1. **Cess and Surcharge:** As per the recent Budget estimates the **divisible pool** has fallen below **₹90 per ₹100 collected** since **2020-21** due to rising **cesses and surcharges** and is expected to remain so till **2025-26**.
   - **About Cess**: A **tax on tax**, imposed on **total tax liability**, including surcharge, for a **specific purpose**.
     - **Examples**: Infrastructure Cess, Krishi Kalyan Cess, Swachh Bharat Cess, Education Cess, Cess on Crude Oil.
   - **About Surcharge**: An additional charge on **income tax**, applicable to **specific taxpayers** (individuals, AOPs, companies).
     - **No specific purpose**, can be used as per the **Central Government's discretion**.
   - **Usage**: Used for **centrally sponsored schemes** and **specific national needs**, indirectly benefiting states.
   - **Fund Allocation**: Proceeds from **cess and surcharge** go to the **Consolidated Fund of India** and are **not shared with states**.
   - **Constitutional Provision**: Levied by the **Central Government** under **Article 271** of the **Indian Constitution**.
2. **State Emblem:** Union **Home Ministry** has recently directed **State governments** to prevent the **misuse** and **improper depiction** of the **State Emblem of India**.
   - **About: State Emblem** is an **official seal** of the **Government of India**, adapted from the **Sarnath Lion Capital of Ashoka**.
   - The **complete emblem** includes **three lions on the abacus**, **Dharma Chakra in the center**, **a bull (right)**, **a galloping horse (left)**, **outlines of Dharma Chakras**, and the **motto below**.
   - **Issues: Incomplete display** is a **violation** of the **2005 Act**.
   - **Restrictions on Usage**: Only specified authorities can use the emblem under the **State Emblem of India (Prohibition of Improper Use) Act, 2005** and **Regulation of Use Rules, 2007**.
   - **Strict action** to be taken against **officials (for incomplete display)** and **unauthorized individuals/organizations (for misuse)**.
   - **Misuse of State Emblem of India:** Unauthorized use by **individuals/authorities** on **stationery, vehicles, seals, publications, buildings, websites, etc.**

- Omission of the motto "Satyameva Jayate" (in Devanagari script), making the **Lion Capital logo incomplete**.
- **Design deviations** from **Appendix I & II** of the **State Emblem of India (Prohibition of Improper Use) Act, 2005**.

3. **Darien Gap:** Indian-origin Harjinder Singh left for Dubai, aiming for a safe entry into the USA and a job via the Darien Gap.
   - **About: Darién Gap** is an approximately **60-mile (100-km) break** in the **Pan-American Highway**.
   - The **Pan-American Highway** otherwise runs continuously from **Alaska to Argentina**.
   - The gap is located in thickly vegetated marshland and jungle of the Darién region.
   - It spans the easternmost part of Panama and northwestern Colombia.
   - **Route Taken by Harjinder Singh:** Dubai → Colombia (Cali) → Turbo (Coastal town) → Panama jungle.



4. **Algo Trading:** The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) recently released a regulatory framework to ensure safer participation of retail investors in algorithmic trading through brokers.
   - **About:** Algo Trading involves orders generated using automated **execution logic**, **offering timed and programmed order execution advantages**.
   - **About SEBI:** Established as a **statutory body** in the year 1992 and the provisions of the SEBI Act, 1992 came into force on 1992.
   - **SEBI framework includes:** Use of Application Programming Interface (API) for algo trading.
     - Responsibilities of stock brokers and exchanges.
     - Brokers shall act as principals, while algo providers/fintech vendors will act as agents using the broker's API.
     - Retail investors developing their own algos must register them with the stock exchange through their broker if they exceed a specified order per second threshold.
     - Registered algos can be used only for the investor's family, not for others.

- The threshold for algo categorization will be set by the Broker's Industry Standards Forum, under the guidance of stock exchanges and SEBI.

5. **Tribhuvan Sahkari University Bill, 2025:** The Bill was recently introduced in **Lok Sabha** by **Minister of State for Cooperation**.
   - **About the Bill:** The new university will be established on the **campus of IRMA (Institute of Rural Management Anand) in Gujarat**, will be **India's first** dedicated cooperative university.
   - **Purpose of the University:** Currently, **IRMA offers specialised courses in rural management** and cooperative sector training.
     - The university aims to provide **technical and management education** in the **co-operative sector**.
     - It will promote **co-operative research and development** to achieve **global standards of excellence**.
   - **Global Perspective:** Similar cooperative universities exist in **Germany, Kenya, Colombia, and Spain**.
   - **How is it Different?**
     - **Specialised University** for **co-operative education, training, research, and development**.
     - Establishes **sector-specific schools** in **dairy, fishery, sugar, banking, rural credit, co-operative finance, co-operative marketing, laws, audit, and multi-state co-operatives**.
     - **Integration with e-learning platforms** like **SWAYAM**.
   - **Why a Cooperative University?**
     - **Cooperative sector's role in the economy**: Agricultural credit, fertiliser distribution, fertiliser production, sugar production, milk production and procurement, wheat procurement, paddy procurement & fish production.
6. **WAVES 2025:** TruthTell Hackathon as part of the **Create in India Challenge (CIC)** at **WAVES 2025** aims to develop AI-powered solutions to tackle misinformation in live broadcasts.
   - **About WAVE 2025:** Organized by Ministry of Information & Broadcasting in collaboration with **India Cellular & Electronics Association (ICEA).**
   - **Objectives:** Develop AI-driven tools for real-time misinformation detection and fact verification.

- **Enhance trust and transparency** in live broadcasting.
- **Promote ethical AI usage** in journalism and media.

- **Supporting Partners: Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY), IndiaAI Mission, and DataLEADS.**
- **About ICEA:** Apex industry body for **mobile & electronics sector in India** driving **innovation, policy advocacy, and global collaborations.**

7. **National Mission on High-Yielding Seeds:** The Indian government has recently launched a new programme called the National Mission on High-Yielding Seeds.
   - High-yielding varieties are **those that enable increased food production per unit area** and alleviate pressure to add more arable land to production systems.
   - **About National Mission on High-Yielding Seeds**: Launched in the Union Budget for 2025-26 to improve seed research and increase the availability of over 100 new seed varieties since July 2024.
   - **Main Goals**:
     - **Strengthening research**: Develop new high-yielding seeds.
     - **Improving resistance**: Focus on creating seeds resistant to pests and climate stress.
     - **Commercial availability**: Make these seeds easily accessible to farmers.
   - **Concerns**:
     - **Monoculture risks**: Widespread use of a few high-yielding varieties may lead to monoculture farming, making crops more vulnerable to diseases and pests.
     - **Impact on biodiversity**: Promotion of high-yielding seeds could cause the decline of traditional and indigenous seed varieties.
     - **Loss of pollinator diversity**: Shifting to uniform seed varieties may reduce support for bees and butterflies.
   - **Recommendations**: Support a mix of modern and traditional seeds to preserve genetic diversity.
     - Invest in community seed banks and support farmer-led seed conservation.
     - Create policies promoting biodiversity-friendly farming practices while advancing high-yielding varieties.

8. **Project VISTAAR:** Recently, the project related information shared by Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare in a written reply in Lok Sabha.
   - **About:** The Project aims to create a unified, federated digital ecosystem for agriculture by integrating reliable, validated, and up-to-date resources.
   - **Focus**: Enhances scalability, accessibility, and inclusivity of digital solutions, with two-way communication to incorporate farmer feedback.
   - **Key Objectives**: Supports center-state convergence, fosters stakeholder partnerships, and aligns with ICAR Institutes and State Agricultural Universities.
   - **Goal**: To develop robust Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) for agricultural extension, empowering farmers with actionable information.
   - **MoUs**: Signed with Odisha, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan to onboard their technical and content review committees.
   - **Support**: The Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare supports the implementation of VISTAAR, without separate funding.
   - **Integration**: VISTAAR aims for integration with all initiatives via the network, utilizing AI-enabled chatbots and integration with Agristack.
9. **Landslide Risk Mitigation Scheme (LRMS):** The scheme related information shared by Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs, in a written reply in the Lok Sabha.
   - **About Landslide Risk Mitigation Scheme (LRMS)**: Approved in 2019 for four States—Sikkim, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Uttarakhand—to provide central assistance for disaster preparedness and capacity building for future landslide mitigation projects.
     - Launched in July 2019 under Improving Disaster Risk Governance of State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs) / District Disaster Management Authorities (DDMAs).
   - **About National Landslide Risk Mitigation Project**: Recently approved with a financial outlay of Rs. 1000 Crore for 15 landslide-prone states for funding from the National Disaster Mitigation Fund (NDMF).
   - **15 States Benefitting**: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal.