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Current Affairs – 12 August 2025

SC ORDERS PERMANENT REMOVAL OF STRAY DOGS FROM PUBLIC SPACES IN DELHI-NCR

- India's past attempts to tackle stray dogs—through killing by electrocution, poisoning, shooting, or clubbing—proved ineffective, as partial elimination only reduced competition and spurred breeding.
- Since 1992, sterilisation under the **Animal Birth Control (Dogs) Rules, 2001** has been the preferred method.
 - Animal Birth Control (ABC) Rules, 2023 replaced the earlier 2001 rules.

How Irresponsible Pet Ownership Fuels India's Stray Dog Crisis?

- With no national law mandating pet registration, sterilisation, or vaccination, many owners abandon unwanted dogs or let them breed with strays.
- This uncontrolled breeding adds significantly to the stray population, turning most “Indian street dogs” into crossbreeds.
- Experts suggest targeting pedigreed pets in Animal Birth Control (ABC) drives, offering incentives for registration and sterilisation, and imposing heavy taxes on breeding pets.

Feeding Strays Without Ownership Worsens Aggression and Attacks

- The growing trend of **feeding stray dogs without adopting them makes them territorial and aggressive**, often leading to attacks on non-feeders.
- Abandoned pets or proxy-fed dogs behave more aggressively than true strays, worsening public safety risks.
- Experts link this behaviour to irresponsible pet ownership and stray feeding, urging accountability for both pet owners and neighbourhood feeders.
- The Supreme Court has warned that anyone obstructing its stray dog removal orders will face legal action and may extend accountability to feeders in upcoming hearings.



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Key Highlights of the Judgement

- **Mandatory Capture & Detention:** Strays to be picked up from all areas, prioritising vulnerable localities; resistance will invite contempt of court.
 - **Infrastructure & Personnel:** Authorities must set up shelters/pounds for at least 5,000 dogs within 6–8 weeks, with adequate staff.
 - **Sterilisation & Immunisation:** All captured dogs to be sterilised and vaccinated.
 - **Permanent Confinement:** Strict CCTV surveillance of shelters; no dog to be released — violation will attract stern action.
 - **Public Safety Focus:** Emphasis on protecting infants and children from rabies; no sentiments to interfere with public safety.
 - **Rapid Response Mechanism:** Helpline to be created; all dog bite incidents must be acted upon within **four hours** of reporting.
 - **Victim Support:** Authorities to ensure immediate medical assistance and maintain data on anti-rabies vaccine availability and usage.
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GOOGLE VS CCI: IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA'S DIGITAL MARKET

- The CCI began investigating Google in **2020**.
- This was after getting complaints from app developers and industry groups alleging that the company was exploiting its dominance in the **Android ecosystem** to promote its own services and curb fair competition.
- By **2022**, the CCI concluded that Google engaged in several anti-competitive actions:
 - **Mandatory Google Play Billing System (GPBS):** Developers selling in-app content on the Play Store were compelled to use GPBS, paying commissions of **15–30%**, instead of integrating their own billing systems.
 - **Preferential Treatment to YouTube:** Google exempted YouTube from these billing requirements, granting it a cost advantage over competitors.



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- **Bundling of Google Apps:** Smartphone makers were required to pre-install Google apps (Search, Chrome, YouTube, etc.) to access the Play Store, limiting consumer choice and stifling innovation from alternative service providers.
- **Penalties and Directives**
 - The CCI fined Google ₹936.44 crore and directed it to:
 - Decouple GPBS from Play Store access.
 - Ensure transparency in billing data.
 - Refrain from using billing data to unfairly advantage its own services.

Google's Defence Against CCI's Findings

- Google dismissed the CCI's conclusions, stating its practices aimed to improve user experience, ensure security, and sustain the Android ecosystem.
- It emphasised that Android is open-source and free for manufacturers, and OEMs can license the core platform without installing Google's proprietary apps if they forgo Play Store access.
- Pre-installing Google apps, it argued, was for efficiency and convenience, without restricting users from downloading alternatives.
- Regarding billing, Google claimed the Google Play Billing System (GPBS) ensured safe transactions, reduced fraud, and offered developers global infrastructure, distribution reach, and regular security updates.

Supreme Court Verdict to Shape India's Digital Market Future

- The Supreme Court's hearings will assess whether Google's practices constitute "abuse of dominance" under Indian competition law and weigh the economic dynamics of platform markets.
 - The ruling will influence how over 95% of Indian smartphone users access apps, make payments, and interact with mobile services.
 - A verdict upholding the CCI's original directions could position India as a global leader in strong digital market regulation outside the EU, while a decision in Google's favour would maintain the current market structure.
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NATIONAL SPORTS GOVERNANCE AND ANTI-DOPING BILLS PASSED BY LOK SABHA

- The Lok Sabha has passed two landmark legislations, the **National Sports Governance Bill 2025** and the **National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Bill 2025**, marking a major overhaul of India's sports governance and anti-doping framework.

About the National Sports Governance Bill 2025

- The National Sports Governance Bill seeks to transform India's sports administration through the establishment of New Bodies:
 - National Olympic Committee
 - National Paralympic Committee
 - National and Regional Sports Federations for designated sports
- **Creation of the National Sports Board (NSB):**
 - The NSB will grant recognition to national sports bodies, register affiliated units, and monitor compliance. It will have power to **de-recognise** federations that fail to conduct fair elections, mismanage funds, or commit gross irregularities.
- **National Sports Tribunal:**
 - A judicial body with civil court powers to resolve disputes involving selection, elections, or governance of federations. Tribunal decisions can only be challenged in the Supreme Court.
- **Accountability and Transparency Measures:**
 - All recognised national sports bodies receiving government funding will fall under the **Right to Information (RTI) Act**, with some exceptions, such as the BCCI, which remains outside RTI unless substantially funded by the government.
- **Leadership Provisions:**
 - Administrators aged between 70 and 75 can contest elections if permitted under international federation rules, a relaxation from the earlier age cap of 70 years.



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About the National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Bill 2025

- This amendment aligns India's anti-doping laws with **World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)** requirements:
- **Operational Independence for NADA:** The National Anti-Doping Agency will function without direct government oversight to address WADA's concerns over autonomy.
- **Changes in the National Anti-Doping Board:** The Board remains but without powers to oversee NADA or influence its operations, ensuring compliance with global anti-doping norms.
- **Alignment with UNESCO Convention:** Strengthens India's commitment to international anti-doping standards while protecting athlete rights and ensuring fair play.

Significance of the Reforms

- **Olympics 2036 Preparation:** The legislation is part of India's roadmap to bid for the Summer Olympics, requiring compliance with the Olympic Charter and international best practices.
- **Addressing Long-standing Gaps:** Efforts to create a robust sports governance law date back to 1975, with multiple failed attempts due to political hurdles. This Bill finally delivers on decades of unfinished reforms.
- **Promoting Gender Inclusion:** Provisions ensure greater participation of women in sports federations and leadership roles.
- **Enhancing Performance:** By enforcing accountability and reducing political interference, the Bills aim to improve India's performance in global sports events.

Future Outlook

The reforms are expected to:

- Streamline governance in sports federations
 - Build stronger anti-doping mechanisms
 - Boost India's medal prospects in international competitions
 - Lay the institutional foundation for India's Olympic bid
 - However, successful implementation will depend on effective enforcement, autonomy for sports bodies, and sustained investment in athlete development.
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REVIVING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN HEALTH GOVERNANCE

The Imperative of Citizen Engagement and Its Benefits

- **The Imperative of Citizen Engagement**
 - Health governance in India has evolved from a government-led domain into a more complex ecosystem involving civil society organisations, professional bodies, hospital associations, and trade unions.
 - Meaningful public engagement is not just a procedural nicety, it affirms dignity, counters epistemic injustice, and upholds democratic principles by enabling citizens to shape decisions affecting their health.
- **Tangible Benefits of Inclusive participation**
 - It strengthens accountability and transparency.
 - It challenges elite dominance and reduces the scope for corruption.
 - It develops collaboration with frontline workers, improving service uptake and health outcomes.
 - It builds mutual trust between communities and providers.
 - Without such engagement, health governance risks becoming exclusionary, oppressive, and disconnected from community realities.

The Way Forward

- **The Need for a Mindset Shift**
 - Addressing these challenges requires a fundamental shift in mindset. Community engagement should not be reduced to an instrumental strategy for achieving programme targets.
 - Treating people merely as a means to better health statistics diminishes their agency and dignity.
 - Participatory processes should be valued in their own right, not only for the outcomes they produce.



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- **Empowering Communities**
 - Disseminate accessible information on health rights and governance structures.
 - Develop civic awareness from an early stage.
 - Equip citizens with the tools, skills, and resources to participate meaningfully.
 - **Sensitising Health System Actors**
 - Move beyond the narrative that low health service utilisation is simply due to poor awareness.
 - Avoid individualising blame for systemic issues.
 - Recognise and address structural determinants of health inequities.
 - Develop collaborative relationships where communities are treated as equal partners.
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RECURRING MONSOON DISASTERS IN THE HIMALAYA - BEYOND CLIMATE CHANGE NARRATIVES

- The lower Himalayan states of **Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh** have witnessed severe **erosion and flash floods** during the current monsoon season.
- Public perception often attributes such events directly to climate change, overlooking **historical recurrence and local anthropogenic triggers**—especially unplanned construction and poor land use, which are key drivers of disaster vulnerability.

Misplaced Attribution to Climate Change:

- While climate change impacts (melting glaciers, altered precipitation) are real, attributing every disaster to it oversimplifies causation.
- **Avoidable, immediate triggers** such as poor planning, deforestation, and encroachment play a more decisive role in disaster severity.

Way Forward:

- **Strengthen land-use planning:** Enforce zoning laws and hazard mapping.
- **Regulate religious and adventure tourism:** Introduce visitor caps in ecologically sensitive areas.



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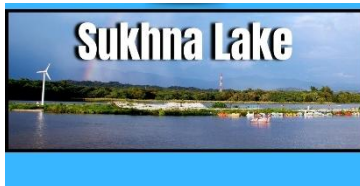
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- **Eco-sensitive infrastructure:** Prioritise resilient construction, away from flood plains.
- **Public awareness:** Shift discourse from fatalism to accountability for unsafe practices.

Conclusion:

- In the coming decades, safeguarding the fragile Himalayan ecosystem will require **shifting from reactive disaster relief to proactive**, science-based land-use planning that prioritises **ecological security** over unchecked development.
- By integrating resilient infrastructure, regulated tourism, and community participation, the region can transform from a disaster-prone zone into **a model for sustainable mountain governance**.



SUKHNA LAKE

- It is an **artificial lake** located in the city of **Chandigarh** at the **foothills of the Shivalik hills**.
- This 3 sq.km. rain fed lake was **created in 1958** by **damming the Sukhna Choe, a seasonal stream** coming down from the Shivalik Hills.
- The lake is 1.52 km long and 1.49 km wide.
- After completion in 1958, the water-spread area of the lake was 188 ha and the average depth was 4.69 m.
- It had a depth of 18 feet originally, but due to heavy silt deposits, the depth reduced to 8 feet 6 inches and the area to 1.5 sq.km.
- The lake is **fringed by a golf course to the south**, and **Nek Chand famous Rock Garden of Chandigarh to its west**.
- The lake is declared **National Wetland** by the Government of India.
- **During winter**, Sukhna Lake transforms into a **haven for diverse migratory birds** such as **Siberian ducks, storks, and cranes**, hosting around 30 resident and migratory species.
- The lake is also a **part of the Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary**.
- Sukhna Lake has the **longest channel for rowing and yachting events in Asia**.



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KEY FACTS ABOUT BHAGIRATHI RIVER



- It is a **turbulent Himalayan river** in the state of **Uttarakhand**.
- It is **one of the two main headstreams of the Ganges River**, the other being the **Alaknanda**
 - According to Hindu mythology and culture, Bhagirathi is the source stream of the Ganges.
 - But according to the hydrology, Alakananda is the source stream of the Ganges for its flow and length.
- **Course:**
 - It **originates** from the **Gaumukh Glacier** located at the **base of the Khatling and Gangotri Glaciers** in the **Garhwal Himalayas**, where the melting ice gives birth to the river.
 - Further, the river passes through the Tehri Garhwal district, including the towns of Uttarkashi and Tehri, where it **encounters cliffs, rapids, and waterfalls**.
 - It is joined by **tributaries** such as – **Kedar Ganga, Jadh Ganga, Kakora Gad, Jalandari Gad, Siyan Gad, Asi Ganga** and **Bhilingana**.
 - Finally, the Bhagirathi River **meets the Alaknanda River at Devprayag**.
 - The **combined waters** of the two rivers **then flow as the Ganges River**, and this river eventually empties into the Bay of Bengal.
- **Major Dams: Maneri Dam, Koteswar Dam, and Tehri Dam.**
- **Religious Significance:**
 - The **confluence of the Bhagirathi and Alaknanda rivers** is considered a sacred site in Hindu mythology.
 - It is an **essential part of the sacred Panch Prayag Yatra**, which involves visiting the **five holy confluences** of Uttarakhand: **Devprayag, Rudraprayag, Nandprayag, Karnaprayag, and Vishnuprayag**.