

7. Short News

Riverine Lighthouses on the Brahmaputra River

Context - India has started developing riverine lighthouses along the Brahmaputra River, part of National Waterway 2.

About the Riverine Lighthouse on Brahmaputra

1. **First Lighthouse on Inland Waterways** - The project marks the first-ever establishment of lighthouse infrastructure on an inland waterway in India.
2. **Objective** - To improve navigation safety and waterway operational efficiency on the Brahmaputra River.
3. **Implementing Agencies** - The project is being implemented jointly by the Directorate General of Lighthouses and Lightships (DGLL) and the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI)
Both organisations function under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
4. **Locations of the Lighthouses** - Four riverine lighthouses will be constructed along the Brahmaputra under National Waterway 2 at -
 1. **Bogibeel**
 2. **Pandu**
 3. **Silghat**
 4. **Biswanath Ghat**
5. **Significance** -
 1. Enhances safe navigation and operational efficiency on the Brahmaputra.
 2. Promotes sustainable and low-carbon transport through waterways.
 3. Strengthens regional connectivity and economic development in Northeast India.

About the National Waterway-2 (NW-2)

1. **Location** - National Waterway 2 is located on the Brahmaputra River in Assam.
It stretches about 891 km from Dhubri to Sadiya.
2. Declared a National Waterway in 1988 under the National Waterways Act.
3. **Implementing Authority** - Developed and maintained by the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI).
4. **Cargo Movement** - It recorded around 53% growth in cargo movement in FY 2024-25, indicating its rising importance for regional trade.

Project HANUMAN

Context - Andhra Pradesh Government launched Project HANUMAN on World Wildlife Day 2026 (03 March) to mitigate rising human-wildlife conflict (HWC) cases.

About Project HANUMAN- HANUMAN stands for 'Healing and Nurturing Units for Monitoring, Aid and Nursing of Wildlife'.

Objective - A comprehensive technical and scientific program for the rescue, treatment, rehabilitation, and monitoring of injured wildlife.

Features -

1. **Infrastructure** - Deployment of 100 vehicles (93 Rapid Response and 7 Ambulances) and establishment of four rescue centers in Visakhapatnam, Rajamahendravaram, Tirupati, and Birlut.
2. **Technology** - Use of Artificial Intelligence for real-time tracking and the development of the 'Hanuman digital app' for early warning systems.
3. **Compensation** - Ex-gratia for death increased from ₹5 lakh to ₹10 lakh; injury compensation raised to ₹2 lakh.
4. **'Vajra' (Wildlife Rakshak) Teams** - Village-level local volunteers trained to handle snake rescues and minor incursions, reducing dependence on forest officials.

5. **Kumki Elephants** – Elephants (sourced from Karnataka) to manage and address the issue of wild elephants in districts like Chittoor and Srikakulam.

Legal Context –

1. **Wildlife Protection Act (WPA), 1972** – Provides the legal framework for the protection of wild animals and management of their habitats.
2. **Seventh Schedule** – “Prevention of cruelty to animals” and “Forests” are in the **Concurrent List**, allowing both Centre and States to legislate.

Kumki Elephants –

1. ‘kumki’ or ‘koonkie’ is derived from the Persian word ‘kumak’ which literally means to “aid”.
2. Widely used as trained elephants to capture conflict elephants and rescue or treat injured wild animals.
3. Kheda Method is one such trapping method involving Kumkis.

India's Push to Eliminate Cervical Cancer

Context – Union Health Minister reaffirmed India's commitment to the WHO's 90-70-90 targets to eliminate cervical cancer by 2030.

WHO 90-70-90 Target (by 2030)

1. **Vaccination** – 90% of girls fully vaccinated with the HPV vaccine by the age of 15;
2. **Screening** – 70% of women screened using a high-performance test by the age of 35, and again by the age of 45;
3. **Treatment** – 90% of women with pre-cancer treated and 90% of women with invasive cancer managed.

About Cervical Cancer

1. Cervical cancer is a growth of cells that starts in the cervix.
 1. The cervix is the lower part of the uterus that connects to the vagina.
2. **Causes** – It is caused by persistent infection with the human papillomavirus (HPV).

Key Government Interventions

1. **Screening Infrastructure** – Conducted under the NP-NCD (National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases).
 1. **Method** – Visual Inspection with Acetic Acid (VIA).
 2. **Eligibility** – Women aged 30–65 years.
 3. **Access** – Available at Ayushman Arogya Mandirs and primary health facilities.
2. **HPV Vaccination Campaign (Launched Feb 28, 2026)** –
 1. **Target** – 12 million girls (aged 14) annually.
 2. **Dose** – Free-of-cost, single-dose Gardasil Quadrivalent vaccine.
3. **Digital Monitoring** –
 1. **U-WIN Platform** – Tracks immunization status.
 2. **eVIN** – Manages cold-chain logistics for vaccine integrity.

National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NP-NCD)

1. Government of India initiative under the National Health Mission
2. To combat rising NCDs like cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and stroke.
3. Focuses on strengthening infrastructure, population-based screening (age 30+), early diagnosis, and management through district clinics and Primary Health Centres.

Megalithic Laterite Rock-Cut Burial Chamber

Context – Recently, a 2,000-year-old Megalithic laterite rock-cut burial chamber was unearthed during construction work at Panayal in Kasaragod district, Kerala.

Megalithic Rock-Cut Chambers

1. Megalithic rock-cut chambers are subterranean burial structures carved into laterite rock and associated with Iron Age Megalithic funerary practices in South India.
2. Location – These burial chambers are mainly found in the laterite-rich regions of Kerala and coastal Karnataka, particularly in the Western Ghats belt.
3. **Features**
 1. **Subterranean Circular Chamber** – The burial structure typically consists of a circular underground chamber carved into laterite rock, accessed through a narrow vertical shaft.
 2. **Sealed Entrance and Ritual Aperture** – The chamber entrance is usually sealed with a heavy stone slab and often contains a small circular opening used for ritual offerings or symbolic passage of the spirit.
 3. **Associated Megalithic Monuments** – These structures are frequently located near other Megalithic monuments such as umbrella stones (Kudakkallu) and cap stones (Toppikallu), indicating organised burial landscapes.

Significance

1. **Evidence of Megalithic Burial Practices** – The chambers reveal complex funerary rituals where bones of the deceased were placed with pottery, iron tools, and beads as grave goods.
2. **Insight into Early Iron Age Culture** – They provide archaeological evidence of the Megalithic culture and the transition from the Neolithic to the Iron Age in South India.
3. **Technological and Cultural Importance** – The chambers demonstrate the early use of iron tools and the architectural ability of ancient communities to carve burial spaces into hard laterite rock.