

Daily Current Affairs

19 February 2025

Gyanesh Kumar Appointed As New CEC

- **Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar** has been appointed as the 26th Chief Election Commissioner (CEC). He succeeded Rajiv Kumar.
- CEC Gyanesh Kumar is a former IAS officer from the 1988 batch of the Kerala cadre. He has served as secretary in the ministry of parliamentary affairs.



- **Vivek Joshi** has been appointed as the new Election Commissioner. He is an IAS officer from the 1989 batch of the Haryana cadre. President Droupadi Murmu has appointed both commissioners.



- As **the next Chief Election Commissioner**, he would be in charge of elections in five states – Opposition-ruled Bengal, Kerala and Tamil Nadu and NDA-ruled Bihar and Assam — in the immediate future. The election in Bihar is due later this year – the rest take place in 2026.
- About Election Commissioner of India (ECI)
- It is a constitutional body to conduct and regulate elections in the country.
- It consists of a chief election commissioner (CEC) and two election commissioners (usually retired IAS or IRS officers)
- Founded – 25 January 1950
- Headquarters – New Delhi
- 1st Chief – Sukumar Sen
- 1st Women Chief – V.S. Ramadevi
- 26th Chief – Gyanesh Kumar (replace Rajiv Kumar)
- Commissioner – Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Dr. Vivek Joshi
- Tenure – 6/65yrs

India, Qatar Ink MoUs

- On the sidelines of the visit of the Amir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, to India, the two nations signed two Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) to enhance business and investment collaboration.



- MoUs were signed in the presence of **Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal** and his Qatari counterpart, Sheikh Faisal bin Thani bin Faisal Al Thani, in New Delhi.
- The agreements were exchanged between the Qatari Businessmen Association and the **Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)**, as well as between Invest Qatar and Invest India. Addressing the India-Qatar Business Forum, Mr. Goyal highlighted that the future India-Qatar partnership will rest on the pillars of sustainability, technology, entrepreneurship, and energy.



- The minister added that the **nature of trade and business** is witnessing transformative changes, evolving from energy trade to emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things (IoT), quantum computing, and semiconductors.
- **Highlighting the investment opportunities in the country**, Mr. Goyal said reforms in every sphere of business have facilitated ease of doing business. He said, India today provides an **oasis of stability, predictability**, and continuity.
- He said that business collaboration between the two nations can help create synergy between the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 and Qatar National Vision 2030 to **bring greater prosperity to people**.

Subsea Internet Cable Project Waterworth

- **Meta introduced its internet subsea cable Project Waterworth**, which will cross **50,000 km in length** and bring enhanced connectivity to the U.S., India, Brazil, South Africa, and other locations whilst becoming the longest subsea cable project in the world.



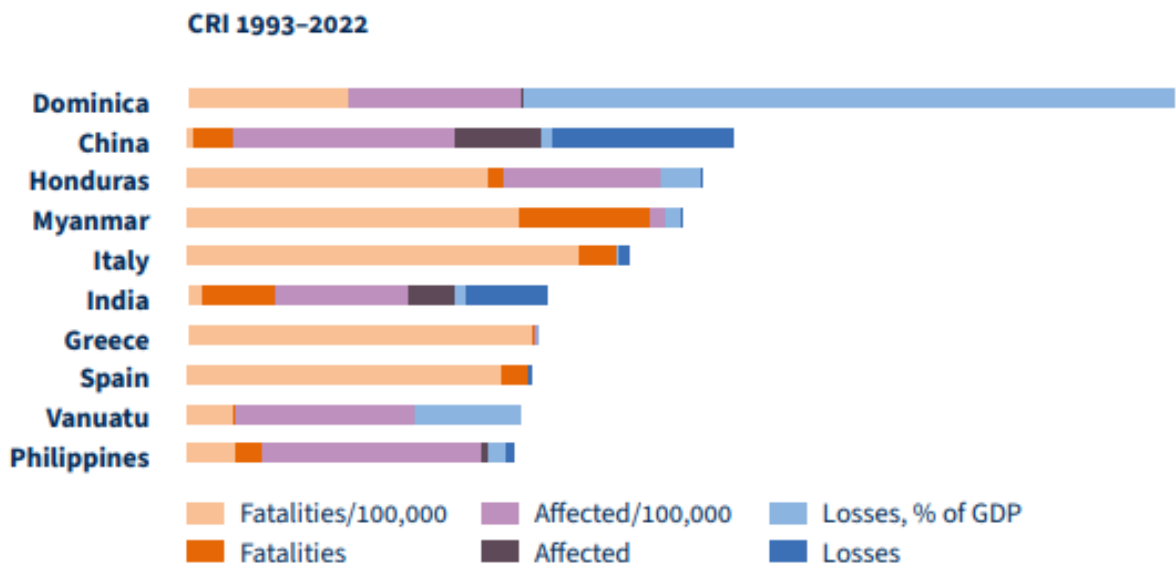
- The investment involves billions of dollars and is set to span across years, in a bid to **bring AI access to users all around the world**.
- **Subsea cables projects, such as Project Waterworth**, are the backbone of global digital infrastructure, accounting for **more than 95% of intercontinental** traffic across the world's oceans to seamlessly enable digital communication, video experiences, online transactions, and more.

- According to **Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai)** data, the country hosts around 17 international subsea cables across 17 district landing stations.



Climate Risk Index

- India is among the nations hit hardest by **extreme weather over the past 30 years**, according to the newly released 2025 Climate Risk Index (CRI).
- **Between 1993 and 2022**, the country endured more than 400 extreme events — including floods, heatwaves, and cyclones — leading to 80,000 fatalities and economic losses nearing **\$180 billion**.



- The **CRI measures both the human and economic consequences** of climate-related disasters, ranking countries based on fatalities, damages, and the number of people affected.
- **Climate Risk Index puts India in sixth place** among the 10 most affected countries, showing high absolute fatalities and economic losses in addition to high **absolute and relative numbers of people affected**. The report highlights the country's increasingly frequent extreme weather events over the past three decades, including floods, heat waves, cyclones, and droughts.
- **It also takes note of cyclones in Gujarat (1998), Odisha (1999), Hudhud (2014), and Amphan (2020),** as well as major floods in northern India (1993) and Uttarakhand (2013), in addition to severe floods in 2019

Rank	1993-2022 (Most Affected Countries)	2022 (Most Affected Countries)
1	Dominica	Pakistan
2	China	Belize
3	Honduras	Italy
4	Myanmar	Greece
5	Italy	Spain
6	India	Puerto Rico
7	Greece	United States of America
8	Spain	Nigeria
9	Vanuatu	Portugal
10	Philippines	Bulgaria

PMFBY Completes 9 Years

- India's flagship crop insurance scheme, has **completed nine years** since its launch on **February 18, 2016, under the leadership** of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- The initiative aims to **provide comprehensive crop insurance** to Indian farmers, safeguarding them against various risks like natural disasters, pests, and diseases.



- Over these nine years, the **scheme has proven to be a vital tool for farmers, disbursing ₹1.75 lakh crore** in claims to over 23.22 crore farmers. This has not only helped in **stabilizing farmers' incomes** but also fostered a culture of innovation and sustainable agricultural practices.



Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare
Government of India

Pradhan Mantri
Fasal Bima Yojana

Every farmer's dream deserves protection,
and PMFBY delivers just that!

9 YEARS; 9 Promises Fulfilled

— PMFBY, A Shield for Every Farmer!
PMFBY @ 9 – A Legacy of Protection and Progress!

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- One of the key highlights of PMFBY is its affordability. Farmers are required to pay minimal premiums for crop insurance, which makes it highly accessible. For **Kharif food and oilseed crops, the premium is capped at 2%, while Rabi crops have a premium of 1.5%. Commercial and horticultural crops are insured with a premium of 5%.**



- The government bears the rest of the premium, making it a cost-effective solution for farmers. This has encouraged widespread adoption, helping many farmers protect their crops from unforeseen calamities.
- Moreover, the scheme ensures that farmers are compensated in a timely manner. **Claims are processed within two months of harvest**, ensuring that farmers receive financial support quickly when they need it the most. This timely **compensation has played a crucial role in ensuring that** farmers can bounce back from losses caused by various risks like hailstorms, droughts, and other local risks.
- Union Cabinet approved the continuation of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and Restructured Weather-Based Crop Insurance Scheme till 2025-26 with a total budget of over 69 thousand 515 crore rupees.

A Health Hazard

- **Ganga River, one of India's most revered** rivers, holds deep religious significance for millions of devotees. Every year, especially during the **Maha Kumbh Mela, millions gather to take** a holy dip in the river's waters, believing it will cleanse them of sins.
- However, recent reports from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) have raised serious concerns regarding the presence of faecal coliform bacteria in the waters at Prayagraj, particularly during the ongoing Maha Kumbh Mela.



- **This contamination, primarily due to untreated sewage** discharge, is not just an environmental issue but a significant public health risk. This article delves into the impact of faecal bacteria on human health and the steps being taken to address this growing concern.
- **Faecal coliform is a group of bacteria typically** found in the intestines of humans and animals. Their presence in water bodies like rivers and lakes is a clear indicator that the water has been contaminated with animal or sewage waste.
- Although not all types of coliform bacteria are harmful, their presence often signals the likelihood of other dangerous pathogens being present, **including viruses, Salmonella, and E. coli.**



- These pathogens are known to cause a variety of serious health issues, making their detection in the Ganga particularly concerning. The importance of faecal coliform as an indicator of water contamination lies in its ability to signal the presence of other more harmful microorganisms.



- **According to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), the acceptable limit for faecal coliform bacteria in bathing water is 2,500 units per 100 millilitres.** However, recent test results from various areas around Prayagraj, especially during the ongoing Maha Kumbh Mela, show levels of faecal coliform far exceeding this limit.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What Is The Rank Of India In Global Climate Risk Index 2025

- A. 4th
- B. 5th
- C. 6th
- D. 7th

ANSWER: C

2. Who Publishes The Climate Risk Index

- A. UNEF
- B. Germanwatch
- C. World Meteorological Organization
- D. IPCC

ANSWER: B

3. Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojna Launched In

- A. 2015
- B. 2016
- C. 2017
- D. 2019

ANSWER: B

4. What Is The Name Of Meta's Internet Subsea Cable Project

- A. Project OceanNet
- B. Project Waterworth
- C. Project DeepLink
- D. Project BlueWave

ANSWER: B

5. Koraput Kalajeera Rice Got GI Status, Is Cultivated In Which State

- A. Punjab
- B. Odisha
- C. Andhra Pradesh
- D. Uttar Pradesh

ANSWER: B

6. Which Prestigious Award Did C. Krishnaveni Receive In 2004

- A. Nandi Award
- B. Dadasaheb Phalke Award
- C. Padma Shri
- D. Raghupathi Venkaiah Award

ANSWER: D

7. Who Has Been Appointed As The New Election Commissioner Of India

- A. Sunil Arora
- B. Sushil Chandra
- C. Vivek Joshi
- D. Gyanesh Kumar

ANSWER: C

8. Who Has Been Appointed As The New Chief Election Commissioner Of India

- A. Sunil Arora
- B. Sushil Chandra
- C. Vivek Joshi
- D. Gyanesh Kumar

ANSWER: D

9. Kirkuk Which Was Seen In The News, Is Located In Which Country

- A. Israel
- B. Iraq
- C. Australia
- D. Greece

ANSWER: B

10. Which Organization Facilitated India's First-ever Commercial Trial Shipments Of Pomegranates To Australia Via Sea

- A. Federation of Indian Export Organizations
- B. Indian Council of Agricultural Research
- C. Ministry of External Affairs
- D. Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority

ANSWER: D

11. Which Organization Signed An Mou With IIIT Dharwad For Collaborative Research And Skill Development

- A. ISRO
- B. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)
- C. Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)
- D. Indian Air Force

ANSWER: B

12. Until Which Year Has The Centre Approved The Continuation Of The PM-AASHA Scheme

- A. 2023-24
- B. 2024-25
- C. 2025-26
- D. 2026-27

ANSWER: C

13. What Is Bima Manthan

- A. A government-sponsored insurance scheme
- B. A quarterly review meeting held by IRDAI with insurance company CEOs
- C. A new insurance policy for rural areas
- D. A digital platform for insurance claims

ANSWER: B

14. Who Has Been Appointed As The CEO Of Standard Chartered India

- A. Shaktikanta Das
- B. Prabdev Singh
- C. Arundhati Bhattacharya
- D. Uday Kotak

ANSWER: B

15. Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary Is Located In Which State

- A. Maharashtra
- B. Uttar Pradesh
- C. Madhya Pradesh
- D. Gujarat

ANSWER: B

16. Gabon Which Was Seen In The News, Is Located In Which Region

- A. Africa
- B. Europe
- C. Australia
- D. Asia

ANSWER: A

17. Measles Disease Is Caused By Which Agent

- A. Bacteria
- B. Virus
- C. Fungus
- D. Protozoa

ANSWER: B

18. Which Day Is Observed As Global Tourism Resilience Day Annually

- A. 15 February
- B. 16 February
- C. 17 February
- D. 18 February

ANSWER: C

19. Which Day Is Observed As Swami Ramakrishna Paramhansa Birth Anniversary

- A. 15 February
- B. 16 February
- C. 17 February
- D. 18 February

ANSWER: D

20. What is "Quipu"

- A. A superstructure containing multiple galactic superclusters
- B. A famous archaeological site in Indonesia
- C. A massive black hole
- D. Invasive plant

ANSWER: A