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MISSION FOR AATMANIRBHARTA IN PULSES



- It is aimed at boosting domestic production and achieving self-sufficiency (Aatmanirbharta) in pulses.
- **Time Period:** The Mission will be implemented over a six-year period, from 2025-26 to 2030-31.
- It aims to **achieve self-sufficiency in pulses** by significantly enhancing domestic production, reducing import dependence, and sustainably improving farmers' incomes.
- The Mission plans to **expand the area under pulses cultivation** by an **additional 35 lakh hectares**, targeting rice fallows and other suitable lands, while promoting intercropping and crop diversification.
- **Key Features of Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses:**
 - **Comprehensive strategy:** The mission covers research, seed systems, area expansion, procurement, and price stability.
 - **Focus on quality seeds:** A key focus will be the development and **dissemination of high-yielding, pest-resistant, and climate-resilient pulses varieties**, supported by a robust seed system.
 - **Seed Production:** To ensure availability of premium quality seeds, states will prepare five-year rolling seed production plans.
 - The **breeder seed production** will be supervised by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).
 - **Capacity building:** Structured training programmes for farmers and seed growers to promote sustainable techniques and modern technologies.
 - **Post-harvest infrastructure:** To strengthen markets and value chains, the Mission will help develop **processing units**, thereby reducing crop losses, improving value addition.
 - **Procurement:** Assured maximum procurement of **Tur, Urad, and Masoor** under Price Support Scheme (PSS) of PM-AASHA.

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- **Cluster-Based Approach:** Tailoring interventions to the specific needs of each cluster to enhance productivity, and promote geographic diversification of pulse production.
- **NAFED and NCCF** will undertake **100% procurement** in participating states for the next four years from farmers who register with these agencies and enter into agreements.

AMRIT BHARAT STATION SCHEME



- It was **launched in 2022**.
- It aims at **development and upgradation** of stations over the **Indian Railways (IR) network**.
- It was launched to improve railway stations and make them **cleaner, more comfortable and passenger-friendly**.
- The ABSS has a long-term vision that **involves creating master plans, promoting multimodal connectivity**, better station accessibility for passengers, etc.
- **Features:**
 - **Design:** One of the significant features of this scheme is to designs of redeveloped station buildings are **inspired by local culture, heritage and architecture**.
 - **Amenities:** Under the scheme, stations are being upgraded with **better waiting halls, toilets, lifts, escalators, free Wi-Fi, executive lounges**, improved access roads and landscaping. Some stations may also have designated spaces for business meetings.
 - The facilities are planned **according to the needs of each station**.
 - **Local Economy Support:** Local products will be sold at **kiosks under the ‘One Station One Product’ scheme**, and efforts will be made to make stations look greener and more attractive.

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US-RUSSIA DIESEL DEAL: WHAT TRUMP'S U-TURN MEANS FOR INDIA'S ENERGY DIPLOMACY

- The US has for years pressured India over its purchases of Russian crude oil, imposing penal tariffs and passing laws threatening up to 100% tariffs on major buyers of Russian energy.
- Washington's argument: such purchases effectively fund Russia's war in Ukraine.
- In a striking reversal, President Donald Trump has now announced a deal allowing Russia to **supply diesel to the US** and global markets — exposing a glaring contradiction in US policy, and strengthening India's case for continuing its own energy choices.

Why the US Needs Russian Diesel Now?

- **Diesel's Economic Importance:** It powers long-haul trucking, agriculture, and construction — making price spikes politically sensitive and inflationary.
- **The Immediate Trigger:** Diesel prices in the US and Europe have surged, driven by constrained fuel movement through the Strait of Hormuz and attacks on Russia's oil and gas infrastructure.
 - US diesel prices hit record levels of ~\$6.5/gallon.
 - With US midterm elections approaching, the Trump administration faces pressure to show action on fuel prices.

The Core Contradiction — and India's Opening

- Trump's diesel deal **generates revenue for Moscow**, exactly as India's crude purchases do — undercutting Washington's own stated rationale for punishing India.
- This gives India a strong diplomatic argument. India can cite this deal directly in consultations with the US over Russian oil sanctions and push for waivers under the Graham Act.
- **The US's likely counter-argument:** It may frame its diesel licence as a response to exceptional market conditions, not a departure from its general Russia policy.

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- But India can push back — as the world's third-largest crude importer, with import dependency over 88%, India's energy security needs are no less real than America's.

Conclusion

Trump's Russian diesel deal lays bare an uncomfortable truth: US sanctions on Russian energy have been applied selectively, bending whenever domestic political and economic pressures demand it. For India, this is more than an irony to point out — it is a concrete diplomatic lever.

As a nation far more dependent on energy imports than the US, India can now press Washington to judge its Russian oil purchases by the same standard it applies to itself: pragmatic necessity, not punitive politics.

QUANTUM COMPUTING: THE NEXT BIG THREAT TO BANKING SECURITY

While artificial intelligence (AI) dominates current cybersecurity concerns, a far bigger, longer-term threat is quietly emerging for the banking sector: quantum computing.

Financial institutions and regulators worldwide, including in India, have already begun preparing for this threat — years before it is expected to fully materialise.

Current Cybersecurity Push in Indian Banking

- Before quantum enters the picture, regulators have already stepped up conventional cyber preparedness:
 - The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued a **new cybersecurity and technology-resilience framework** for commercial banks in July 2026, covering IT governance, cyber-risk management, and incident response.
 - The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) introduced an **IT Resilience Index** in August 2026 for market infrastructure institutions, to measure robustness of critical IT systems and spot weaknesses early.

About Quantum Computing

- Traditional computers store data as a bit (value 0 or 1). Quantum computers use a **qubit** (quantum bit), which can exist as a combination of 0 and 1 — a property called superposition.

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- Qubits also exhibit **entanglement**, where states of different qubits become closely correlated.
- Quantum algorithms exploit these properties to amplify correct answers and suppress wrong ones, giving quantum computers a massive computational edge for certain problems.
- It can solve in minutes or hours what classical computers would take millennia to complete.

Why This Threatens Bank Encryption?

- Modern cryptography relies on mathematical problems that are extremely hard for classical computers to solve. Some widely used public-key systems are:
 - RSA (Rivest–Shamir–Adleman): relies on difficulty of factoring large numbers.
 - Elliptic-curve cryptography: relies on difficulty of discrete-logarithm problems.
- India's financial ecosystem is deeply digitised through UPI, Aadhaar, RTGS, and NEFT — all underpinned by such cryptography.
- The threat isn't that quantum computers would directly hack a payment system. Instead, they could **undermine** the cryptographic building blocks used for authentication, secure communication, key exchange, and digital signatures across digital infrastructure.
- Experts explained: by 2029–2030, quantum computers could become powerful enough to decrypt historical encrypted data — a point often called the quantum deadline.

How Imminent Is the Threat?

- India currently has only a handful of quantum computers, mostly under 10 qubits, developed by institutions like IISc Bengaluru and startups like QpiAI.
- India's National Quantum Mission (launched 2023) aims to scale from 20–50 physical qubits initially to larger systems over time.
- Globally, NIST (US) has already finalised PQC standards; the G7 has a roadmap for financial-sector transition; the EU wants member states to begin transition by end-2026, with high-risk systems migrated by end-2030.

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GLOBAL INITIATIVE ON AI FOR AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS



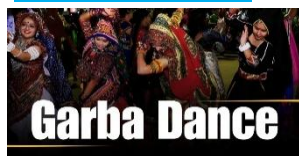
- It is a **UN Global Initiative**.
- It is coordinated by the **International Telecommunication Union (ITU)**, in close collaboration with **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)**, **International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)** and **World Food Programme (WFP)**.
- This provided a platform for advancing dialogue on the **responsible use of AI in agriculture and food systems** by promoting trustworthy and interoperable farmer-centric AI solutions.
- It strengthens international cooperation on governance and standards and identifying opportunities to **translate innovation into practical applications**.

What is International Telecommunication Union?

- It is the United Nations specialized agency for information and communication technologies.
- **Historical Background:**
 - It was established in 1865 as the **International Telegraph Union**.
 - In 1947 the ITU became a **specialized agency of the United Nations**.
- It is an intergovernmental organization that **coordinates between governments** and private sector bodies with respect to global telecommunication and information communication technology (ICT) services.
- **Member countries:** It has a **membership of 194 countries** and more than 1000 companies, universities and international and regional organizations.
- **India and ITU:** India has been an **active member of the ITU since 1869** and has been a regular member of the **ITU Council since 1952**.
- **Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland.

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GARBA DANCE



- It is a **ritualistic and devotional dance** performed throughout the State of Gujarat, and across India.
- It is celebrated for **nine days during the festival of Navaratri**.
- The festival is dedicated to the worship of the **feminine energy or Shakti**.
- The cultural, performative, and visual expressions of this feminine energy are expressed through the Garba dance. The performative and visual celebration of Garba takes place within **homes and temple courtyards**.
- **Social Impact:** It promotes gender inclusivity, community bonding, and social equality across rural and urban spaces. It continues to be inclusive and participative by diverse and marginalized communities, strengthening community bonds.
- Garba of Gujarat was inscribed on the **UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity** in 2023.

EXERCISE KONKAN-2026



- It is an **annual bilateral maritime exercise** conducted between **India and United Kingdom (UK)**.
- It is fostering **enhanced interoperability** and mutual understanding in **maritime operations between the two Navies**.
- **Phases:** The exercise is being conducted off Plymouth, UK, in **two phases**.
 - **Harbour Phase:** It includes a broad spectrum of professional interactions, cross-deck visits, sports fixtures, cultural engagements.
 - **Sea Phase:** It will encompass complex maritime operational drills across all three domains: **air, surface and sub-surface**.
- The exercise is a reaffirmation of the shared commitment to ensuring **secure, open and free seas and exemplifies** the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership outlined in the India-UK Vision 2035.

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GLOBAL INNOVATION INDEX 2026



- It is a ranking of countries as per their **success and capacity in innovation**.

- It was **first launched in 2007**, and has become the leading global benchmark for measuring and comparing innovation performance.

- It is published yearly by the **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)**.
- It is **recognized by the UN General Assembly** as an authoritative reference for Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) policies. It tracks global innovation trends through investment patterns, technological progress, adoption rates, and socioeconomic impacts.

Key Highlights of Global Innovation Index 2026:

- The 19th edition of the GII ranks the **innovation performance of 139 economies**, maps the world's top 100 innovation clusters, and tracks the main global innovation trends.
- For the 16th consecutive year, **Switzerland is the most innovative economy** in 2026 followed by **Sweden and the United States**.
- The **Republic of Korea and Singapore** consolidate 4th and 5th place respectively, **China remains 10th**, **Japan holds 12th** and Hong Kong, China climbs to 14th.
- India ranks **38th among the 139 economies** featured in the GII 2026.

NATIONAL HOUSEHOLD TRAVEL SURVEY



- It is published by the **National Statistics Office (NSO)** under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).

- **Primary objectives of the survey:** To generate **robust, data-driven insights** into domestic travel patterns and dynamics to support regional transport planning, infrastructure development and policy formulation.

- The survey captures key **aspects of domestic travel, including:**
 - **Purpose of travel:** Employment, education, social engagements, cultural and leisure activities, tourism, domestic work, caregiving and other purposes.

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- **Mode of transport:** Modes of transportation used by different demographic groups for undertaking trips.
- **Travel duration and distance:** Average time taken and distances travelled during trips.
- **Major findings of National Household Travel Survey:**
 - **Student Mobility:** Students in the **15-29 age group** recorded the **highest regular** trip participation for daily travel to educational institutions, at **1 per cent in rural India and 73.3 per cent in urban India**.
 - **Workforce Mobility:** **Male workers** recorded a **higher share** of daily work trips of more than 1 km, at 61.9 per cent, compared with 41.9 per cent among female workers nationwide.
 - **Commuting costs:** The average monthly expenditure on commuting to a fixed workplace stood at Rs 785 per worker. **Urban workers** incurred an average monthly expenditure of Rs 1,044, compared with Rs 612 for **rural workers**.

PALAMU TIGER RESERVE



- **Location:** It is located in **Jharkhand**.
- The reserve **forms a part** of the **Betla National Park**.
- It is one of the first tiger reserves created in the country at the inception of 'Project Tiger'. It is the **first reserve** in the world in which a **tiger census** was carried out as a **pugmark count**, as early as 1932.
- **Terrain:** The terrain is undulating with **valleys, hills, and plains**. The geological formation consists of gneiss and includes granite and limestone.
- **Rivers:** It is drained by **three rivers, namely North Koel, Auranga, and Burha**, flowing through the valleys.
- **Vegetation:** The vegetation comprises **moist deciduous and dry deciduous forests**.
- **Flora:** It mainly consists of Sal and bamboo as the major components.
- **Fauna:** Some keystone and principal species found in the reserve include Tiger, Asiatic Elephant, Leopard, Grey wolf, Wild dog, Gaur, Sloth bear and four horned antelope.