

8. Short News

1. GPS Jamming & Spoofing (West Asia Conflict)

The Crisis- Rising US-Iran tensions in the Strait of Hormuz have led to intense electronic interference affecting maritime navigation.

Jamming- Using high-power "noise" to drown out satellite signals, causing a total loss of GPS.

Spoofing- A "cyber-physical" attack where fake signals are sent to a receiver to show false coordinates.

Impact on India- As India imports 90% of its crude oil (with ~50% from West Asia), these disruptions threaten energy security and could weaken the Rupee.

Backups- Ships are reverting to Inertial Navigation Systems (INS) and Dead Reckoning (manual position calculation).

2. The Strait of Hormuz & Kharg Island

Strait of Hormuz- A 33-km wide "chokepoint" connecting the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman. It handles 20% of global petroleum consumption.

Kharg Island- Iran's primary oil export terminal located in the northern Persian Gulf.

1. Strategic Role- Handles 90% of Iran's oil exports.
2. Recent Event- Targeted by U.S. strikes in March 2026, causing global oil price volatility.

3. National Skills & Vocational Training (NSQC)

48th NSQC Meeting- Held March 12, 2026, to approve 43 new qualifications and Micro-Credentials.

NSQC Role- The apex body that implements the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF).

NCVET- The regulator established in 2018 to maintain quality standards in vocational training across India.

4. Greece's Eco-Mooring Project

Goal- To protect Posidonia oceanic (Neptune Grass), a vital Mediterranean seagrass.

The Problem- Boat anchors scrape the seafloor, destroying seagrass roots (rhizomes).

The Solution- Installing "Ecological Anchorages"—specialized bolts drilled 3m into the seabed so chains never touch the plants.

Importance- Seagrass acts as "Blue Carbon" storage and is known as the "lungs of the Mediterranean."

5. Devon Island (Mars on Earth)

Location- Nunavut, Canada; the largest uninhabited island in the world.

Mars Analogue- Its cold, dry "polar desert" and the Haughton Impact Crater mimic the Martian surface.

Research- Scientists test pressurized rovers, autonomous drones, and "micro-oasis" life (microorganisms hiding in rocks).

6. Humanitarian Aid to Madagascar

India's Action- Dispatched 30 tonnes of relief after Cyclones Fytia and Geza hit the island.

Geography- Madagascar is the world's 4th largest island, located off the coast of Mozambique.

Regional Strategy- Part of India's "SAGAR" vision (Security and Growth for All in the Region).

7. Economic Stabilisation Fund (ESF)

Allocation- ₹57,381 crore (Total outlay of ₹1 lakh crore).

Purpose- A fiscal "cushion" to handle global shocks like \$100-per-barrel oil spikes or supply chain breaks.

Supplementary Grants- Funds are drawn via Article 115 of the Constitution, requiring Parliament's approval to spend beyond the original budget.

8. Digital Twin at V.O. Chidambaranar Port

Innovation- First Indian port (Thoothukudi, TN) to create a virtual real-time replica of its operations.

Tech- Uses AI, IoT, and LiDAR to predict equipment failure and reduce ship turnaround time by 25%.

The Port- An artificial port in the Gulf of Mannar; India's 3rd largest container terminal.

9. Samriddh Gram Phygital Services

Pilot Village- Launched in Umri, Madhya Pradesh.

Concept- "Phygital" (Physical + Digital). Uses BharatNet high-speed internet to deliver telemedicine and e-governance through a single village center (Samridhi Kendra).

10. Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) in Meghalaya

Context- Garo Hills (GHADC) elections postponed due to violence.

Legal Basis- Sixth Schedule (Articles 244 & 275) of the Constitution.

Structure- 30 members (29 elected, 1 nominated by the Governor) with powers to protect tribal customs and land.

11. SWAMIH Fund (Housing)

Full Form- Special Window for Affordable and Mid-Income Housing.

Objective- Provides "last-mile" funding to complete stalled housing projects.

Impact- Has completed over 58,000 homes, benefiting 2.38 lakh people since 2019.

12. Global Pandemic Agreement

Current Status- India is negotiating a fair Pathogen Access and Benefit-Sharing (PABS) system in Geneva.

Goal- A legally binding framework to ensure developing countries get fair access to vaccines and data.

Deadline- Expected adoption by May 2026.

13. KC-135 Stratotanker Crash

The Incident- A Boeing-built aerial refuelling aircraft crashed in Iraq during "Operation Epic Fury."

Military Role- Essential for extending the range of fighter jets by refuelling them mid-air at 30,000 feet.

