

7. SHORT NEWS:

1) Naxal Free Bihar

With the surrender of the last armed Maoist in Munger, Bihar has been officially declared Naxal-free, reflecting India's broader success in curbing Left-Wing Extremism.

About Naxal-Free Bihar

1. Surrender of Last Armed Maoist: The surrender of Suresh Koda in Munger marked the end of organised armed Maoist presence in Bihar.
 - Under the Centre's surrender and rehabilitation policy, he will receive financial assistance and reintegration support, symbolising a shift from insurgency to mainstream participation.
2. Complete Elimination of Naxal Activity: Once affected in 23 districts (2012), Bihar reported zero Naxalite incidents in 2025.
 - Sustained security operations and development outreach led to 220 arrests in 2025, dismantling armed squads and restoring governance in previously disturbed regions.
 -

2) About Left-Wing Extremism (LWE)

1. Left-Wing Extremism refers to armed insurgency driven primarily by the Communist Party of India (Maoist), seeking to overthrow the Indian state through violent revolution.
2. Origin: The movement traces its roots to the 1967 Naxalbari uprising in West Bengal and gained strength after the 2004 merger of People's War Group and Maoist Communist Centre to form CPI (Maoist).
3. Eradication Target: The Government aims for the complete eradication of LWE by March 2026, following an 81% decline in violent incidents since 2010 and a sharp reduction in affected districts.
4. Nodal Ministry & Division: The Ministry of Home Affairs oversees LWE policy through its Left Wing Extremism Division (established 2006).
5. It coordinates security deployment, capacity-building schemes like SRE and Special Infrastructure Scheme, and monitors inter-ministerial development efforts.
6. Success So Far: Violent incidents declined from 1,936 (2010) to 374 (2024), security force casualties fell by 73%, over 8,000 cadres surrendered in a decade, and affected districts reduced from 126 to 11 by 2025 signalling the collapse of the "Red Corridor."

3) Salar de Pajonales

Scientists are studying gypsum-rich rocks in Chile's Salar de Pajonales to understand how life might survive and be preserved under Mars-like conditions.

About Salar de Pajonales

- Salar de Pajonales is a high-altitude salt flat located in the Atacama Desert of Chile and is considered one of the closest Earth analogues to Martian environments.
- Key Features
 1. The Salar lies about 3.5 kilometres above sea level and experiences extreme aridity, freezing temperatures, and intense ultraviolet radiation.
 2. Its geological formations include gypsum ($\text{CaSO}_4 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$) deposits and stromatolites, layered rock structures formed by microbial activity over long periods.

Need for Studying Salar de Pajonales

1. Mars Analogue Environment: The extreme dryness, cold climate, and high UV radiation make the Salar an ideal natural laboratory for simulating Martian surface conditions.
2. Gypsum as a Protective Shelter: Gypsum rocks are translucent, allowing sufficient sunlight for microbial photosynthesis while blocking harmful radiation and retaining moisture, thereby creating microhabitats for life.

3. Evidence of Living Microbes: Scientists discovered living microbes just millimetres beneath the gypsum surface, demonstrating how life can survive in hostile environments.
 4. Preservation of Ancient Life: Deeper stromatolite layers contain fossils and chemical biosignatures, showing that gypsum can seal and preserve biological remains.
- Findings from Salar de Pajonales study will guide future Mars missions to target gypsum deposits as promising sites for detecting preserved biosignatures and evidence of past extraterrestrial life.

4) Micron ATMP Facility Inaugurated in Sanand

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Semiconductor Assembly, Test and Packaging (ATMP) facility of Micron Technology in Sanand, Gujarat.

About the Sanand ATMP Facility

1. This marks the beginning of commercial production and shipment of India-made semiconductor memory modules.
2. Micron's Sanand facility will specifically handle Dynamic Random Access Memory (DRAM) and NAND memory chips used in smartphones, SSDs, and data centres.
3. One of the first approved projects under the India Semiconductor Mission.

What is an ATMP Facility?

1. ATMP stands for Assembly, Test, and Packaging. It is the final stage of semiconductor manufacturing where raw silicon wafers are transformed into finished, usable chips.
2. 3 Stages of ATMP:
 - Assembly: The silicon wafer is cut into individual chips (called "dies") and mounted onto a substrate or lead frame, essentially giving the chip a physical base.
 - Test: Each chip is electrically tested to ensure it works correctly. Defective chips are identified and discarded before reaching consumers.
 - Packaging: The chip is enclosed in a protective casing with metal pins/connectors that allow it to interface with other electronics.
3. ATMP is the "back-end" of chip manufacturing, it comes after the complex front-end fabrication (done in fabs like TSMC).
4. It is less capital-intensive than building a full semiconductor fab, making it a practical entry point for countries like India.
5. The output is ready-to-use chips for products like phones, laptops, cars, and servers.

5) ANVESH-2026

ANVESH-2026, an international conference on sustainable and healthy foods, was successfully concluded at NIFTEM-Kundli, Sonapat, Haryana.

About ANVESH-2026

1. ANVESH-2026 (Advanced Next Generation Vision for Emerging & Sustainable Healthy Foods) served as a global platform for advancing innovation in sustainable food systems and next-generation healthy foods.
2. Organised By: National Institute of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship and Management, Kundli (NIFTEM-K) under the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI), Government of India.
3. Participants: The event witnessed participation from policymakers, scientists, industry leaders, start-ups, chefs, and academicians from 25 countries, with over 500 registered participants and 2000 visitors. It featured 3 panel discussions, 113 oral presentations, 115 invited talks, 226 poster presentations, 61 exhibitors, and 22 live cooking demonstrations.
4. Objectives: To promote innovation in food safety, nutraceuticals, alternate proteins, sustainable processing, waste valorization, digital transformation, and industry-academia collaboration.

It also focused on aligning food processing with the vision of Viksit Bharat-2047.

5. Significance: ANVESH-2026 strengthened India's leadership in sustainable food innovation, policy reform, and global collaboration in the food processing ecosystem.

About NIFTEM-Kundli

1. NIFTEM-K, Haryana, is a premier apex institution dedicated to education, research, and entrepreneurship in food technology and management.
2. Establishment: Established in 2012 under MoFPI, it was declared an Institute of National Importance (INI) in 2021.
3. Key Focus Areas: The institute offers B.Tech, M.Tech, and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programmes, promotes research and patents. It also supports start-ups through incubation facilities and pilot plants, and fosters industry collaboration and rural outreach initiatives.

6) National Governance Conference

The National Governance Conference on "Holistic Development of Districts: Transforming Governance for Viksit Bharat" is being held in Jammu starting from 3rd March 2026.

About the National Governance Conference

1. The National Governance Conference focused on strengthening district-level governance to achieve "Viksit Bharat" through citizen-centric and technology-driven administrative reforms.
2. Organised By: The conference is organised by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) under the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, in collaboration with the Government of Jammu and Kashmir.
3. Participants: Expected to be attended by more than 200 delegates from across India, including senior administrators, domain experts, and practitioners in the field of public administration.
4. Objectives:
 1. To showcase and disseminate innovative governance practices adopted by districts across the country that have significantly improved service delivery, citizen welfare, and local development outcomes.
 2. To provide a platform for District Collectors, Senior Officials, Policymakers, and Experts to share experiences, exchange ideas, and deliberate on strategies for achieving saturation of flagship schemes, integrated development across sectors, and effective grievance redressal mechanisms
5. **Key Focus Areas:** The conference emphasized digitization of governance, saturation of flagship schemes, grievance redressal, and integrated district development.
 - It highlighted the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Digital India initiatives, e-Suvidha platforms, and Radio Frequency Identification (RFID)-enabled Yatra management systems.
6. Best Practices Showcased
 1. Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration-winning initiatives (2023-24) from districts such as Eluru, Gomati, Koraput, Kargil, Nalbari, Kupwara, and Parvathipuram (PRISM 10 initiative)
 2. Jammu and Kashmir's innovations, including Kulgam district governance models and Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board's RFID management system
7. Significance: The conference strengthens grassroots governance reforms, supporting inclusive development and administrative transformation.

7) National Science Day 2026

Context: Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and its laboratories marked National Science Day 2026 nationwide through lectures, demonstrations, student visits, and public outreach promoting scientific temper.

About National Science Day

1. National Science Day is observed annually on 28 February to commemorate the discovery of the Raman Effect by C. V. Raman in 1928.
 1. The Raman effect is a change in the wavelength of light that occurs when a light beam is deflected by molecules.
 2. Scientists from CSIR–NPL and Indian Institute of Technology Delhi demonstrated the Raman Effect, explaining its applications in spectroscopy, materials science, chemistry, medicine, and industry.
2. 2026 Theme: “Women in Science: Catalyzing Viksit Bharat”
3. Focus Area: The celebrations focused on scientific awareness, women’s participation in STEM, youth engagement, and strengthening India’s research ecosystem.
4. Significance: The day promotes scientific temper, innovation, and public engagement with science, aligning with India’s vision of becoming a science-led Viksit Bharat.

