

8. Short News

1. Nitrofurans and Egg Safety

The FSSAI has launched a nationwide safety drive after allegations of nitrofurans residues were found in eggs from a popular brand.

Nitrofurans- They are a group of synthetic, broad-spectrum antibiotics. Historically used in poultry and livestock to treat bacterial infections.

Structure- Characterized by a furan ring with a nitro group.

They Dangerous

Residues- They break down into stable metabolites (like AOZ and AMOZ) that bind to tissue and persist long after the drug is gone.

Health Risk- Studies link them to carcinogenic (cancer-causing) and mutagenic effects.

Global Status- Banned in the EU and many countries with a "zero-tolerance" policy.

Current Findings- Residues (AOZ) were detected at levels below India's permissible limit, but their presence still raises safety concerns due to their banned status.

Note on Eggs- Authorities maintain that eggs remain nutrient-dense (rich in protein, Vitamin B12, Choline) and have not advised avoiding them.

2. ASPIRE Scheme (MSME)

Full Form- A Scheme for Promotion of Innovation, Rural Industry, and Entrepreneurship.

Launch- Launched in 2015 by the Ministry of MSME.

Objective- To generate employment in rural areas by promoting agro-based industries and rural entrepreneurship.

Key Components

Component	Description
Livelihood Business Incubators (LBIs)	Focus on training in local trades (e.g., food processing, handicrafts) to help locals start micro-enterprises.
Technology Business Incubators (TBIs)	Focus on supporting innovative, technology-driven startups, specifically in the agro-industry sector.
Fund of Funds	Managed by SIDBI; provides venture capital and angel funding to scale up startups.

Inclusivity- Special focus is placed on empowering Women, SC, and ST entrepreneurs.

Related Initiatives

Yashasvini Campaign- Empowering women entrepreneurs.

PMEGP- Credit-linked subsidy scheme for self-employment.

3. Kerala- India's Butterfly Capital

Status- A new study confirms Kerala has the highest butterfly diversity in the Western Ghats.

Key Statistics

1. Total Species- 328 documented species.
2. Endemic- 41 species found only in the Western Ghats.
3. Protected- 70 species listed under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

Significance- Acts as a crucial migration corridor for 36 species. Home to Aralam Butterfly Sanctuary (Kannur), India's first forest dedicated to butterflies.

New Discovery- A new subspecies, *Tajuria maculata sureshi*, was discovered and named after naturalist Suresh Elamon.

Dominant Families- Nymphalidae (Brush-footed), Lycaenidae (Blues), and Hesperidae (Skippers).

4. National Digital Livestock Mission (NDLM)

Goal- To create a comprehensive digital database of livestock and related services across India.

Platform- Implemented via the "Bharat Pashudhan" ecosystem (App & Web portal).

Key Feature- Pashu Aadhaar A 12-digit unique identity number assigned to each animal via a bar-

coded ear tag. Used to track registration, vaccination, breeding, and ownership.

Objectives

Traceability- Ensures quality assurance and market access for livestock products.

Disease Control- Real-time surveillance for prevention and response.

Breed Improvement- Data-driven decisions for artificial insemination.

Infrastructure- Built as a Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) with an open-source architecture to integrate with banks, insurers, and vets.

5. Exercise Ekatha - 2025

Type- Annual Bilateral Maritime Exercise.

Participants- Indian Navy and Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF).

History- Established in 2017; the 2025 iteration is the 8th edition.

Focus Areas- Combat diving and boarding operations. Asymmetric warfare tactics. Special heli-borne drills.

Strategic Context- Aligns with India's SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) vision. Capacity Building India handed over operational spares for the MNDF ship *Huravee*.

Other India-Maldives Exercises- Ekuverin (Army) Dosti (Trilateral with Sri Lanka)

6. Gulf of Oman

Iran seized a foreign oil tanker carrying smuggled diesel in this region.

Geography- The north-western arm of the Arabian Sea. Connects the Indian Ocean to the Persian Gulf via the Strait of Hormuz.

Strategic Importance- It is a vital maritime corridor for the global trade of oil and LNG.

