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Polity & Governance

Abdul Hameed v. State of Rajasthan

• **Background** – The case arose from the 1996 Samleti (Dausa) bus bomb blast in Rajasthan that claimed 14 lives.
  - Dr. Abdul Hameed *was denied effective legal representation* during crucial stages of the trial.

• **Supreme Court's observation –** The *effective legal representation is an essential part of the right to a fair trial under Article 21*.
  - Denial of legal aid does not automatically result in acquittal; a fresh trial may be the appropriate remedy.

• **Judgment –** The Court set aside the conviction and death sentence and *ordered a de novo (fresh) trial*.

• **Significance –** The judgement reinforces that fair trial and effective legal aid are indispensable constitutional guarantees, even in terrorism cases.

International Relations and Issues

UN SOFI report 2026 – Hunger

• The 2026 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) Report details that Africa has surpassed Asia to record the highest population facing hunger.
• Africa recorded 309 million undernourished people (20% of its population) in 2025, edging past Asia's 292 million.
• Over half of Africa's population (56.6%) experienced moderate or severe food insecurity, compared to 20.3% in Asia.
• Healthy diets remained out of reach for 66.6% of the African population.
• Most severe hunger crises occur in South Sudan, Burundi, Somalia, the Central African Republic, and Chad.
• It was driven by conflict, climate shocks, debt and dependence on food imports.
• SOFI report jointly released by five specialized United Nations agencies:
  - Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO
  - International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
  - United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
  - World Food Programme (WFP)
  - World Health Organization (WHO)

Social Media Ban for Children Under 15 - France

*Recently **France** has officially approved a nationwide ban on social media for children under the age of 15.*

• It the first country in the European Union to implement such a comprehensive restriction.
• The law also prohibits the use of mobile phones in high schools.
• Australia has already approved a ban for users under 16, while Spain, Denmark, Greece and the UK are considering similar restrictions.

Economy

India's Renewable Energy Target 2030

• **2030 Target** – 500 GW of non-fossil fuel electricity capacity.
• India has achieved its target of 50% installed electricity capacity from non-fossil fuels.
• **Current status (as of mid-2026)** –
  - **Non-Fossil Capacity (Renewable+Nuclear)** – 297.36 GW.
  - **Renewable Energy Capacity** – 288.58 GW.
• The solar power accounted for the largest share at 162.15 GW.
• It is followed by wind power at 57.44 GW, large hydro power at 52.06 GW, bio power at 11.75 GW, and small hydro power at 5.18 GW.
• India is also well on track to achieve its target of 500 GW installed electricity capacity from non-fossil fuel-based sources by 2030.
• *India ranks as the 3rd largest globally* (After China, USA) in total *renewable energy installed capacity*.

India Emerges as Global Leader in Railway Electrification

• ***India** has achieved 99.6% electrification of its broad gauge railway network*, ranking *2nd globally* (1st Switzerland).
• It is ahead of several major railway networks, including China (82 per cent), Spain (67 per cent), Japan (64 per cent), France (60 per cent) and the United Kingdom (39 per cent).
• This milestone highlights rapid infrastructure growth, massive diesel savings, and lower carbon emissions.
• **Impacts** –
  - Rail transport emits about 11.5 grams of carbon dioxide per tonne-kilometre, nearly 89 per cent lower than road transport, which emits around 101 grams.

Environment

Zoopharmacognosy

• **Zoopharmacognosy** – 'zoo' stands for animals, 'pharmaco' for medicines, and 'gnosy' for knowledge.
• It is the natural behavior *where animals self-medicate by finding and using plants, soils, or insects* to treat or prevent illness.
• **Wildlife examples** –
  - *Apes swallow rough leaves whole to sweep out intestinal parasites* or chew bitter stems to fight infections.
  - *Pets often eat grass to help clear their stomachs* or cause vomiting when they feel sick.
  - Many *birds line their nests with strong-smelling leaves to keep harmful mites and bacteria away* from their young.
  - Pregnant elephants in Kenya eat specific tree leaves from the borage family to help start labor.

Security

Kusha Missile

Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted the maiden flight-test of the 'Kusha Missile' from the APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.

• **Type** – *Long-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (LRSAM)*
• It is *designed to neutralise a wide range of aerial threats includes* fighter jets, drones (UAVs), cruise missiles, and large enemy aircraft.
• It features a three-tier interceptor missile architecture (M1, M2, and M3 variants).
• **Operational ranges** – Planned engagement ranges span 150 km, 250 km, and up to 350–400 km.
• **Speed** – Interceptors are designed to travel at hypersonic speeds of *approximately Mach 5.5*.
• **Significance –** Bridges the strategic air defence gap between India's Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM) and the imported S-400 system.

Samudra Pradakshina

Defence minister said Samudra Pradakshina is testament to India's Nari Shakti recently.

• It is India's first-ever *Tri-service all-women global circumnavigation sailing expedition*.
• The mission stands as a monumental milestone for Nari Shakti (women power), military diplomacy, and the joint operational synergy of the Indian Armed Forces.
• **Crew** – 9 women officers drawn from the Indian Army, Indian Navy, and Indian Air Force.
• **Distance** – Covered nearly *25,500 nautical miles across four major oceans.*
• The expedition successfully fulfilled all internationally recognised criteria for a circumnavigation by crossing all meridians of longitude, crossing the Equator twice.
• It was crossing the International Date Line and rounding the *3 Great Capes - Cape Leeuwin, Cape Horn and the Cape of Good Hope.*
• **Vessel** – *IASV Triveni* (Indian Army Sailing Vessel).

Miscellaneous

Commonwealth Games 2026

• **Venue** – *Glasgow, Scotland*.
• **Frequency** – *Every 4 years (1st held in 1930).*
• The events officially opened by King Charles III at the OVO Hydro arena.
• This 23rd edition of the Games features *74 nations competing in 10 core sports* across four centralized venues.
• **10 Sports** – Athletics, Swimming, Boxing, Weightlifting, Judo, Artistic Gymnastics, Track Cycling, Bowls, 3x3 Basketball, and Netball.
- **The following are excluded** - Badminton, cricket, hockey, squash, table tennis, and wrestling.
• The event features 47 medal events across 6 integrated para-sports, making it *the largest para-sport program in Commonwealth Games history.*
• India has sent a lean, 125-member squad competing across eight able-bodied and five para-sports.
• The Commonwealth of Nations is a group of 56 countries composed mostly of former British colonies.
• It was established by the London Declaration in 1949.

India's First CWG 2026 Medal

• **Lovlina Borgohain** assured India of their first medal at the Commonwealth Games after received an entry into the semi-finals (guaranteed her at least a bronze).
• She is a *boxer of the women's 75kg event*.
• This is the first Commonwealth Games medal for the 28-year-old.
• She has already won medals at the Olympic Games, World Championships, Asian Games and Asian Championships.

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