1. **NITI NCAER States Economic Forum Portal:** Finance Minister Ms. Nirmala Sitharaman recently launched the "NITI NCAER States Economic Forum" portal.
   - **About NITI NCAER States Economic Forum Portal:** Developed by NITI Aayog, in collaboration with the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER).
     - It is a comprehensive repository of data on social, economic, and fiscal parameters, research reports, papers, and expert commentary on state finances from 1990-91 to 2022-23.
   - The portal comprises **four main components:**
     - **State Reports:** Summarises the macro and fiscal landscape of 28 Indian States, structured around indicators on demography, economic structure, and socio-economic and fiscal indicators.
     - **Data Repository:** Provides direct access to a complete database categorised under five verticals: **Demography, Economic Structure, Fiscal, Health & Education.**
     - **State Fiscal and Economic Dashboard:** Presents graphical representations of key economic variables over time, with quick access to raw data via a data appendix and summary tables.
     - **Research and Commentary:** Features in-depth research on State finances and key aspects of fiscal policy and financial management at both State and national levels.
   - The portal facilitates understanding of macro, fiscal, demographic, and socio-economic trends in a user-friendly format.
2. **Undersea Cables:** India is gradually getting new undersea cable landing systems. The latest is **Airtel's 2Africa Pearls system,** with investment from Meta, adding 100 terabits per second capacity to India's international bandwidth. Earlier in 2024, the SEA-ME-WE-6 cable also landed in Chennai and Mumbai.
   - **About:** Undersea cables are the main link connecting the world's internet networks.
     - They connect internet service providers and telecom operators in different countries.
     - These are a few inches thick, heavily padded to withstand the hostile sea floor environment.
     - Inside are strands of fiber optic cables carrying large volumes of data globally.
     - About 600 cables exist globally (as per Goldman Sachs).
     - 90% of data, 80% of world trade, and about $10 trillion in financial transactions and secure government information move through these cables.

- **Capacity:** Each modern cable supports several hundred gigabits per second, serving thousands of telecom users.
  - The terrestrial network brings connectivity inland from the coast.
- **India's position:** Two major cable landing hubs: Mumbai & Chennai.
  - India also has two domestic cable systems: Chennai–Andaman and Nicobar Islands (CANI) & Kochi–Lakshadweep Islands Project.

3. **Axiom-4 Mission**: Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla will be the pilot of the Axiom-4 (Ax-4) mission, the fourth private astronaut mission to the **International Space Station (ISS)**.
   - Captain Shukla is also one of the four astronaut-designates selected for the **Gaganyaan mission** of ISRO.
   - **About:** Axiom Mission 4 (Ax-4) is a private mission to the International Space Station (ISS).
     - Conducted by Axiom Space using a SpaceX Crew Dragon spacecraft.
   - **Collaboration:** In partnership with NASA, marking the fourth Axiom Space mission after Ax-1, Ax-2, and Ax-3.
   - **Mission Objectives:**
     - **Commercial Space:** Supports **research, technology, and tourism**.
     - **Global Collaboration:** Involves **astronauts from multiple nations**.
     - **R&D:** Conducts **microgravity experiments** in various fields.
   - **About International Space Station (ISS):** Launched in **1998**, allowing **modular expansion and flexibility**.
     - **Purpose:** Conducts research in astrobiology, astronomy, meteorology, and physics.
     - **Largest Artificial Object in Space:** At altitude of 400 km above Earth.
     - Collaborative Project involving five major space agencies: **NASA (USA), Roscosmos (Russia), JAXA (Japan), ESA (Europe) & CSA (Canada)**
     - **Two Segments of the ISS:** Russian Orbital Segment (ROS) - Managed by Russia.
     - **United States Orbital Segment (USOS):** Managed by USA & partner nations.
     - **Governance:** Established through the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), these agreements between NASA and other space agencies were signed on January 29, 1998.

4. **World Health Organization (WHO) Report on compassionate healthcare:** In January 2025, the WHO published a report emphasizing **compassion** as a transformative force in primary healthcare systems (PHC). It highlighted the importance of being responsive and adapting to community needs with quality care.
   - **About WHO Report 2025 – Compassion & Primary Health Care in India:**
   - **Definition of Compassion:** It is characterised by awareness, empathy and action — is identified as a transformative force for PHC, driving quality care and health system transformation.
   - **Primary Healthcare Infrastructure in India (as per National Health Mission):**
     - Sub-centres serve 3,000–5,000 people.
     - Primary Health Centres (PHCs) serve 20,000–30,000 people.
     - Community Health Centres (CHCs) serve 80,000–1,20,000 people.
   - **Examples of Compassion in India's Primary Healthcare System**
     - Rajasthan – Clinical Courage through Amrit Clinics: Operated by Basic Health Services (BHS) in tribal Udaipur.
     - Gujarat – ASHA-led Domestic Violence Care (SWATI): NGO SWATI trains ASHAs in Patan district to handle domestic violence cases.
     - Tamil Nadu – Trained Public Health System for Disaster Response: Regular training for health staff in epidemic and disaster preparedness.
5. **Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024:** Recently, the Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024 was passed in the Lok Sabha to provide a dedicated legal framework for promoting coastal and inland trade in India.
   - **Key Features of Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024:**
     - **Objective:** Unlock the potential of India's coastline and decongest road and rail networks.
     - **Policy Alignment:** Linked to the **National Logistics Policy** and Government's multi-modal transport vision.
     - **Legal Overhaul:** Replaces outdated **Merchant Shipping Act, 1958** with a future-ready legal framework.
     - **Foreign Vessel Regulation:** Introduces licensing for foreign vessels in coastal trade.
     - **Strategic Planning:** Mandates a National Coastal and Inland Shipping Strategic Plan, revised biennially.

- **Data Integration:** Creates a National Database for Coastal Shipping for transparency and coordination.
- **Penalty Mechanism:** Regulates foreign-chartered vessels with penalties aligned with decriminalisation.
- **Regulatory Power:** Grants powers to the Director General of Shipping for enforcement and oversight.
- **Government Oversight:** Central Government can provide exemptions and frame regulations.
- **Global Standards:** Aligns with international best practices, tailored to Indian conditions.
- **Trade Boost:** Enhances coastal trade, inland waterways, and riverine economies.
- **State Support:** Focus on Odisha, Karnataka, Goa, enabling joint planning and execution.

6. **Heard and McDonald Islands:** Recently, the US President announced 10% reciprocal tariffs on several trade partners, including Heard and McDonald Islands.
   - **About Heard and McDonald Islands**: It is an uninhabited Sub-antarctic Islands located in the Southern Ocean, have no permanent human population, administered by Australia.
   - **Volcanic Activity**: The only volcanically active **subantarctic islands**, offering a unique view into geomorphic processes and glacial dynamics.
   - **World Heritage Status**: Recognized as UNESCO World Heritage Sites for their scientific value and ecological significance.
7. **Next Generation Launch Vehicle (NGLV):** The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister of India, was approved the development of the Next Generation Launch Vehicle (NGLV).
   - **About:** The Next Generation Launch Vehicle (NGLV) is also known as "Soorya," is a three-stage, partially reusable launch vehicle under development by ISRO, designed to replace existing launch systems like PSLV, GSLV, and LVM3.
     - It will have 3 times the present payload capability at 1.5 times the cost of LVM3.
     - **Key Features:** It will have reusability, enabling low-cost access to space and modular green propulsion systems.
     - **Payload Capacity:** NGLV is designed to carry a maximum payload of 30 tonnes to Low Earth Orbit, with a reusable first stage.

- **Significance:** Enables national and commercial missions, including human spaceflight missions to Bharatiya Antariksh Station.
  - ✓ Supports lunar and interplanetary missions, and LEO satellite constellations for communication and earth observation.
  - ✓ Boosts the Indian space ecosystem in terms of capability and capacity.

8. **Uranium Deposits in India:** Recently, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology and Atomic Energy, informed the Rajya Sabha about the state-wise augmentation of uranium resources and ongoing uranium mining projects in India.
   - **About:** Uranium is a naturally occurring radioactive element with atomic number 92 and chemical symbol U. Main fuel source for nuclear reactors — a chicken-egg-sized amount of uranium can produce as much electricity as 88 tonnes of coal.
   - **About Uranium Deposits in India:** First uranium deposit in India was discovered in 1951 at Jaduguda, located in the Singhbhum Thrust Belt, Jharkhand.
   - **Operating uranium mines in India:** Jaduguda Mine, Bhatin Mine, Narwapahar Mine, and TuramdihMine (All located in Jharkhand)
   - **Major uranium occurrences**: Cuddapah Basin, Andhra Pradesh – several uranium-bearing sites discovered. Mahadek Basin, Meghalaya – sandstone-type uranium deposits found at Domiasiat, Wahkhyn & Mawsynram
   - **Recent Discovery**: U-oxide resource identified at Jaduguda North - Baglasai-Mechua deposit, in East Singhbhum district, Jharkhand.