

NEWS TODAY

Supreme Court (SC) in a Judgement calls for collaborative efforts to bring children into the adoption pool

Key Highlights of Judgement (Temple of Healing Vs. Union of India):

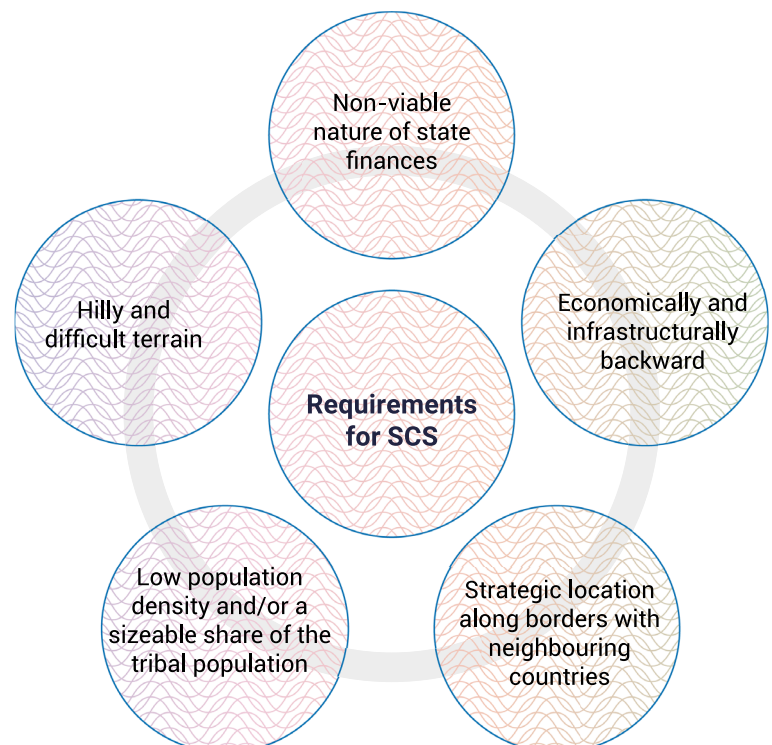
- ⊖ Adoption pool should be enhanced by including more children from Child Care Institutions (CCIs). Such Children should fulfil following criteria:
 - ◆ Parents have not visited them for over a year.
 - ◆ Unfit parents or guardians.
 - » Unfit parent or guardian refers to parent who is unable or unwilling for parenting and indulging in substance (drug) abuse.
 - » It also includes parents who have abused or neglected the child, having a criminal record, etc.
- ⊖ Also, directed States and Union Territories to begin a bi-monthly drive to identify children.
- **Benefits of Judgement:** It will reduce burden of government agencies and Non-profit organisations which are operating CCIs.
 - ⊖ Also, lot of children will get better future.
- CCI provides care and protection to children, who are in need of such services.
 - ⊖ It includes Children's Home, Open Shelter, Specialized Adoption Agency (SAA) and a Fit Facility.
 - ◆ These are recognised under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act (JJ Act), 2015.
- In India, adoption process is regulated by the Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA).
 - ⊖ It is established under JJ Act, 2015.

Key Challenges related to adoption:

- ⊖ Demand Mismatch: Between children available for legal adoption and the number of prospective adoptive parents (PAP), according to CARINGS, CARA's online portal.
 - ◆ It happens due to specific needs of the PAP such as age group, etc.
- ⊖ Infrastructural deficiencies: out of 760 districts in the country, only 390 districts have SAAs.
- ⊖ Legal Issues: The Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Law of 1956, allows Hindus to adopt without involving agencies.
- ⊖ Lengthy and complex adoption process - Parents have to wait for more than 3 years for child adoption.

Bihar Cabinet passes resolution requesting the Centre to grant Special Category Status (SCS) to Bihar

- Apart from Bihar, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh are also demanding SCS.
- A SCS is a classification given by the Centre to assist in the development of those states that face certain geographical and socio-economic disadvantages.
- The SCS was introduced in 1969 on the recommendations of the Fifth Finance Commission to benefit certain disadvantaged states with preferential treatment.
 - ⊖ The grants for SCS were based on the Gadgil formula.
 - ⊖ Presently, 11 states have SCS - Assam, Nagaland, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Uttarakhand, and Telangana.
- **Benefits of SCS:**
 - ⊖ Central government pays 90% of the funds in centrally sponsored schemes while other states get 60% to 75% of the funds.
 - ⊖ In case of unspent money, the states with SCS have the provision to carry it forward.
 - ⊖ SCS states also enjoy a significant concession on excise, customs duties, income tax, and corporate tax.
- Presently no more states can be given SCS since the 14th Finance Commission effectively removed the concept of SCS.
 - ⊖ The Constitution of India has special provisions for some states (through Article 371 A, 371 B etc.), it does not categorize any state as an SCS state.



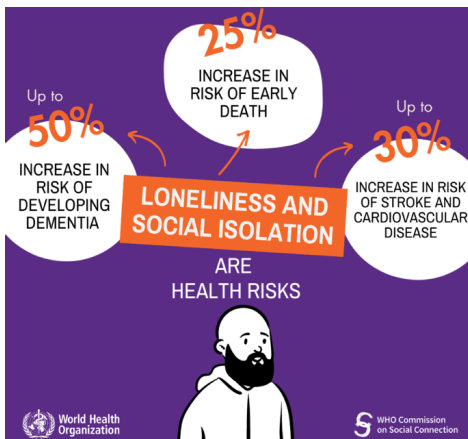
Central Council for Research in Ayurveda Sciences (CCRAS) launched Ayurveda Gyan Naipunya Initiative (AGNI)

- AGNI aims to **promote research** for mainstreaming the **pragmatic Ayurveda practices** through **scientific validation and evidence-based appraisal**.
 - ⊖ Ayurveda is part of the **AYUSH**.
 - ⊖ **AYUSH** include **Indian systems of medicine** and **Homoeopathy**.
 - ◆ **Indian systems of medicine** also include **Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Sowa Rigpa**.
- It will provide a **platform to Ayurveda practitioners** for reporting their **innovative practices and experiences** in various disease conditions.
 - ⊖ These **practices and experiences** will be documented and published by CCRAS for education and academic purposes.
 - ◆ For this, it will cooperate with **NCISM (National Commission for Indian System of Medicine)**.
 - ◆ **NCISM** is a **statutory body**, constituted under NCISM Act, 2020.
- **Need of AGNI:**
 - ⊖ Ayurveda practice requires a **rigorous evidence-based appraisal**.
 - ◆ Scientific validation and the documentation are essential for **global acceptance**.
 - ◆ It can be leveraged as a **soft power**.
 - ⊖ **Dissemination of innovative ayurvedic practices** for disease management.
- CCRAS is an **apex research organization** and it is committed for undertaking, coordinating, formulating, development and promotion of **research on scientific lines in Ayurveda**.
 - ⊖ It works under the **Ministry of AYUSH**.

- **Other initiatives for promoting Ayurveda**
 - ⊖ CCRAS' **SPARK** for Undergraduate Scholars, **PG-STAR** for PG Scholars and **SMART program** for teachers
 - ⊖ **National Ayurveda Day** and **Ayurveda for One Health Campaign**
 - ⊖ Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National AYUSH Mission
 - ⊖ Publicization of **AYUSH medicine systems** under **Scheme for promotion of International Cooperation**.

World Health Organisation (WHO) launches a commission to foster social connection

- The new commission on social connection (2024–2026) aims to address **loneliness as a pressing health threat, promote social connection as a priority and accelerate the scaling up of solutions in countries of all incomes**.



- ⊖ It is also to **study how connections enhance the well-being of communities** and help foster economic progress, social development, and innovation.
- **Isolation and loneliness impact the health and well-being of all age groups across the world.**
 - ⊖ One in four older people **experience social isolation** and the rates are broadly similar in all regions.
- **Impact of Loneliness**
 - ⊖ Have **serious, and still under-recognised, impacts** on health and lifespan. (see infographic)
 - ⊖ Social disconnection can lead to **poorer economic and educational outcomes**
 - ⊖ Feeling disconnected and unsupported in a job can lead to **poorer job satisfaction and performance**.
- Investments in social connection are critical to **creating productive, resilient and stable economies that promote the well-being of current and future generations**.
 - ⊖ These should be supported through the framing of **national policies and psychological interventions** to reduce social isolation.

1st year Anniversary of Karmayogi Prarambh

- Karmayogi Prarambh is an online orientation programme under the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions.
- The programme aims to **provide all the necessary details related to government policies** for newly appointees recruited through Rozgar Melas.
 - ⊖ It includes a set of eight courses curated to help all Rozgar Mela appointees.
- The Karmayogi Prarambh module falls **under the ambit of Mission Karmayogi**.
- The National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB)- Mission Karmayogi aims to create a **competent civil service rooted in Indian ethos**, with a shared understanding of India's priorities, working in harmonization for effective and efficient public service delivery.
 - ⊖ It was launched in 2020.
 - ⊖ The **Programme covers all civil servants** (including contractual employees) across different ministries, departments, organizations and agencies of the Union Government.
 - ⊖ By design, Mission Karmayogi **adopts a citizen-centric approach for civil service reforms**.
- It has **6 pillars**: Policy Framework, Institutional Framework, Competency Framework, **Digital Learning Framework (Integrated Government Online Training Karmayogi Platform (iGOT-Karmayogi))**, electronic Human Resource Management System (e-HRMS), and Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.
 - ⊖ **iGOT Karmayogi** is a comprehensive online platform to **guide individual civil service officials** in their capacity-building journey.



59th Council session of the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) concluded

- The objective of the session was to promote **sustainable tropical forest management** activities.
 - ⊖ Also, emphasised on ensuring the trade of **sustainably produced tropical timber**.
- **Tropical forests** are major source of timber. Tropical timber includes logs, sawnwood, veneer sheets and plywood.
 - ⊖ **Tropical forests** represent 45% of all forests. These are situated between the **Tropic of Cancer** and **Capricorn**.
 - ◆ Main tropical forest includes Amazon rainforest, Congo Basin etc.
- **Major uses of Tropical Timber:**
 - ⊖ **Construction:** In houses, railway sleepers, the piers and jetties etc.
 - ⊖ **Fuel:** In both, domestic and industries.
 - ⊖ **Other Uses:** Production of paper, synthetic textile fabrics like Rayon etc.
- **Major Threats to sources of Tropical Timber:**
 - ⊖ **Deforestation:** Due to land use change to agriculture and urbanisation, illegal logging, and wood fuel collection.
 - ⊖ **Forest degradation:** It is due to wildfires, climate change etc.
- **Initiatives for Tropical Timber:**
 - ⊖ **International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA)**, 2006
 - ⊖ **ITTO's Strategic Action Plan (2022–2026)**
 - ⊖ **ITTO/ Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity
 - ⊖ **Intergovernmental Panel and Forum on Forests** (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED, 1992))

International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO)


Yokohama, Japan

Genesis: It is working since 1987 as an intergovernmental organisation.

Mandate: Promotes the sustainable management and conservation of tropical forests.

Members: 75 members (divided into producing and consuming countries), including European Union.

India is a producing member ✓

Other Key Information:

- ⊖ **International Tropical Timber Council** is the governing body.

Also in News



Nordic-Baltic Eight (NB8) nations

- **External Affairs Minister** has said that India's engagement with the NB-8 nations has significantly strengthened in recent years.
- NB8 is an informal (non-institutionalized) **regional cooperation format** established in 1992 that includes.
 - ⊖ The **five Nordic countries** (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden) and
 - ⊖ The **three Baltic countries** (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania)
- The format is unique as it includes **both members and non-members of the EU** (Norway and Iceland) and **NATO** (Sweden)



SATHEE

- **Ministry of Education (MoE)** asked States to encourage use of online coaching platform **SATHEE (Self Assessment Test and Help for Entrance Exams)**.
- **About SATHEE**
 - ⊖ It is an initiative by the **MoE** in association with **IIT-Kanpur**.
 - ⊖ It is an **open learning and assessment platform** available to students at no cost.
 - ⊖ It uses **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** to interact with students, and can be customised to each student's pace of learning.



Self Assessment, Test and Help for Entrance Exams



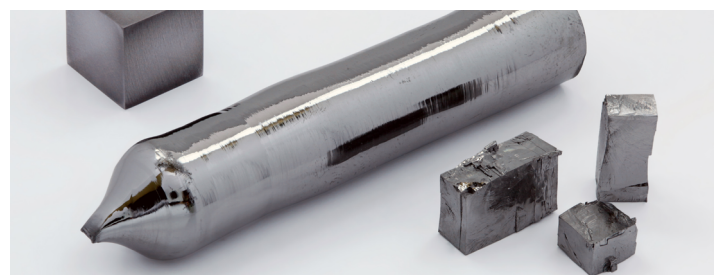
Exercise Vajra Prahar

- ⊖ It is a joint exercise conducted between the **Indian Army** and **US Army Special Forces**.

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Tantalum

- Researchers found the presence of tantalum in the **Sutlej river sand in Punjab**.
- **Properties of Tantalum:**
 - ⊖ It is a rare metal.
 - ⊖ Grey, heavy, **Ductile and very hard metal**.
 - ⊖ Possesses **high corrosion resistance**
 - ⊖ It is almost **completely immune to chemical attacks** at temperatures below 150°C.
 - ⊖ **Extremely high melting point**.
- **Uses of tantalum:**
 - ⊖ In industries like Electronics and semiconductors, nuclear power plants, aeroplanes, biomedical etc.
 - ⊖ **Substitute for Platinum** due to its high melting point and lower cost.





Noa-Dihing Music Frog

- Biologists from **Wildlife Institute of India** have discovered the new species of music frog in the **Namdapha-Kamlang** landscape of **Arunachal Pradesh**.
- The species is named after the **Noa-Dihing River**.
 - ⊖ **Noa-Dihing River** it is a tributary of **Brahmaputra River**.
- **Key Features of Frog**
 - ⊖ **Genus: Nidirana** (first time frog of this species are found in India)
 - ⊖ Characterised by a **pale cream-coloured line on the mid body** with 'rounded' snouts and **bony protrusions on their backs**.
 - ⊖ They are referred as **Music frogs** because of their **unique call pattern**.



Kyasanur Forest Disease (KFD)

- A study has confirmed the presence of the **KFD virus (KFDV)** in two more districts of **Karnataka**.
 - ⊖ It derives its name from **Kyasanur Forest Range** of **Karnataka** where it was first spotted.
- **About KFD:**
 - ⊖ It is a **zoonotic disease** caused by **KFDV**.
 - ⊖ **KFDV** is transmitted through the **bite of ticks**.
 - ⊖ It is also known as **Monkey Disease/Monkey Fever** as **Bonnet**, and **black-faced langur monkeys** are highly susceptible.
 - ◆ They play a significant role in the spread of the virus in the human population.



Amyloidosis

- Scientists have fabricated **2D protein monolayer** that can help to **study diseases like Amyloidosis**
- **Amyloidosis** is a rare disease characterised by a **buildup of abnormal amyloid deposits** in the body
 - ⊖ **Amyloid** refers to the **abnormal fibrous, extracellular, and proteinaceous deposits** that can be found in the heart, brain, kidneys, spleen and other parts.
- **Symptoms:** Tiredness, weight loss, numbness, increased tongue size etc.
- As per **WHO**, a **Rare disease** is a debilitating lifelong disease or disorder with a prevalence of **1 or less per 1000 population**



Kolkali

- Recently, **Kolkali dance** was performed in **Thrissur, Kerala** in remembrance of **St. Thomas' arrival** in India.
- **About Kolkali Dance**
 - ⊖ Folk art form, performed in **North Malabar region** of **State**.
 - ◆ It is referred to as **Kolattam** and **Kolamu** in **Tamil Nadu** and **Andhra Pradesh**, respectively.
 - ⊖ It draws elements from **Kalaripayattu**, a martial art of **Kerala** and **Tamil Nadu**.
 - ⊖ Each performer holds a stick and moves in a circle, striking the sticks.
 - ◆ As music gradually rises in pitch, the **pace increases**, and the circle expands and contracts as the dance progresses.
 - ⊖ It is performed during the **paddy harvest season**.



Places in news



Mozambique (Capital: Maputo)

- **INS Sumedha** arrived at **Maputo, Mozambique** as a part of the ongoing **Extended Operational Deployment to Africa**.
- **Historical Aspect:** Mozambique was governed from **Portuguese India (Goa)** until **1752**.
- **Political Features:**
 - ⊖ **Southeast African nation** bordered by the **Indian Ocean** to the east.
 - ⊖ **Bordering nations:** **Tanzania, Malawi and Zambia** to the north, **Zimbabwe** to the west, **South Africa and Swaziland** to the south.
- **Geographical Features:**
 - ⊖ **The Tropic of Capricorn** passes through it
 - ⊖ **Major rivers:** **Zambezi, Ruvuma, Maputo** etc.
 - ⊖ **Highest Point:** **Mount Binga**
 - ⊖ **Minerals:** **Gold, emeralds, copper, iron ore, natural gas** etc.



AHMEDABAD



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



JAIPUR



JODHPUR



GUWAHATI



HYDERABAD



LUCKNOW



PRAYAGRAJ



PUNE



RANCHI



SIKAR