1. **Agriculture Infrastructure Fund scheme:** Punjab has utilized 100% of the Rs4,713 crore allocated under the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) scheme, making it the top-ranked state in India for implementing this scheme.
   - **About Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF):** Launched in July 2020 to provide medium to long-term financing for agriculture infrastructure projects at the post-harvest stage.
     - **Aim:** To reduce post-harvest wastage by creating better storage and modern cold storage chains in villages.
     - Initially for post-harvest management and processing at the primary level; since August 2024, **includes secondary-level processing** (e.g., making juices, jams from kinnow produce).
     - Credit guarantees and interest subvention provided under the scheme.
     - **Eligible beneficiaries: Farmers, agripreneurs, PACS, FPOs, start-ups, PPPs, and state agencies.**
     - Can be availed alongside other state and central subsidies.
2. **Gandhi-Irwin Pact:** Gandhi-Irwin Pact, signed on **March 5, 1931**, recently came in news when a historian argued that he could not have done much more.
   - Critics argue that Gandhi prioritized the **Delhi Pact** over Bhagat Singh's life, while others claim he made efforts but lacked real influence over the British.
   - **About Gandhi-Irwin Pact:** On January 25, 1931, Gandhi and all members of the **Congress Working Committee (CWC)** were released unconditionally.
     - The CWC authorized Gandhi to initiate discussions with Viceroy Lord Irwin.
     - The discussions led to the Delhi Pact (Gandhi-Irwin Pact), signed on February 14, 1931, placing Congress on an equal footing with the British Indian Government.
   - **Provisions of the Pact:** Immediate release of all political prisoners not convicted of violence.
     - Remission of all fines not yet collected.
     - Return of all confiscated lands not yet sold to third parties.
     - Lenient treatment of government servants who had resigned.
     - Right to make salt in coastal villages for personal consumption (not for sale).
     - Right to peaceful and non-aggressive picketing.
     - Withdrawal of emergency ordinances.
   - **British Rejection of Key Demands:** Public inquiry into police excesses, and commutation of Bhagat Singh and his comrades' death sentence to life imprisonment.

3. **CHIPS & Science Act:** The Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors (CHIPS) and Science Act was signed into law in August 2022 to bring microchip manufacturing back to the US.
   - US President has recently announced a $100 billion investment by Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co (TSMC) in the US for five new fabrication plants.
   - **About CHIPS Act:** Aims to boost domestic semiconductor production after decades of offshoring.
     - US share in semiconductor production fell from 40% (1990) to 12% (current), while Taiwan produces over 60% of global semiconductors and over 90% of the most advanced chips.
     - Companies eligible for a 25% tax credit under the law.
   - **About Semiconductors:** Also known as microchips or integrated circuits, made from silicon.
     - Contain millions or billions of transistors that flip on/off to process data.
     - Essential for modern technology, from household appliances to defense systems, mobile phones, and cars.
4. **Space Debris:** Recently, a 500 kg metal object fell in Kenya, believed to be a separation ring from a space-bound rocket.
   - Similar incidents have occurred in the **US, Australia, and Poland**, raising concerns over space debris and governance issues.
   - **About Space Debris:** It consists of spent rocket stages, dead satellites, fragments of space objects, and debris resulting from Anti-Satellite (ASAT) systems.
     - **Risks:** Objects in Low Earth Orbit (LEO) travel at 27,000 kph, posing a severe risk to satellites. Even centimetre-sized fragments can be fatal in collisions.
     - **Sources:** All space junk originates from objects launched from Earth and remains in orbit until it **re-enters the atmosphere**.
     - **Debris-Free Space Missions:** India aims for debris-free space missions by all governmental and non-governmental actors by 2030.
   - **About Space Debris Law:** No universally accepted legal definition in international treaties. The UN COPUOS defines it as all non-functional man-made objects in orbit or re-entering the atmosphere.
     - **Liability Concerns:** The 1972 Liability Convention covers space objects, but legal disputes arise over whether debris qualifies as a space object.

- **Outer Space Treaty 1967:** Article VI states that states are responsible for all national space activities, whether by government or private entities.
- **Absolute Liability:** The 1972 Convention imposes absolute liability on launching states for damage caused by space objects on Earth, without requiring proof of negligence.

- **About Zero Debris Charter:** Introduced by European Space Agency (ESA) at the ESA Space Summit (November 2023, Seville).
  - **Objective:** To achieve zero space debris by 2030 and ensure the sustainability of space activities.
  - **Global Collaboration:** The first international initiative uniting space actors for debris mitigation.
  - **Non-Legally Binding:** Encourages voluntary compliance but lacks legal enforcement.

5. **EUTELSAT:** Investor interest in Eutelsat has recently surged amid concerns that Ukraine may lose access to Elon Musk's Starlink satellite Internet, vital for its military communications.
   - **About: Eutelsat** is a **Franco-British company** that merged with **Britain's OneWeb in 2023**.
     - After the merger, it controls the only operational global-coverage LEO (Low Earth Orbit) satellite constellation besides Starlink.
     - Supports government and institutional communications in Ukraine and can serve as an alternative for certain government and defence applications.
   - **How Crucial is Starlink to Ukraine:** Starlink enables Internet access via a small satellite dish that communicates with a constellation of LEO satellites.
     - Since Russia's invasion (Feb 2022), Ukraine's mobile and fixed-line networks have been damaged, making Starlink essential for communication.
6. **Livestock Health and Disease Control Programme (LHDCP):** The Union Cabinet, chaired by PM, has recently approved the Revision of Livestock Health and Disease Control Programme (LHDCP).
   - **About LHDCP:** It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) under the Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying (DAHD), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.
   - **Objective:** Reduce livestock productivity losses due to diseases like **Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Brucellosis, Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR), Classical Swine Fever (CSF), Lumpy Skin Disease, etc.**

- **Scheme Components:**
  - National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP), **LH&DC**, with **three sub-components**: Critical Animal Disease Control Programme (CADCP) → Establishment and Strengthening of Veterinary Hospitals & Dispensaries - Mobile Veterinary Unit (ESVHD-MVU) → Assistance to States for Control of Animal Diseases (ASCAD)
- **Pashu Aushadhi (New Component):** Provides affordable generic veterinary medicines via **PM-Kisan Samriddhi Kendra & Cooperative Societies**.
- **Eligibility Criteria:** Beneficiary must be a bona fide farmer or livestock owner → Must have a valid livestock ownership document → Livestock must be used for commercial purposes.

7. **National Ropeways Development Programme:** The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has recently approved the construction of a 12.4 km ropeway project from Govindghat to Hemkund Sahib Ji in Uttarakhand.
   - The project is sanctioned under the National Ropeways Development Programme **– Parvatmala Pariyojana** to provide all-weather last-mile connectivity for pilgrims and tourists.
   - **About National Ropeways Development Programme:** The ropeway will be developed on a Design, Build, Finance, Operate, and Transfer (DBFOT) mode.
     - **Current route:** 21-km uphill trek from Govindghat to Hemkund Sahib Ji, presently covered on foot, ponies, or palanquins.
     - The new ropeway will ease travel for pilgrims visiting Hemkund Sahib Ji and tourists visiting the **Valley of Flowers (UNESCO World Heritage Site)**.
   - **About Hemkund Sahib Ji:** A highly revered Sikh pilgrimage site at 15,000 ft elevation.
     - The Gurudwara opens for 5 months (May–September) and receives 1.5 to 2 lakh pilgrims annually.
     - The trek route also serves as the gateway to the Valley of Flowers in the Garhwal Himalayas.
8. **Gene Bank:** Indian Prime Minister has recently announced the establishment of a **Gene Bank** to **conserve India's genetic resources** and ensure **food security** for future generations.
   - **About:** Gene Bank is a repository of genetic material (seeds, pollen, tissue samples) from different plant species, preserving vital crop varieties to prevent extinction.
   - India’s first Gene Bank was established in 1996 by ICAR-NBPGR (Indian Council of Agricultural Research - National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources) in New Delhi.

- **Aim:** To **strengthen India's leadership in global biodiversity conservation** and support **sustainable farming systems**.
- India is **biodiversity-rich**, with **811 cultivated crop species** and **902 crop wild relatives**, playing a key role in **plant genetic resource (PGR) conservation**.
- The new facility will: Strengthen India's global biodiversity conservation efforts → Support international biodiversity initiatives (SAARC & BRICS nations) → Provide a safety duplicate structure to safeguard germplasm from climate change, disasters, and geopolitical risks.

9. **Mobile World Congress (MWC):** Union Minister for Communications has recently showcased India's telecom transformation at Mobile World Congress (MWC) 2025 in Barcelona, Spain.
   - **About Mobile World Congress (MWC) 2025:**
   - Theme: **"Converge. Connect. Create."**
   - **Key Themes:** 5G Inside → AI+ → Connect X → Enterprise Re-invented → Game Changers → Digital DNA
   - MWC 2025 is the world's leading platform for mobile innovation, networking, and future connectivity.
   - **India's Initiatives at MWC 2025:** Inauguration of 'Bharat Pavilion' featuring 38 Indian telecom equipment manufacturers → Unveiled India Mobile Congress 2025 → Launched VVDN's indigenously designed AI-based Wi-Fi-7 → Visited booths of Meta & Google Cloud to explore advanced tech solutions.
10. **Vishwamitri River:** Citizens and environmentalists have recently criticized the desilting and resection measures of the Vishwamitri River in Vadodara, calling it a "serious deviation" from the National Green Tribunal (NGT) mandate.
    - Concerns raised over the **river's ecological integrity**, particularly regarding **crocodiles and other Schedule 1 & 2 species**.
    - **About Vishwamitri River: Originate from** Pavagadh hills, Gujarat.
    - **Tributaries:** Dhadhar and Jambuva, finally draining into the Gulf of Kambhat.
    - **Course:** Flows 25 km through Vadodara before meeting the sea in Bharuch district.
    - **Nature:** A highly meandering sinuous river with a unique ecosystem, characterized by beautiful ravines from source to endpoint.
    - **Biodiversity:** The Vadodara stretch- home to mugger crocodiles (Crocodylus palustris).