenous Ferric Carboxymaltose (IV FCM):** IV FCM bypasses absorption issues and **rapidly restores haemoglobin** — a game-changer for moderate to severe anaemia.
- **Combined Nutrient Therapy:** Use **injectable Vitamin B12 + Folate + IV Iron** for holistic and **refractory anaemia** treatment.
- **Comprehensive Preconception Screening:** Include **thyroid function**, **blood sugar**, and **Vitamin B12** in preconception check-ups.
- **Strengthen Community Engagement:** Empower **ASHA and Anganwadi workers** to promote preconception health in existing maternal programs.
- **Policy and Behavioural Shifts:** Normalize preconception care just like antenatal care.
  - Encourage families to **support early health check-ups**.

Source: The Hindu: Manage anaemia before pregnancy