

7. Short News

1. Discovery of *Hoya nagaensis*

The Issue- Researchers from Nagaland University discovered a new wax plant species, *Hoya nagaensis*, in the Kavünhou Community Reserved Forest (Phek district).

The Science- It is a flowering plant with star-shaped, waxy flowers and milky latex. It thrives in high-altitude temperate forests.

The Risk- It is provisionally classified as Critically Endangered. Its survival is threatened by its highly restricted distribution (only one known site) and shifting cultivation (*jhum*).

2. Extension of Justice Gita Mittal Committee

The Issue- The Supreme Court has extended the mandate of **this all-women committee until July 31, 2026**.

The Mandate- Formed in August 2023, the committee oversees relief, rehabilitation, and compensation for victims of the ethnic violence in Manipur.

The Composition- It consists of three retired High Court judges- Justice Gita Mittal (Chair), Justice Shalini Phansalkar Joshi, and Justice Asha Menon.

3. Sinking of Major River Deltas

The Issue- A study in the journal *Nature* found that over 50% of India's major deltas are sinking faster than the sea level is rising.

The Hotspots- The Ganga-Brahmaputra, Brahmani, and Mahanadi deltas are the most vulnerable. In the Brahmani delta, 77% of the area is subsiding.

The Drivers- The primary cause is excessive groundwater extraction, which causes soil compaction. Additionally, upstream dams block the natural flow of silt (sediment) needed to rebuild delta land.

4. Breakthrough in High-Voltage Supercapacitors

The Issue- Indian researchers at ARCI (an autonomous body under the DST) developed a supercapacitor that operates at 3.4 volts.

The Innovation- Traditional supercapacitors are limited to 2.5–3.0 V. This new device uses a Porous Graphene Carbon Nanocomposite (PGCN) electrode that is water-repellent and stable at high voltages.

The Impact- It offers 33% higher energy density and exceptional durability (15,000 cycles). It is critical for the future of Electric Vehicles (EVs) and grid storage.

5. Launch of PANCHAM Digital Chatbot

The Issue- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj launched PANCHAM (Panchayat Assistance and Messaging Chatbot) to support rural governance.

The Technology- Developed with UNICEF, it is a WhatsApp-based AI chatbot that uses the Bhashini platform to communicate in 22 Indian languages.

The Utility- It allows Sarpanches and village officials to access real-time info on schemes, training videos, and policy updates without needing complex apps.

6. Tiger Re-entry in Gujarat

The Issue- After 33 years, Gujarat is officially a tiger-bearing state again following sightings in the Ratanmahal-Jambughoda forest corridor.

The Corridor- This 90-km ecological link connects the Ratanmahal Sloth Bear Sanctuary and Jambughoda Wildlife Sanctuary, allowing tigers to migrate from Madhya Pradesh.

The Strategy- To support a permanent population, Gujarat is strengthening the prey base (breeding chital/sambar) and has requested the NTCA to introduce a female tiger.

7. Green Hydrogen Hub at Kandla Port

The Issue- India is developing its first large-scale Green Hydrogen Hub at Deendayal Port (Kandla), Gujarat.

The Standard- Green hydrogen is defined as having a well-to-gate emission limit not exceeding 2 kg \$CO_2\$ equivalent per kg of \$H_2\$.

The Goal- It leverages port infrastructure for the production and export of green ammonia and methanol, supporting the National Green Hydrogen Mission's target of 5 MMT production by 2030.

