

8. Short News

1. Privilege Breach Notice

Opposition moved a notice against Minister Piyush Goyal for announcing an Indo-U.S. trade deal to the media while Parliament was in session.

Definition- A formal motion alleging that a Minister or Member has violated the rights, immunities, and dignity of the House or its members.

Constitutional Basis-

- Article 105- Privileges for Members of Parliament.
- Article 194- Privileges for State Legislatures.

What Constitutes a Breach- Making false statements, premature disclosure of reports, obstructing members, or publishing expunged proceedings.

Procedure

- MP submits notice to the Speaker (Lok Sabha) or Chairperson (Rajya Sabha).
- Governed by Rule 222 (LS) and Rule 187 (RS).
- Can be referred to the Committee of Privileges (15 members in LS, 10 in RS).

Punishment- Can range from reprimand and suspension to expulsion or imprisonment (for outsiders).

2. The Network Readiness Index (NRI) 2025

India's Rank- 45th globally (improved by 4 slots from 2024).

Publisher- Portulans Institute (Washington DC).

Theme- "AI Governance in a Global Context".

Top Performers- USA (1st), Finland (2nd), Singapore (3rd).

India's Strengths

- Rank 1- AI scientific publications, Annual telecom investment, ICT services exports.
- Rank 2- Mobile broadband traffic, international bandwidth.
- Performance- Scores higher than expected for a lower-middle-income country.

India's Weakness- Ranked 3rd in "Income Inequality" (suggesting a digital divide).

3. Libya (Migrant Crisis)

53 migrants died/missing after a boat capsized off the Libyan coast.

Geography- North African nation bordering the Mediterranean Sea; holds Africa's largest oil reserves.

Crisis- Deeply divided politically since the fall of Muammar Gaddafi (2011); a key hub for dangerous migration routes to Europe.

International Organization for Migration (IOM)- UN-related body (since 2016) focused on humane migration. Headquartered in Geneva; India is a member.

4. HbA1c Test for Diabetes

Issue- A *Lancet* study warns that the HbA1c test is unreliable for diagnosing diabetes in India.

Reason- High prevalence of Iron-Deficiency Anaemia and blood disorders (Thalassaemia) in India alters haemoglobin lifespan, distorting readings.

HbA1c Function- Measures average blood sugar over 2-3 months (Diabetes diagnosed at values $\geq 6.5\%$).

Risk- Potential misdiagnosis or delayed diagnosis of Type 2 Diabetes.

Recommendation- Doctors should use "Multiparametric Diagnosis" (combining HbA1c with Oral Glucose Tolerance Tests or continuous monitoring).

Diabetes Context- Type 2 (insulin resistance) accounts for 90-95% of cases in India.

Ethiopia-Eritrea Tensions

Ethiopia demanded Eritrea withdraw troops from its borders, reigniting tensions.

Key Friction Points

- Badme- Territory awarded to Eritrea but remains a flashpoint.

- b. Pretoria Agreement (2022)- Peace deal between Ethiopia and Tigray rebels that excluded Eritrea.

Geography

- a. Eritrea- Controls the strategic Bab-el-Mandeb Strait (Red Sea chokepoint).
- b. Ethiopia- World's most populous landlocked nation; relies on Djibouti for 90% of trade; built the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) on the Blue Nile.

6. PMKVY Irregularities (Skill India)

The Ministry (MSDE) blacklisted 178 Training Partners under PMKVY 4.0 for fraud.

Scheme- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) provides short-term industry training to youth.

Identified Frauds

- a. Fake biometric attendance (manipulation of Aadhaar systems).
- b. "Ghost" centers (closed during working hours).
- c. Unauthorized merging of centers.

Impact- Misuse of public funds and loss of trust in skill certification.

Proposed Reforms-

- a. AI Analytics- To detect abnormal attendance spikes.
- b. Blockchain- For tamper-proof digital certificates.
- c. Outcome-Based Evaluation- Focus on actual employment rather than just enrollment numbers.

7. Bastar Pandum Festival

Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated the people of Chhattisgarh on the celebration of the 'Bastar Pandum' festival.

About the Festival- It is a cultural festival celebrated in the Bastar region of Chhattisgarh. It showcases tribal heritage, art, music, dance, handicrafts, and indigenous cuisine. More than 700 artists participated in competitions across 12 cultural disciplines.

8. Form 7 Controversy (Voter Deletion)

Controversy has erupted over the bulk submission of Form 7 applications by anonymous actors, raising fears of voter suppression during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.

What is Form 7?

It is the official application used to object to the inclusion of a name in the electoral roll or to seek deletion (e.g., due to death or shifting residence).

Legal Basis- Governed by the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960 (under the Representation of the People Act, 1950).

Recent Change (2022)- The rules were amended to allow any voter within a constituency to file objections, removing the earlier restriction that only voters from the same polling booth could object.

Safeguards

Physical Verification- Booth Level Officers (BLOs) must verify claims (e.g., three visits for shifted voters, death certificates for deceased).

Notice- The concerned voter must be issued a notice and given a hearing.

Punishment- Filing a false declaration is punishable by up to one year imprisonment or fine under Section 32 of the RPA, 1950.