

Four projects completed under Namami Gange Mission 2.0

- **Projects are launched in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh** (Mirzapur Budget: Rs 129 crore, Munger Project: Budget of Rs 366 crore, Ghazipur Project: Budget of Rs 153 crore, Bareilly Project: Budget of Rs 271 crore.)
 - **Objective:** These projects aim to add 145 mega liters per day (MLD) of sewage treatment capacity, improve sewer networks, and intercept multiple drains to reduce pollution.
- **About Namami Gange Mission 2.0 (NGM 2.0)**
 - The **Namami Gange Programme was launched in 2014** as an integrated mission to conserve and rejuvenate the River Ganga. Initially set to run until **March 2021**, it was extended until March **2026 as NGM 2.0**.
 - **Objective:** To effectively reduce pollution and revitalize the River Ganga.
 - **Main Focus Areas:**
 - Sewage treatment.
 - Riverfront development.
 - River surface cleaning.
 - Afforestation.
 - Biodiversity conservation.
 - Public awareness.
 - Effluent management.
 - Ganga Gram (developing villages along the river).
 - **Implementation:** The mission is carried out by the **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)** and its counterparts at the state and district levels, under the **Ministry of Jal Shakti**. The NMCG is registered under the **Societies Registration Act of 1860**.
 - **Funding:** The initiative is fully funded by the central government, with no specific state-wise allocation.
- **Achievements of the Mission (as of February 2024)**
 - **Projects:** A total of 457 projects have been initiated, with 280 of them completed and operational.
 - **District Ganga Committees:** 139 District Ganga Committees (DGCs) have been formed, headed by District Magistrates.
 - **Effluent Treatment:** NMCG has approved the establishment of Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs) for industrial pollution control.

e-Sankhyiki Portal

- The **e-Sankhyiki Portal** is designed to create an efficient system **for managing and sharing data, making it easier to access official statistics across India**.
- **About the e-Sankhyiki Portal:**
 - **Purpose:** To offer timely and valuable data for policymakers, researchers, and the public.
 - **Launched by:** Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).
- **Features:**
 - Allows users to search datasets, download relevant data, and increase its value and usability.
 - Provides time series data on key macro indicators with tools for filtering and visualizing the data.

Mitra Shakti

- **"Mitra Shakti"** is an annual military exercise between **India and Sri Lanka**. Its goal is to enhance the operational skills of both armies by allowing them to share knowledge, experiences, and best practices.

DCPA And Dacthal

- **DCPA, also known as Dacthal**, is a weed-killing pesticide that was used **on crops like broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, and onions**.
- **The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** has banned its use because exposure to DCPA can harm fetuses, potentially leading to low birth weight, impaired brain development, decreased IQ, and poor motor skills later in life.

PM-KUSUM Scheme Requires Urgent Recalibration To Meet 2026 Targets: CSE Study

- The **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM)** has only achieved **30%** of its targets, raising concerns about meeting the **2026 deadline**.
- **Key Findings:**
 - **Component B (Solar Powered Agriculture Pumps)** has seen the most progress, while **Components A (small Solar Power Plants)** and **C (Solarisation of Grid-connected Agriculture Pumps)** have lagged.
 - Solar-powered pumps allow farmers to irrigate during the day, but the availability of cheap electricity reduces the incentive to switch from electric to solar pumps.
 - There is a lack of suitable pump capacities in different regions; for example, **in Haryana, surface pumps of 5 hp and 7.5 hp are not available**.
- **Recommendations:**
 - **Decentralized Implementation:** Agencies with local knowledge should handle the implementation to better meet farmers' needs.
 - **Financial Viability:** Farmers should have the option to pay upfront costs in installments to make the scheme more affordable.
 - **Increased Central Financial Assistance:** Assistance should vary based on state needs and solar module prices.
- **About PM-KUSUM:**
 - **Launched:** 2019
 - **Objectives:** Reduce the use of diesel in farming, provide water and energy security to farmers, increase farmer income, and reduce environmental pollution.
 - **Target:** Add 34.8 GW of solar capacity by March 2026.
 - **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.
- **Components:**
 - **Component A:** Installation of 10,000 MW of solar capacity through small Solar Power Plants (up to 2 MW each).
 - **Component B:** Installation of 14 lakh standalone Solar Powered Agriculture Pumps.
 - **Component C:** Solarisation of 35 lakh Grid-connected Agriculture Pumps.

South China Sea (SCS)

- **United States, Australia, Canada, And The Philippines Recently Conducted An Air And Naval Exercise In The Disputed South China Sea (SCS)**
- The exercise aimed to tackle common maritime challenges and emphasize the commitment to upholding international law and the rules-based order.
- **About the South China Sea (SCS):**
 - The SCS is a part of the western Pacific Ocean, extending from **Singapore and the Strait of Malacca** in the southwest to the **Strait of Taiwan in the northeast**.
 - It is a crucial shipping route, a rich fishing area, home to a highly biodiverse coral reef ecosystem, and believed to contain significant oil and gas reserves.
 - Several countries bordering the SCS claim parts of its islands to assert control over the surrounding sea and its resource

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) Has Released A Framework Paper On "Debt For Development Swaps." (Debt Swaps)

- **About Debt Swaps:** Debt swaps are agreements where a government and its creditors agree to exchange sovereign debt for commitments to fund specific development goals. These goals can include nature conservation, climate action, education, nutrition, and refugee support.
- **Key Points:**
 - Debt swaps help fund initiatives like environmental protection, improving education, and addressing climate change.
 - When considering debt swaps, factors like the country's initial debt situation and the overall financial benefits must be assessed.
- **Types of Debt Swaps:**
 - **Bilateral Debt Swaps:** Involve the write-off of official bilateral debt.
 - **Commercial Debt Swaps:** Target debt held by private creditors.