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Current Affairs - 06 September 2025

MY BHARAT



Union Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs stated that MY Bharat Aapda Mitras will be mobilised to provide rescue operations in the flood-affected areas of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh.

- It is an **autonomous body** that has been set up by the Department of Youth Affairs, **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sport**
- MY Bharat's digital platform provides **equitable access to opportunities** for youth to actualize their aspirations and build Viksit Bharat.
- It is meticulously designed to cater to the needs of the dynamic youth demographic, aged between **15 and 29 years**.
- This platform **offers a wealth of resources**, mentorship programs, experiential learning opportunities, networks, and invaluable industry connections.

MY Bharat Aapda Mitras

- They are trained by the **National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)** under the Aapda Mitra programme.
 - **Aapda Mitra programme** is a unique **initiative under MY Bharat**, offering structured NDMA-certified disaster response training to young volunteers.
 - It equips them with **skills in search and rescue, first aid, crowd management**, and emergency coordination, making them valuable assets during natural calamities.
 - These youth volunteers will work at the grassroots to ensure that food, medical aid, and essential supplies reach villages cut off due to floods and landslides.
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INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR INTEGRATED MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENT

- It is an **intergovernmental knowledge and learning centre** working on behalf of the people of the **Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH)**.
- It was formally established and inaugurated on **5 December 1983**.
- **Mission:** To build and **share knowledge** that drives regional policy and action and attracts investment that enables the diverse countries and communities of the HKH to **transition to greener, more inclusive, and climate resilient development**.
- **Member countries:** Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, **India**, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan.
- **Functions of International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development**
 - It serves the **region through information and knowledge** generation and sharing to find innovative solutions to critical mountain problems.
 - It **bridges science with policies** and on-the-ground practices.
 - It provides a regional platform where experts, planners, **policymakers, and practitioners can exchange ideas** and perspectives towards the achievement of sustainable mountain development.
- **Headquarter:** Kathmandu, Nepal.

Key facts about Hindu Kush Himalayas

- It extends around 3,500 km over **eight countries**— Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal, Myanmar, and Pakistan.
 - It is considered **the Third Pole**(after the North and South Poles) and has significant implications for climate.
 - It forms the **largest area of permanent ice cover** outside of the North and South Poles and is home to **4 global biodiversity hotspots**.
 - It is the **source of ten large Asian river systems:** the Amu Darya, Indus, Ganges, Brahmaputra, Irrawaddy, Salween, Mekong, Yangtze, Yellow River, and Tarim.
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MISSION MAUSAM



The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) will install four additional radars under Mission Mausam in Jammu & Kashmir for more accurate, district wise specific weather forecasts.

- It was launched by the **Ministry of Earth Sciences** in 2024.
- It is implemented by the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)**, the **National Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF)**, and the **Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM)**.
- It aims to improve **weather and climate services**, ensuring timely and **precise observation**, modeling, and forecasting information for multiple sectors, including agriculture, disaster management, and rural development.
- **Objectives of Mission Mausam:**
 - To enhance **India's capability in weather forecasting** across various scales—short-term, medium-term, extended-range, and seasonal
 - To develop **high-resolution models** for improved accuracy in predicting monsoon behaviour
 - To strengthen **observational networks with advanced radars**, satellites, and automated weather stations
 - To provide **actionable advisories** for agriculture, water resources, energy, health, and disaster management sectors
 - To **build capacity through research collaborations** with national and international institutions
- **Significance of Mission Mausam**
 - It marks a transformative milestone in India's efforts to **address climate variability** and its far-reaching socio-economic impacts.
 - It **supports sustainable development** while safeguarding lives, livelihoods, and critical infrastructure.



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INDIA'S STRATEGIC AUTONOMY IN A MULTIPOLAR WORLD

- Strategic autonomy refers to a **state's capacity to make sovereign decisions** in foreign and defence policy without being dictated by external pressures or alliance commitments.
- Importantly, **it does not imply isolationism or neutrality but rather flexibility, independence, and adaptability** in a world of shifting alignments.
- For India, **the concept has deep historical roots**. Colonial subjugation instilled a determination never to allow external powers to decide India's destiny.

The American Partnership, Chinese Challenge and Russian Connection

- **The American Partnership: Collaboration Without Subordination**
 - Over the past two decades, **India's relationship with the United States** has transformed dramatically. **Strategic cooperation** spans defence, intelligence sharing, technology transfers, and joint military exercises.
 - **Multilateral initiatives such as the Quad, I2U2, and the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor** further underscore converging interests, especially in countering China's rise.
 - Yet, **tensions persist**. **U.S. pressure to reduce defence and energy ties with Russia**, coupled with protectionist trade policies, has tested New Delhi's ability to safeguard its interests.
 - **India's response, engaging deeply with Washington while asserting independence** on global issues, illustrates strategic autonomy in practice.
 - **It is not anti-Americanism but rather a principled refusal** to subordinate India's interests to another country's strategic imperatives.
- **The Chinese Challenge: Rivalry Without Rupture**
 - China represents India's most complex strategic challenge.
 - The **2020 border clashes underscored the limits of cooperative engagement**, pushing India to bolster its military posture and deepen partnerships across the Indo-Pacific.



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- At the same time, **China remains one of India's largest trading partners** and a co-participant in forums like BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.
- Here, **strategic autonomy translates into dual-track diplomacy**: firm deterrence alongside selective engagement.
- **India neither succumbs to Chinese pressure nor wholly decouples** from its neighbour.
- **The Russian Connection: Legacy and Pragmatism**
 - **Despite Moscow's growing alignment with Beijing** and its isolation following the Ukraine war, **New Delhi has continued to import Russian oil** and arms while engaging diplomatically.
 - This has invited **criticism from Western capitals**, yet India's position reflects a consistent principle: external powers cannot dictate its partnerships.
 - **At the same time, India has diversified defence imports**, invested in indigenous capacity, and cultivated new strategic partners.
 - **Its engagement with Russia**, therefore, is not nostalgia but pragmatism, a reminder that **strategic autonomy** is less about loyalty to old allies and **more about preserving space for manoeuvre in a rapidly polarising world**.

The Way Forward: Standing Tall in a Turbulent World

- **Strategic autonomy, for India, is neither a slogan nor a vestige of non-alignment.** It is the art of navigating a turbulent world without losing one's bearings.
- In practice, **it means engaging with the United States without becoming a junior partner, deterring China without provoking conflict**, and maintaining ties with Russia without inheriting its isolation.
- **It requires both diplomatic skill and domestic strength**, economic, technological, and institutional.

Conclusion

- Ultimately, **strategic autonomy is about more than survival; it is about agency** and it **allows India to participate in shaping global norms** while protecting its sovereignty.



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VULTURE NETWORK PORTAL



- It is a **cloud-based portal** designed to serve as a comprehensive knowledge and awareness platform **on vultures of**

India.

- It is **first of its kind in India** - to build a network of individuals engaged in saving the large scavenger birds.
- It was started by **We Foundation India** supported by dedicated partners such as the Assam Bird Monitoring Network and other organisations.
- **Purpose:** It was developed to compile **scientific information, spread awareness,** and provide freely downloadable outreach materials for anyone interested in conducting awareness campaigns.
- It focuses on the **threats of carcass poisoning,** harmful veterinary drugs such as **diclofenac,** and negative social perceptions, all of which continue to drive vulture population decline.
- It is disseminating information in local languages, **beginning with Assamese.**

Vultures found in India

- **Slender-billed vulture** (only about 800 mature individuals left) white-rumped vulture, red-headed vulture, Himalayan griffon, Indian vulture, cinereous vulture, Eurasian griffon, Egyptian vulture, and bearded vulture.

HEALTHAI GLOBAL REGULATORY NETWORK



- It is a **Geneva-based, independent nonprofit organization** that promotes equitable access to AI-powered health innovations.

- It is a **global network of health regulators** dedicated to the safe and effective use of artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare.



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- It aims to build trust, improve safety and accelerate responsible innovation through shared learning, joint standards and **early warnings of emerging risks**.
- Members of this network group will also have access to a **global directory of registered AI health tools** to support transparency and collaboration.
- The **Indian Council of Medical Research -National Institute for Research in Digital Health and Data Science (ICMR - NIRDHDS)**, and **IndiaAI** will work with HealthAI.

What is IndiaAI?

- It is the Government of India's central initiative to build a **comprehensive and inclusive AI ecosystem**.
- It works under the **Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY)** via the Digital India Corporation,
- It aims to position India as a leader in AI innovation and development.

SAMPLE REGISTRATION SURVEY STATISTICAL REPORT



- It is carried out by the **Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India (ORGI)**

- It provides the **fertility and mortality indicators**, also includes data on crude birth rate, crude death rate and **infant mortality rates**.

Key Highlights of the Report

- **Total Fertility Rate:** India's **Total Fertility Rate (TFR)** has **fallen** for the first time in two years to **9 in 2023**
- It pointed out that 18 States and UTs had reported a TFR of below the replacement level TFR of 2.1.
- **Crude Birth Rate:** India's Crude Birth Rate (CBR) has **declined 0.7-point** from 19.1 in 2022 to 18.4 in 2023. (Highest CBR was in Bihar at 25.8, and the lowest was in Tamil Nadu at 12).



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- **Ageing population:** 7 per cent of India's people are now aged 60 or above, a sharp increase in just over a decade. (**Kerala leads the list**, almost 15 per cent of its population is above 60 years of age)
- **Sex ratio at birth:** It is noted that the sex ratio at birth (SRB) in the **country stood at 917**, denoting that 917 girls are born for every 1,000 boys in the population.

INDIAN SCIENCE CONGRESS TO BE REPLACED BY THE ESTIC

- For over a century, the **Indian Science Congress (ISC)** has been the premier platform for Indian scientists, researchers, and policymakers to deliberate on national scientific priorities.
- Established in 1914, the ISC grew into a prestigious event inaugurated annually by the Prime Minister, bringing together global and Indian experts.
- However, over recent years, concerns over its effectiveness, controversies in its sessions, and institutional disputes have diminished its relevance.
- In 2025, the government announced a **new approach with the Emerging Science, Technology and Innovation Conclave (ESTIC)**, scheduled to be held in November.
- This marks a historic transition in India's science policy ecosystem, signalling a move toward a more structured, innovation-driven forum aligned with national priorities like Viksit Bharat 2047.

The Emerging Science, Technology and Innovation Conclave (ESTIC)

- **Overview**
 - The **first ESTIC** will be held at **Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, from November 3-4, 2025**, and is expected to be inaugurated by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**.
 - Organised by the **DST in collaboration with all science-related ministries**, ESTIC aims to become India's leading forum for advancing innovation-driven research.



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- **Key Features**

- **Thematic Sessions:** 11 technical sessions will focus on frontier areas such as space, biotechnology, deep-tech, and renewable energy.
- **Innovation Showcase:** 75 exhibition stalls will be set up by deep-tech startups.
- **Global Participation:** Nobel Laureate **Andre Geim (Physics, 2010)**, French space expert **Jean-Yves Le Gall**, and Japanese biologist **Professor Masaru Tomita** are among the confirmed international guests.
- **Government Involvement:** Unlike the ISC, ESTIC will involve **direct participation from all science-related ministries**, including atomic energy, IT, and space.
- **Prime Minister's Presence:** PM's attendance at the inaugural underlines the strategic importance given to ESTIC.

- **Objectives**

- To showcase **cutting-edge research and technology breakthroughs**.
- To align India's science innovation ecosystem with **Viksit Bharat 2047** vision.
- To provide a **serious global platform for scientists and innovators**, different from IISF (India International Science Festival), which is designed more as a science popularisation event.

Significance of the Transition

- Replacing ISC with ESTIC represents:
 - **Policy Modernisation:** Moving from a general science gathering to a high-level innovation conclave.
 - **Focus on Innovation:** Prioritising applied research and startup-driven technology ecosystems.
 - **Global Leadership:** Positioning India as a key player in international science and technology networks.
 - **Institutional Clarity:** Shifting control directly to DST reduces friction with external associations like ISCA.
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