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Current Affairs - 15 August 2025

RISING UNDOCUMENTED MIGRATION IN INDIA

- **Context (TH):** Voluntary exits of undocumented migrants through the eastern border tripled in 2025 compared to 2024, reflecting intensified enforcement and shifting migration patterns.

Scale and Patterns of Undocumented Migration in India

- **Primary Origin:** Bangladesh remains the largest source of undocumented migrants in India.
- **Illegal Entries:** 1,372 people intercepted along the Bangladesh border until July 2025.
- **Voluntary Exits** Include 3,536 undocumented migrants caught by BSF (till July 2025).
- **Apprehensions Surge:** Between June and October 2024, cases rose over 30% to the annual peak.
- **Recent Apprehensions:** 2,355 Bangladeshi entrants caught between January 2024 and March 2025.
- **Other Nationalities:** 153 non-Bangladeshis caught at the eastern border during the same period.

Challenges Posed by Undocumented Migration

- **Large inflows** through the porous border and economic pull factors strain governance and resources.
- **Demographic Stress:** Alters ethnic composition in Assam and Tripura, intensifying local tensions.
- **Security Risks:** Border gaps are exploited by insurgents, such as ULFA movements in the Northeast.
- **Resource Strain:** Public health and education systems are overburdened in border districts.
- **Labour Market Impact:** Wages in informal sectors like construction in Kolkata suburbs are depressed.
- **Political Polarisation:** Identity-based politics are amplified, notably in West Bengal election campaigns.



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- **Criminal Networks:** The Bengal border districts along the river are used for **trafficking**.
- **Administrative Burden:** **Verification backlogs** burden Assam's Foreigners Tribunals and border police.

Causes of the Recent Surge in Voluntary Exits

- The recent rise in **voluntary exits** reflects **stronger enforcement** and **procedural incentives**.
- **Enforcement Drive:** MHA launched nationwide **deportation campaigns** in December 2024.
- **Political Instability:** Regime change in Bangladesh in 2024 led to increased voluntary exits.
- **Deterrent Operations:** Actions like Operation Sindoor imposed strong psychological deterrence.
- **Nationwide Raids:** **Raids intensified** in Delhi, Rajasthan, Telangana, and Odisha border areas.
- **Document Scrutiny:** Aadhaar cancellations and **"negative lists"** boosted migrant detection.

About Voluntary Exit

- **Voluntary exit** allows migrants to return home **without formal deportation**, unlike non-consensual pushbacks at borders.
- While India has **used voluntary exits** in border management before, their **implementation increased significantly** in early 2025.
- It **reduces detention congestion** and **aligns with UNHCR's voluntary repatriation principles**.



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INDIA'S BID FOR THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES

- **Context (TH):** The **Indian Olympic Association** has officially approved **India's bid to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games (CWG)** at its Special General Meeting in **New Delhi**.
- India has submitted an **Expression of Interest** proposing **Ahmedabad** as host for the **2030 CWG**.
- **General Assembly of Commonwealth Sport** will announce the host country in **November in Glasgow**.
- *India previously hosted the Commonwealth Games in New Delhi in 2010, marking its debut.*
- *The CWG is a quadrennial multi-sport event with athletes from the Commonwealth member nations.*

BROWN REVOLUTION 2.0

- **Context (TH):** The proposed **Brown Revolution 2.0** seeks to **restore soil fertility** through the **Amul cooperative model** for agricultural waste management.
- *Brown Revolution promoted leather production and cocoa cultivation in tribal areas.*

Why Brown Revolution 2.0?

- **Soil Degradation Crisis:** Large areas of Indian farmland now fall below **critical soil organic matter** thresholds, threatening sustainable productivity.
- **Agro-Waste Mismanagement:** **Less than 20% of crop residues** are scientifically recycled, and the rest are burned or dumped.
- **Environmental Hazards:** Burning residues **release large quantities** of PM2.5, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, and other pollutants, and runoff leads to water eutrophication.



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The Proposed Model

- **Amul-Inspired Model:** Establish **village-level cooperatives** for scientific processing of agro-waste.
- **Value Addition:** Convert waste into compost, vermicompost, and biochar.
- **Dual Benefits:** Restore soil health & **reduce dependence on costly chemical fertilisers.**
- **Technology Integration:** Deploy **AI-based monitoring** and **IoT platforms** for soil tracking, production optimisation, and participation in carbon credit mechanisms.

Policy Framework

- **Mandatory funding** for cooperative-based agro-waste clusters in every district.
- **Economic incentives**, such as a minimum support price for processed biomass.
- **Strict enforcement of a ban** on open burning.
- **Integration with existing schemes** like Soil Health Card to provide farmers with data-driven feedback.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN HEALTH GOVERNANCE

- **Context (TH):** India's **doorstep healthcare schemes** highlight the urgent need to **integrate active community participation** in health governance structures.

Mechanisms for Civic Participation

- **Civic engagement:** Involves **structured citizen participation** in health decision-making processes.
- **Community Oversight:** VHSNCs plan and monitor equitable access to local healthcare.
- **Public Grievances:** **Jan Sunwai forums** in states address complaints through open hearings.
- **Hospital Governance:** **Rogi Kalyan Samitis**, as registered societies, manage facility-level resources.



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- **Urban Engagement: Mahila Arogya Samitis** in urban slums mobilise women for health action.
- **Digital Feedback:** e-Sanjeevani OPD and **referral modes** gather patient inputs for service improvement.
- **Coordination:** Forums **link health with sanitation & nutrition**, strengthening governance integration.
- **Social Audits:** Community **audits assess service quality** and ensure **transparent fund utilisation**.

- *VHSNCs: Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Committees plan and monitor community wellbeing.*
- *Jan Sunwai: Public forums resolving citizen grievances through open hearings.*
- *Rogi Kalyan Samiti: Manages hospital resources for efficient public health delivery.*
- *Mahila Arogya Samiti: Mobilises women for awareness and neighbourhood health action.*
- *e-Sanjeevani: Delivers telemedicine consultations via government healthcare platforms.*

Governance Value of Civic Engagement

- Inclusive governance converts health systems **from service providers to social contracts**.
- **Legitimacy:** Citizen engagement strengthens trust, legitimising health governance frameworks.
- **Accountability:** Community oversight curbs corruption, **ensuring equitable resource distribution**.
- **Service Access:** Local participation **boosts healthcare utilisation**, enhancing public health outcomes.
- **Mutual Trust:** Engagement fosters collaboration, **strengthening provider-community partnerships**.
- **Equity Enhancement:** Inclusive forums **reduce disparities**, prioritising marginalised groups' needs.



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- **Policy Alignment:** Community inputs shape policies, reflecting **local health priorities**.
- **Knowledge Exchange:** Blending community insights with expertise shapes effective health interventions.

Barriers to Meaningful Engagement

- Inactive platforms erode both **community agency** and **institutional credibility**.
- **Mindset Barrier:** Viewing **communities as recipients** hinders active health governance roles.
- **Metric-Driven Focus:** **Target-based metrics** ignore engagement quality, reducing policy effectiveness.
- **Leadership Disconnect:** Doctor-led systems **often sideline community inputs**, weakening alignment.
- **Platform Inefficiency:** **Ambiguous committee mandates** diminish accountability in health governance.
- **Fund Misallocation:** Bureaucratic delays **underutilise funds**, limiting community health initiatives.
- **Awareness Shortfall:** Limited rights knowledge **restricts citizens' health governance** engagement.

SABHASAAR

- **Context (PIB):** The **Ministry of Panchayati Raj** will launch the AI tool **SabhaSaar** to document Panchayat-level meetings.

About SabhaSaar

- It is an **AI-powered meeting summarisation tool** that generates structured Minutes of Meeting from Gram Sabha or Panchayat meetings' audio and video recordings.
- **Technology:** Uses **AI & Natural Language Processing (NLP)** to transcribe discussions, extract decisions.



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- **Integration:** Linked with Bhashini, supports **thirteen Indian languages** with planned expansion.
- **Initial Rollout:** All **Gram Panchayats** and **local bodies** in **Tripura** will initially adopt SabhaSaar.
- **Significance:** SabhaSaar uses digital innovation to boost **participatory democracy**, enhance efficiency, and maintain transparent, standardised meeting records.

INDIA ACHIEVES HISTORIC DEEP OCEAN DIVES IN ATLANTIC

India reached a new milestone in ocean exploration in August 2025. Two Indian aquanauts descended to depths of 4,025 and 5,002 metres in the Atlantic Ocean. This achievement places India among fewer than six nations to explore such extreme ocean depths. The expedition was part of an Indo-French collaboration using the French submersible Nautilie. It sets the stage for India's upcoming Samudrayan Mission, which aims to reach 6,000 metres using the indigenous submersible MATSYA-6000 by 2027.

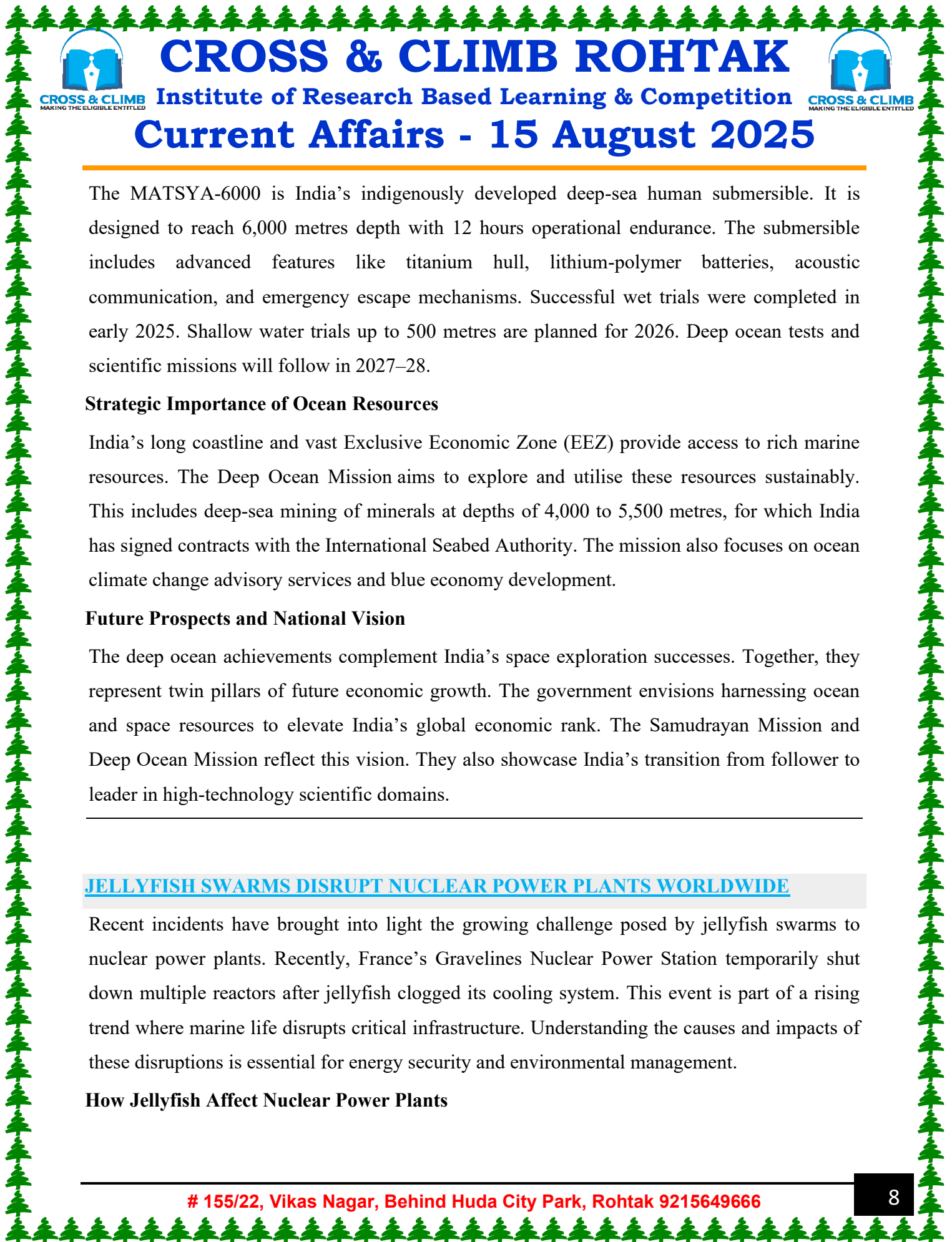
Significance

The dives mark India's first ventures beyond 4,000 metres depth. They demonstrate India's growing scientific and technological capabilities in deep ocean research. The missions contribute to the understanding of deep-sea environments and resource potential. The success boosts India's global standing in marine exploration and supports its goal of becoming a leading economy.

Indo-French Collaboration

The expedition was conducted with IFREMER, the French marine research institute. Indian aquanauts boarded the Nautilie submersible from the research ship L'Atalante near Portugal. This collaboration provided valuable experience in deep-sea operations. It helped Indian scientists gain expertise in piloting, sample collection, and managing submersible systems. Such partnerships enhance knowledge transfer and encourage international scientific cooperation.

MATSYA-6000 Submersible



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The MATSYA-6000 is India's indigenously developed deep-sea human submersible. It is designed to reach 6,000 metres depth with 12 hours operational endurance. The submersible includes advanced features like titanium hull, lithium-polymer batteries, acoustic communication, and emergency escape mechanisms. Successful wet trials were completed in early 2025. Shallow water trials up to 500 metres are planned for 2026. Deep ocean tests and scientific missions will follow in 2027–28.

Strategic Importance of Ocean Resources

India's long coastline and vast Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) provide access to rich marine resources. The Deep Ocean Mission aims to explore and utilise these resources sustainably. This includes deep-sea mining of minerals at depths of 4,000 to 5,500 metres, for which India has signed contracts with the International Seabed Authority. The mission also focuses on ocean climate change advisory services and blue economy development.

Future Prospects and National Vision

The deep ocean achievements complement India's space exploration successes. Together, they represent twin pillars of future economic growth. The government envisions harnessing ocean and space resources to elevate India's global economic rank. The Samudrayan Mission and Deep Ocean Mission reflect this vision. They also showcase India's transition from follower to leader in high-technology scientific domains.

JELLYFISH SWARMS DISRUPT NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS WORLDWIDE

Recent incidents have brought into light the growing challenge posed by jellyfish swarms to nuclear power plants. Recently, France's Gravelines Nuclear Power Station temporarily shut down multiple reactors after jellyfish clogged its cooling system. This event is part of a rising trend where marine life disrupts critical infrastructure. Understanding the causes and impacts of these disruptions is essential for energy security and environmental management.

How Jellyfish Affect Nuclear Power Plants



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Nuclear plants rely on large volumes of seawater to cool reactors. Intake pipes draw water through grated screens designed to keep out debris and aquatic life. When millions of jellyfish are drawn in during blooms, they clog these screens rapidly. This blocks water flow, risking overheating of turbines, condensers, and boilers. To avoid damage, plants must shut down reactors until the blockage is cleared. Removing jellyfish is difficult and hazardous, sometimes taking up to two days.

Reasons for Rising Jellyfish Incidents

Jellyfish-related shutdowns have increased due to several environmental factors. Global warming raises ocean temperatures, boosting plankton populations, the main jellyfish food. Warmer water also speeds up jellyfish reproduction. Overfishing removes natural jellyfish predators like tuna and sea turtles, allowing jellyfish numbers to grow unchecked. Plastic pollution creates low oxygen zones and artificial breeding sites near coastlines, further aiding jellyfish proliferation.

Implications

Jellyfish blooms threaten both marine ecosystems and energy infrastructure. Power station shutdowns cause economic losses and disrupt electricity supply. The rising frequency of such events reflects broader ocean health issues linked to climate change and pollution. Nuclear plants near coastal waters face increasing vulnerability from these natural yet amplified phenomena.

Mitigation Strategies

Addressing jellyfish disruptions requires innovative solutions. Improved intake screening technology can reduce clogging risks. Monitoring jellyfish populations and bloom forecasts helps prepare plants for potential shutdowns. Reducing overfishing and pollution can restore ecological balance and limit jellyfish growth. Climate action to curb ocean warming remains critical to controlling jellyfish blooms long term.
