

**Mains Exam Practice (MEP): Questions of the Day**

1. What is Geographical Indication (GI)? Discuss the Geographical Indications of Bihar and explain how it contributes to the preservation and promotion of indigenous products in India. Discuss its importance in preserving traditional knowledge and promoting economic development. [BPSC GS 2: Section II](19 Marks)
2. "How can international AI collaborations, like the Oracle-Soft-Bank-OpenAI joint venture, impact the global digital divide? Discuss its implications for developing countries like India." [BPSC GS 1: Section II] (19 Marks)

**National Affairs**

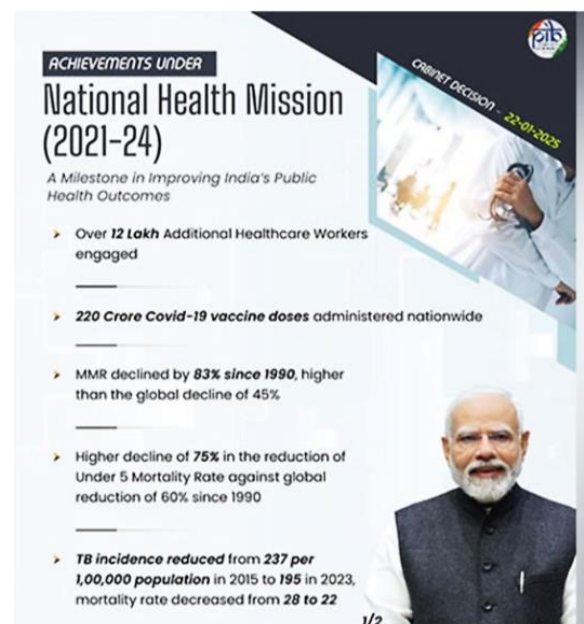
**Cabinet extends National Health Mission for 5 years**

The Union Cabinet on 22 Jan 2025 decided to extend the National Health Mission (NHM) by another five years, after reviewing the scheme's progress over the last three years.

- ❖ The scheme was launched in 2005. The scheme was extended till 2026 during its last extension in 2021.

**key achievements**

- ❖ The Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) declined by 25 percent, from 130 per 100,000 live births in 2014-16 to 97 per 100,000 in 2018-20. Similarly, the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) dropped from 39 per 1,000 live births in 2014 to around 28 in 2020.
- ❖ "These improvements indicate that India is on track to meet its SDG targets for maternal, child, and infant mortality well ahead of 2030.
- ❖ The mission also played a pivotal role in administering over 2.2 billion doses of the Covid-19 vaccine between January 2021 and March 2024.



## National Tribal Health Conclave 2025

### Why in the news?

Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA), in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW), organised the National Tribal Health Conclave 2025, on 20th January 2025 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.

- ❖ This landmark event is a pivotal initiative under the DhartiAaba-Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan, aimed at addressing the critical health and well-being challenges faced by India's tribal communities.

### Objectives of the Conclave:

- ❖ Facilitate discussions to explore innovative healthcare delivery models for tribal regions.
- ❖ Identify priority areas for policy interventions and research.
- ❖ Develop culturally appropriate health strategies to enhance health-seeking behavior.
- ❖ Strengthen healthcare systems through capacity building, community engagement, and monitoring mechanisms.
- ❖ Create a comprehensive action plan to improve healthcare access and outcomes in tribal areas.



## Economy

### 10000 GI tags by 2030

#### Why in the news?

Shri Piyush Goyal set a target of reaching 10,000 Geographical Indication (GI) Tags by 2030, at the GI Samagam in New Delhi on 22 Jan 2025.

- ❖ Organized by - the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and India Today Group.
- ❖ The number of GI tags issued by the department to date stands at 605.
- ❖ The number of authorized users for GI tags increased from 365 to 29000 and the number of patents granted increased from 6000 to 100000, in the last 10 years.



## Environment And Geography

### Mount Everest

#### Why in the news?

The government of Nepal is increasing the permit fees for climbing Mount Everest from USD 11000 to USD 15000, making the world's tallest peak more expensive for mountaineers.

- ❖ The fees are revised after 2015. The new rate is applicable from 1st September 2025.
- ❖ **Revised Mountaineering Regulations for Everest**– Every two climbers must hire a guide for mountains over 8,000 metres, including Everest.

#### Revised Royalty Fees

- ❖ Spring Season (March–May): Increased to USD 15,000 (from USD 11,000).
- ❖ Autumn Season (September–November): Increased to USD 7,500 (from USD 5,500).
- ❖ Winter (December–February) and Monsoon (June–August): Increased to USD 3,750 (from USD 2,750).



## Miscellaneous

### Shunya: India's first flying taxi

#### Why in the news?

The Bengaluru-based Sarla Aviation introduced its innovative electric flying taxi, 'Shunya', at the Bharat Mobility Global Expo on 18 Jan 2025.

- ❖ The startup revealed plans to bring its electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) vehicles to the skies by 2028, aiming to be India's first provider of urban air transportation.

#### About Shunya

- ❖ The Shunya prototype is designed for short-distance commutes, capable of covering 20–30 km trips at speeds up to 250 km/h.
- ❖ With a capacity to carry six passengers and a maximum payload of 680 kg, it is currently touted as the eVTOL with the highest payload in its category.
- ❖ Sarla Aviation plans to offer air taxi services at competitive prices, aiming to match those of high-end taxi services in India.
- ❖ Boasting a 680 kg payload capacity and a roomy loading area accessible from both sides, this design establishes a new standard for cargo operations.





### Namami Gange Pavilion

#### Why in the news?

The Namami Gange Pavilion, set up by the Namami Gange Mission in Prayagraj, is attracting a significant number of visitors at the Mahakumbh-2025.

- ❖ This pavilion has become an innovative medium for spreading awareness about the cleanliness and conservation efforts undertaken by the Government for the Ganga River.
- ❖ The pavilion begins with an interactive biodiversity tunnel that offers visitors an experience of the Ganga's biodiversity and natural beauty.
- ❖ Equipped with modern projection technology, this tunnel showcases the chirping of birds living on the banks of the Ganga and highlights the importance of the life-giving Ganga.



### Tri-Services Tableau

#### Why in the news?

The first-ever tri-services tableau will depict the vision of jointness and integration in the armed forces, enhancing national security and operational excellence.

- ❖ **Indian Navy Focus:** Showcasing its pivotal role in the Indian Ocean.

#### Tableau Details:

- ❖ The tableau will feature a 'joint operations room' illustrating seamless networking and communication among the three Services.
- ❖ It will depict a battlefield scenario demonstrating coordinated operations across land, sea, and air, featuring the Indigenous Arjun Main Battle Tank, Tejas fighter aircraft, Advanced Light Helicopter, warship INS Visakhapatnam, and UAVs, symbolising tri-services synergy in multi-domain operations
- ❖ 2025 has been declared as the 'Year of Reforms' in the Ministry of Defence



## International Year of Glaciers' Preservation (IYGP) 2025

### Why in the news?

On January 21, 2025, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

- ❖ (UNESCO) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) have jointly declared 2025 as
- ❖ International Year of Glaciers' Preservation (IYGP) in Geneva (Switzerland), emphasizing the global urgency to safeguard glaciers, which are critical sources of freshwater for over 2 billion people worldwide.
- ❖ The UN General Assembly made this decision in December 2022. The first World Glacier Day will be celebrated on March 21, 2025.
- ❖ An International Conference on Glacier Preservation will be held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan in May 2025.

Glaciers support the livelihoods and economies of billions around the world.



### News in Short

- ❖ The National E-Sports Championship will be held in June 2025. Director General of Bihar State Sports Authority Ravindra Shankar announced this.
- ❖ Eminent litterateur Dr. Neerja Madhav (Varanasi), honoured by the President, will be awarded the National Maithili Sharan Gupt Samman for the year 2023 by the Madhya Pradesh Government, Culture Department.
  - Under this award, she will be awarded an amount of Rs 5 lakh.
  - The conferment ceremony of this award will be held on 26 January 2025 on the occasion of Republic Day at Ravindra Bhavan, Bhopal.
- ❖ The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras has admitted five athletes with national accomplishments under its 'Sports Excellence Admission' (SEA) category for the academic year 2024-25.
- ❖ Netradyne, an AI-driven logistics solutions startup, has achieved unicorn status, becoming the first Indian startup of 2025 to reach this milestone.

- The company raised \$90 million in its Series D funding round, led by existing investor Point72 Private Investments, pushing its valuation to \$1.34 billion.
- ❖ Kalaripayattu has been included in the list of events for demonstration and removed from the competition section in the 38th national games to be held in Uttarakhand.

- ❖ Usha Vance became the first Indian-American Second Lady after her husband J.D. Vance was sworn in as the 50th Vice President of the US on 20 Jan 2024.
- ❖ United States President Donald Trump has announced a \$500bn joint venture with Texas-based tech firm Oracle, Japan's SoftBank and ChatGPT-maker OpenAI to advance artificial intelligence infrastructure.

**BPSC  
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