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AFFAIRS



18 JULY 2026



सत्यमेव जयते

★ **RELEVANT FOR UPSC PRELIMS & MAINS** ★

SOURCES:



PIB
pib.gov.in



Ministry
Press Releases



PRS India
prsindia.org



ISRO
isro.gov.in

UPSC SYLLABUS
RELEVANCE

GS I | GS II | GS III
PRELIMS FACTS
& MAINS ANALYSIS

1



President Gives Assent to the Merchant Shipping Bill, 2026

Why in News?

The President has given assent to the Merchant Shipping Bill, 2026, replacing the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 and modernising India's maritime regulatory framework.



Key Points

- Replaces the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958.
- Enhances maritime safety and environmental protection.
- Simplifies vessel registration.
- Aligns Indian laws with international maritime conventions.



Prelims Facts

- Ministry: Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways.
- Supports India's Blue Economy initiatives.
- India has over 7,500 km coastline.



Mains Link

Blue Economy • Maritime Security • Logistics • Port-led Development

2



ISRO Successfully Completes NISAR Mission Preparations

Why in News?

ISRO announced completion of final preparations for the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) mission before launch.



Key Points

- Joint mission of NASA and ISRO.
- Will monitor earthquakes, glaciers, forests and land deformation.
- Uses dual-frequency Synthetic Aperture Radar.
- Strengthens disaster management and climate monitoring.



Prelims Facts

- World's first dual-frequency SAR satellite.
- Payloads contributed by both NASA and ISRO.



Mains Link

Space Technology • Disaster Management • Climate Change

3



India Expands AI Governance Framework

Why in News?

The Government released new guidelines to strengthen responsible Artificial Intelligence adoption across public services.



Key Points

- Promotes ethical AI.
- Focus on transparency and accountability.
- Encourages innovation with safeguards.
- Supports Digital India Mission.



Prelims Facts

- AI Mission implemented under IndiaAI Mission.
- Focus areas include computing infrastructure and skilling.



Mains Link

Science & Technology • Digital Governance • Data Ethics

4



Mangrove Restoration Programme Expanded

Why in News?

The Ministry of Environment announced expansion of mangrove restoration projects in coastal States under the MISHTI initiative.



Key Points

- Improves coastal resilience.
- Enhances biodiversity.
- Protects against cyclones and erosion.
- Increases carbon sequestration.



Prelims Facts

- MISHTI: Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes.
- Supports India's climate commitments.



Mains Link

Environment • Climate Adaptation • Biodiversity Conservation

5



Jagannath Rath Yatra Boosts Cultural Tourism

Why in News?

The annual Jagannath Rath Yatra witnessed record participation, highlighting India's cultural heritage and religious tourism.



Key Points

- Held annually at Puri, Odisha.
- Three grand chariots carry Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra.
- Promotes local economy and tourism.
- Strengthens India's cultural heritage.



Prelims Facts

- Associated with the Jagannath Temple, Puri.
- Temple represents the Kalinga style of architecture.



Mains Link

Indian Culture • Tourism • Heritage Conservation

PRELIMS RAPID REVISION



Merchant Shipping Bill, 2026
Modern maritime legislation replacing the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958.



NISAR
NASA-ISRO Earth observation satellite with dual-frequency SAR.



IndiaAI Mission
Promotes ethical AI and digital innovation across sectors.



MISHTI Initiative
Mangrove conservation for shoreline protection, livelihoods & climate.



Jagannath Rath Yatra
Puri, Odisha; annual festival promoting cultural tourism.



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