



9. Short News

1. World Tuberculosis (TB) Day

Date- Observed annually on March 24 to honour Dr. Robert Koch's 1882 discovery of the TB bacteria.

2026 Theme- "Yes! We can end TB" (Focuses on hope and action).

The Disease- Caused by *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*; primarily affects lungs but can attack kidneys, brain, and spine. It spreads via air (coughing/sneezing).

India's Status- India has the highest TB burden globally (26% of cases).

Progress- India achieved a 17.7% decline in TB incidence (2015–2023), double the global average.

Prevention- The BCG vaccine is the only licensed vaccine, providing moderate protection for children.

2. NBA Expert Committee on Invasive Alien Species

Action- The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) set up an expert committee following a National Green Tribunal (NGT) order.

Goal- To prepare a consolidated national list of invasive species.

Scope- Identify high-risk species and recommend science-based control, eradication, and ecological restoration strategies.

NBA Profile- A statutory body (est. 2003) that advises the government on conservation and the fair use of biological resources.

3. SEBI Conflict of Interest Reforms

Context- Triggered by Hindenburg Research allegations and a 2025 High-Level Committee review.

Strict Restrictions- SEBI Chairman and officials are prohibited from trading in equity. They can only invest via mutual funds or pooled instruments.

Disclosure- Senior officials must publicly disclose immovable assets (like IAS officers) and liquidate or freeze private equity holdings.

Family Inclusion- These restrictions extend to family members to prevent indirect conflicts.

Insider Status- Top leadership is now explicitly classified as "insiders" for stricter legal compliance.

4. Modified Credit Guarantee Scheme for MSMEs

Objective- Boost credit for manufacturers and exporters in line with the 2025–26 Budget.

Key Changes (General)-

1. **Refundable Contribution-** The 5% upfront fee is now refundable (1% annually from the 4th year).
2. **Expanded Eligibility-** Service sector MSMEs are now included.
3. **Tenure-** The guarantee now has a fixed 10-year expiry.

Special Provisions for Exporters-

1. Covers profitable units with at least 25% export turnover.
2. Offers 75% guarantee coverage on defaults for loans up to ₹20 crore.

5. Minor Planet Centre (MPC)

Recent News- Announced the discovery of 15 new moons (4 around Jupiter, 11 around Saturn).

Role- The global central database for tracking small solar system bodies (asteroids, comets, minor planets).

Operations- Managed by the International Astronomical Union (IAU) in the USA.

Core Function- Verifies orbital paths and collaborates with NASA to monitor Near-Earth Objects (NEOs) for potential collision threats.

6. Diego Garcia

Strategic Importance- A joint US-UK military base located in the Chagos Archipelago (Indian Ocean).

News Update- Reports suggest an attempted missile strike by Iran, indicating a significant reach in Iran's military capability (approx. 4,000 km).



Usage- Acts as a vital logistics and long-range bomber hub for operations in West Asia and the broader Indo-Pacific.

7. Sixth-Generation Fighter Programme

Concept- Next-level combat aircraft integrating advanced stealth, AI, and network-centric warfare.

Key Features- * **AI-Driven Systems-** Intelligent sensor fusion to support pilot decisions.

1. Manned-Unmanned Teaming- Working with "loyal wingman" drones.
2. Directed Energy Weapons- Potential use of lasers.

Global Projects- * **USA-** NGAD (Air Force) and F/A-XX (Navy).

1. China- J-XX / Huolong (expected by 2035).
2. GCAP- Trilateral project by UK, Italy, and Japan.
3. FCAS- European project led by France, Germany, and Spain.

India's Goal- India is pursuing its 5th-gen AMCA but exploring 6th-gen partnerships to avoid capability gaps.

8. "No Quarter, No Mercy" Controversy

Definition- "No quarter" means refusing to spare enemy combatants even if they surrender or are incapacitated (*hors de combat*).

Legal Status- Declaring "no quarter" is strictly forbidden and classified as a war crime.

Key Conventions- * **Hague Regulations (1907)**- Article 23(d) forbids it.

Geneva Conventions (1977)- Article 40 prohibits ordering "no survivors."

Rome Statute (1998)- Lists it as a war crime in both international and local conflicts.

9. Bharat Tribes Fest 2026

Organizers- TRIFED and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

Date/Venue- 18-30 March 2026, New Delhi.

Focus- Showcasing tribal art, handicrafts, and the "Forest-to-Plate" culinary concept.

RISA Initiative- Highlighting the "Revival of Indigenous Skills & Artisans" to bring traditional textiles like Eri Silk and Dongria embroidery to global fashion.

10. World Water Day (March 22)

Origin- Proposed at the 1992 Rio Summit; officially designated by the UN in 1993.

2026 Theme- "Water and Gender" with the slogan "Where Water Flows, Equality Grows."

Goal- Supporting Sustainable Development Goal 6 (Clean water and sanitation for all by 2030).

11. Credit Guarantee Scheme for MFIs-2.0

Purpose- Boost credit flow to small borrowers and stabilize the microfinance sector.

Mechanism- Provides 70-80% guarantee cover to banks against defaults on loans given to MFIs.

Beneficiaries- Small borrowers with household incomes up to ₹3 lakh.

Validity- Valid until June 30, 2026, with a ₹20,000 crore limit.

12. Ningol Van Initiative (Manipur)

Launch- International Day of Forests (March 21, 2026).

Objective- Community-led forest protection focusing on Ningols (married Manipuri women).

Strategy- Curbing deforestation and illegal poppy cultivation while promoting bamboo and essential oil crops.

13. Project Terafab

Promoter- Elon Musk (Tesla and SpaceX).

Details- A proposed massive AI chip manufacturing facility in Austin, Texas.

Scale- Aims for 1 Terawatt (one trillion watts) of computing power annually.

Goal- To meet the global demand for high-performance chips and reduce dependence on suppliers like TSMC.



14. Colombia (Geography)

Location- Northwestern South America; the Equator passes through its southern part.

Borders- Panama, Venezuela, Brazil, Peru, and Ecuador.

Features- Only South American country with both Caribbean and Pacific coastlines; dominated by the Andes Mountains.

Climate- Tropical variations ranging from the Amazon rainforest to cooler highland climates.

