

Today's Prelims Topics

3 by 35 Initiative

Context

The World Health Organization (WHO) has announced its **“3 by 35” health-tax campaign**, urging countries to increase taxes on tobacco, alcohol, and sugary drinks by at least **50% by 2035**.

WHO's '3 by 35 Initiative'

- **Objective:** WHO urges countries to increase real prices of tobacco, alcohol, and sugary drinks by **at least 50% by 2035** through health taxes.
- **Purpose:**
 - Combat rising **non-communicable diseases (NCDs)** like heart disease, cancer, and diabetes.
 - Raise **public revenue** for health and development.
 - Reduce reliance on **external aid** and improve **fiscal independence**.
- **Urgency:**
 - Health systems face increasing pressure from **growing NCD burden, reduced development aid, and public debt**.
 - NCDs now cause **over 75% of global deaths**.
- **Key Drivers of NCDs:**
 - High consumption of **tobacco, alcohol, and sugary drinks**.
- **Impact of the Policy:**
 - A one-time **50% price hike** could **prevent 50 million premature deaths** over the next 50 years.
 - **Tobacco alone** causes more than **7 million deaths annually**.

Key Action Areas of the Initiative

- Increase excise taxes to raise prices and **make harmful products less affordable**.
- Mobilize domestic funds to support **universal health coverage** and development programs.
- Foster coordination among **finance and health ministries, lawmakers, civil society, and academia**.

Global Trends and Economic Potential

- **140 countries** have already increased tobacco taxes (2012–2022), showing real feasibility.
- Health taxes have **reduced consumption** and **boosted revenue** in countries like **Colombia** and **South Africa**.
- A global 50% price hike could raise up to **\$3.7 trillion in 5 years** (approx. **\$740 billion/year**, or **0.75% of global GDP**).
- WHO targets **\$1 trillion in revenue over the next 10 years** through the initiative.

Policy Challenges

- Many countries still offer **tax breaks** to unhealthy industries like tobacco.
- **Long-term investment deals** often limit governments from raising tobacco taxes.
- WHO urges countries to **eliminate such exemptions** for better public health outcomes.

Vision: '3 by 35' promotes healthier populations, economic resilience, and reduced dependency on aid, aligning fiscal and public health goals for the future.

Source: [Business-Standard](#)

Ham Radio

Context

Indian astronaut **Shubhanshu Shukla** recently connected with students across the country via **ham radio communication** from the **International Space Station (ISS)**.

About Ham Radio

- **Ham radio**, also known as **amateur radio**, is a licensed communication service that uses **radio waves** to connect people.
- It is commonly used for **educational learning, technical experimentation, and emergency communication (SOS)**.
- Communication is established using a **dedicated frequency**, a **transceiver**, and an **antenna** by trained and **licensed operators**.
- It enables communication that can be **local, global, or even space-based** (e.g., with astronauts on the ISS).
- In **India**, any person **above 12 years** of age can apply for a ham radio license.
- The license is issued by the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)**.
- Despite modern communication technologies, ham radio remains a **stable, reliable, and independent medium** of communication.
- It serves as a crucial **alternative communication system**, especially during **disasters** when regular networks fail.
- Ham radio has played a vital role in India during several emergencies:
- **Bhuj Earthquake (2001)**
- **Indian Ocean Tsunami (2004)**
- **Uttarakhand Floods (2013)**
- And other **natural or man-made calamities**.
- Its ability to function independently makes it a valuable tool for **disaster management and public safety**.

Source: [IndianExpress](https://www.indianexpress.com)

Nipah Virus

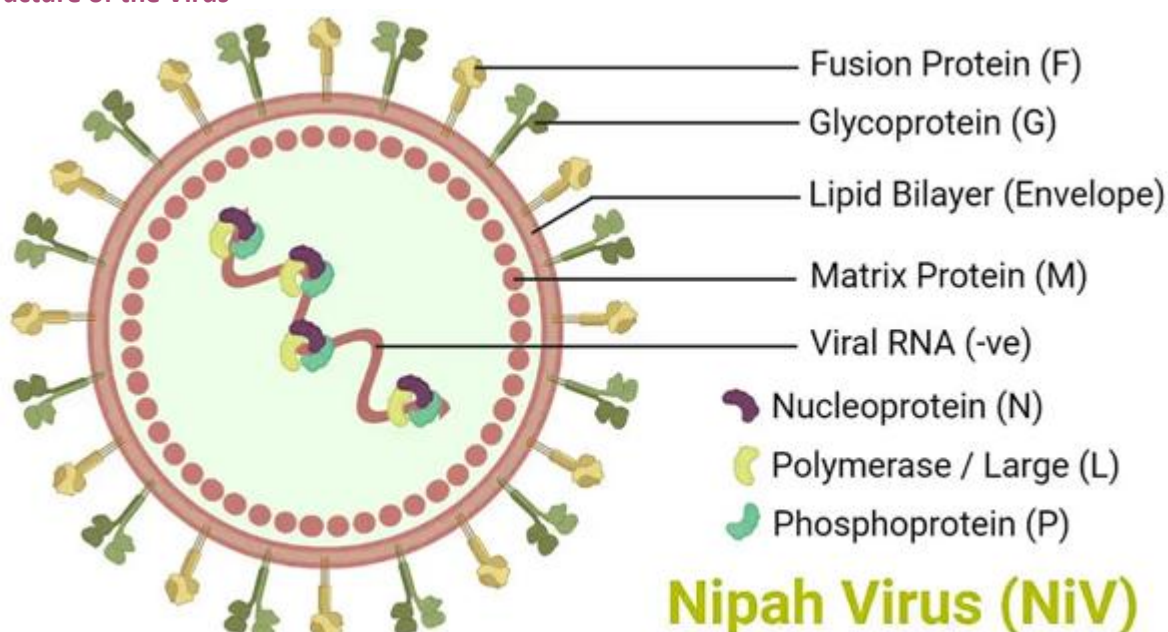
Context

Nipah virus has **resurfaced in Kerala, with two new cases** reported in Malappuram and Palakkad districts.

What is Nipah Virus (NiV)?

- Nipah virus is a **zoonotic virus**, meaning it spreads from **animals to humans** (Human-to-human transmission is also possible).
- It belongs to the **Paramyxoviridae family**, under the **Henipavirus genus**.
- Transmission occurs through **direct contact** with infected **bats, pigs, or contaminated food**.
- Symptoms often start like the **common flu** and may lead to **severe respiratory and neurological issues**.
- No vaccine currently exists (**Ribavirin** may reduce mortality in encephalitis cases).

Structure of the Virus



- **Negative-sense, single-stranded RNA virus** with an **enclosed structure**.
- Key structural proteins: **N, P, M, F, G, and L**.
- Protected by a **matrix protein** with **glycoproteins and fusion proteins** for cell entry.
- Cytoplasmic structures are often found near the **endoplasmic reticulum**.

Origin and Spread

- First identified in **Malaysia (1999)** among pig farmers.
- Reported in other countries like **Thailand, Cambodia, and Ghana**.
- In India:
 - First outbreak in **Siliguri, West Bengal (2001)**.
 - Repeated outbreaks in **2007, 2018, 2023**, and now again in **2025 (Kerala)**.
 - The 2001 outbreak indicated possible **human-to-human transmission**.

Testing Methods

- **RT-PCR** (Real-Time Polymerase Chain Reaction)
- **ELISA** (Enzyme-Linked Immunosorbent Assay)
- **IHC** (Immunohistochemistry)

- **SNT** (Serum Neutralisation Test)

Symptoms

- Early signs: **Fever, headache, sore throat, muscle pain, nausea.**
- Progression: **Dizziness, drowsiness,** and symptoms of **acute encephalitis.**
- Severe cases: May lead to **seizures, coma,** and even **death** within 24–48 hours.
- Can range from **mild illness** to **fatal brain inflammation.**

Current Trends and Outbreak Patterns

- **Seasonal and regional outbreaks,** particularly in **South and Southeast Asia.**
- Evolution from **bat-to-pig-to-human** to **direct bat-to-human** and **human-to-human** transmission.
- **Kerala** has seen **multiple outbreaks,** including deadly ones in **2018** (17 deaths) and **2023.**

Source: [TheHindu](#)



Shrishti

Context

Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurated the "**Shrishti**" **digital studio** and revamped **APPPA module** at IIPA to promote digital governance training and administrative reforms under **Mission Karmayogi**.

About Shrishti – The New Digital Studio at IIPA

- **Shrishti** is a **state-of-the-art digital studio** launched at the **Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA)** by Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh.
- It aims to **boost digital learning** and **policy communication** for civil servants under initiatives like **Mission Karmayogi** and **iGOT**.

Key Features

- **High-tech Infrastructure:** Equipped with modern **audio-video studios**, **editing suites**, and **live-streaming** capabilities.
- **Content Creation Hub:** Enables production of **digital courses**, **webinars**, **explainer videos**, and **podcasts**.
- **Supports Hybrid Learning:** Allows integration of live and recorded content for **civil-military training modules**, especially under **APPPA** (Advanced Professional Programme in Public Administration).

Purpose & Impact

- **Enhances in-house capacity** to create training content, reducing dependence on external vendors.
- Promotes **cost-effective**, **scalable**, and **reusable training modules**.
- Strengthens India's vision of **tech-driven, transparent, and citizen-centric governance**.

Source: [PIB](#)

Ladki Bahin Yojana

Context

The **Maharashtra government** has removed **2,889 government employees** from the beneficiary list of the Ladki Bahin Yojana after finding them ineligible for the women welfare scheme.

About Ladki Bahin Yojana (Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana)

- **Launched in 2024** by the **Maharashtra government** as a major women-centric welfare initiative.
- **Objective**
 - To provide **financial assistance** to **economically weaker women**.
 - Aims at **rehabilitation, economic upliftment, and empowerment** of women in the state.
- **Eligibility Criteria**
 - Must be a **permanent resident** of **Maharashtra**.
 - **Age limit:** Women aged between **21 to 65 years**.
 - **Annual family income** should be **₹2.5 lakh or less**.
 - **No family member** should be a registered **income taxpayer**.
 - **Government employees are ineligible**, as per recent beneficiary audits.
- **Benefits**
 - Eligible women receive **₹1,500 per month** via **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)** into their bank accounts.
 - The financial support is aimed at covering **basic needs**, improving **quality of life**, and promoting **economic inclusion**.

Recent Developments

- **2,889 ineligible government employees** were removed from the beneficiary list after verification.
- The government is using **income tax data** from CDBT to further identify and eliminate ineligible applicants.
- Cases of **double benefits** in Nashik and other districts are under investigation.

Source: [TheHindu](https://www.thehindu.com)

Port of Spain

Context

Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in **Port of Spain** on **4 July** for a state visit to **Trinidad & Tobago**—marking the **first such visit by an Indian PM since 1999**.

About Port of Spain

- An **island country** in the **southeastern West Indies**, located in the **Atlantic Ocean**.
- Lies close to the **South American coast**, **northeast of Venezuela** and **northwest of Guyana**.
- Comprises two main islands:
 - **Trinidad** (larger and more industrial)
 - **Tobago** (smaller and more tourism-driven).
- **Mountain Range**: The **Northern Range** in Trinidad is an extension of Venezuela's **Andes Mountains**.
- **Natural Resource**: **Pitch Lake** (in La Brea, Trinidad) is the **world's largest natural asphalt deposit**.
- **Highest Point**: **Mount Aripo**, in the Northern Range.
- **Major Rivers**: **Ortoire River** and **Caroni River**.



Political and Historical Context

- Former **Spanish** and later **British colony**; gained **independence in 1962** and became a **republic in 1976**.
- **Capital**: **Port of Spain** (on the island of Trinidad).
- **Government Type**: **Unitary parliamentary republic**.
- Member of the **Commonwealth of Nations** and **CARICOM (Caribbean Community)**.

International Significance

- **Major oil and natural gas producer** in the Caribbean.
- Hosts several **regional organizations** and summits.
- A strategic point for trade in the **Caribbean–Atlantic region**.

India–Trinidad & Tobago Relations

- Home to a large **Indian-origin population** (approx. 40%), mainly descendants of indentured laborers.
- India shares strong cultural and historical ties, especially through **diaspora diplomacy**.
- Collaborates with India in sectors like **energy, education, healthcare, and climate resilience**.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi's **2025 visit** marked the first by an Indian PM since 1999, boosting bilateral cooperation.

Source: [PIB](#)