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Top Stories of The Day

- *Centre Revokes NSA Detention of Sonam Wangchuk After Six Months to Facilitate Dialogue in Ladakh*
- *98th Academy Awards Held in Los Angeles; One Battle After Another Wins Best Picture and Six Awards*
- *Veteran Bollywood Actress Madhu Malhotra Passes Away at 71 in Mumbai*
- *Renowned Tamil Poet Vairamuthu Selected for the 2025 Jnanpith Award*
- *Shubman Gill and Smriti Mandhana Honoured with Top Awards at Board of Control for Cricket in India Naman Awards 2026*
- *Government Grants Perpetual Validity to Licences Issued by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India*
- *Centre Introduces New Conditions for States to Receive Funds Under Jal Jeevan Mission*
- *Indian Space Research Organisation Successfully Tests CE20 Cryogenic Engine at 22-Tonne Thrust for LVM3*
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Centre Revokes Detention of Ladakh Activist Sonam Wangchuk under NSA



- The Union Government has revoked the detention of Ladakh-based activist and innovator Sonam Wangchuk with immediate effect. He had been detained under the National Security Act (NSA) in September 2025 following protests in Ladakh.

Government's Decision

- According to the Ministry of Home Affairs, the decision to revoke the detention was taken to promote peace, stability, and constructive dialogue in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

Duration of Detention

- Sonam Wangchuk spent nearly six months in detention after being taken into custody on 26 September 2025 during protests in Leh. During this period, he was lodged in Jodhpur Central Jail.

Reason Behind the Protests

- The protests in Ladakh were linked to demands by local groups for:
- Grant of statehood to Ladakh
- Inclusion of Ladakh under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution to ensure tribal protection and greater autonomy.

Objective of the Revocation

- The government stated that the revocation of detention is intended to facilitate dialogue with

local stakeholders and help maintain peace and stability in the region.

Additional Key Facts:

National Security Act (NSA), 1980

- A preventive detention law allowing authorities to detain a person without trial to maintain national security or public order.
- Detention period can extend up to 12 months.
- Advisory Board reviews detention cases, but detainees have limited legal representation rights.

About Sonam Wangchuk

- Indian engineer, education reformer, and climate activist from Ladakh.
- Founder of SECMOL (Students' Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh).
- Known for innovations such as the "Ice Stupa" artificial glacier technology for water conservation in the Himalayas.
- Inspiration for the character Phunsukh Wangdu in the Bollywood film 3 Idiots.

Sixth Schedule of the Constitution

- Provides autonomous administrative councils for tribal areas.
- Currently applicable to parts of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram.
- Intended to protect tribal land rights, culture, and self-governance.

Background: Ladakh Administrative Status

- Ladakh became a Union Territory in 2019 after the reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir through the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019.
- It currently has no legislative assembly, and is administered by a Lieutenant Governor.

98th Academy Awards Held in Los Angeles



- The 98th edition of the Academy Awards (Oscars) was held on 15 March 2026 at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. The awards celebrate outstanding achievements in films released in 2025 and are presented by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Host and Broadcast

- The ceremony was hosted by comedian and television personality Conan O'Brien for the second consecutive year. The event was broadcast on the ABC television network and streamed online via Hulu, reaching global audiences.

Major Winners and Highlights

- The film *One Battle After Another* emerged as the biggest winner of the night, securing six Academy Awards, including Best Picture and Best Director for Paul Thomas Anderson.

Other major awards included:

- Best Actor: Michael B. Jordan for the film *Sinners*.
- Best Actress: Jessie Buckley for *Hamnet*.
- Best Supporting Actor: Sean Penn for *One Battle After Another*.
- Best Supporting Actress: Amy Madigan for the film *Weapons*.

Other Notable Awards

- Best Animated Feature: *KPop Demon Hunters*.
- Best International Feature Film: *Sentimental Value*.
- Best Documentary Feature: *Mr. Nobody Against Putin*.
- Best Visual Effects: *Avatar: Fire and Ash*.
- Special Achievement and Historic Moments
- A new Best Casting category was introduced at the Oscars, with Cassandra Kulukundis becoming the first-ever recipient for her work in *One Battle After Another*.
- Another historic moment occurred when cinematographer Autumn Durald Arkapaw became the first woman to win the Oscar for Best Cinematography for the film *Sinners*.

Additional Key Facts:

- The Academy Awards (Oscars) are considered the most prestigious awards in the global film industry.
- They were first held in 1929 in Los Angeles.
- The award trophy is officially called the "Academy Award of Merit", popularly known as the Oscar statuette.
- The awards are given in 24 categories covering acting, directing, writing, technical fields, and documentary films.

Veteran Bollywood Actress Madhu Malhotra Passes Away at 71



- Veteran Bollywood actress Madhu Malhotra, known for her roles in classic Hindi films such as *Satte Pe Satta* and *Hero*, passed away in Mumbai at the age of 71.

Career in Hindi Cinema

- Madhu Malhotra was a familiar face in Hindi cinema during the 1970s and 1980s and appeared in numerous films, mostly in supporting roles and song sequences. She gained wide recognition for her appearance in the iconic song “Lambi Judaai” in the film Hero.
- She also appeared in the popular multi-starrer film Satte Pe Satta, starring Amitabh Bachchan and Hema Malini.

Tamil Poet Vairamuthu Named 2025 Jnanpith Award Winner



- Renowned Tamil poet and lyricist Vairamuthu has been selected for the 2025 Jnanpith Award, the highest literary honour in India. The award recognises his outstanding contribution to Tamil literature and poetry over several decades.

Significance of the Recognition

- With this honour, Vairamuthu becomes one of the few writers from the Tamil language to receive the Jnanpith Award. The recognition highlights his significant influence on modern Tamil literature and film lyrics, where he has written thousands of songs and literary works.

Literary Career and Contributions

- Vairamuthu began his literary journey at a young age and later gained prominence as a lyricist in the Tamil film industry. Over his career spanning more than four decades, he has written over 7,500–8,000 songs and numerous

literary works including poetry collections, novels, essays, and travelogues.

- He has also received several prestigious honours, including:
 - 2003: Padma Shri: For Distinguished Services in Literature and Education
 - 2014: Padma Bhushan: For Distinguished Services in Literature and Education
 - 1999: S. P. Adithanar Literary Award for Best Tamil Novel for Thanneer Thesam
 - 2003: Sahitya Akademi Award for Best Literary Work for Kallikkaattu Ithihaasam

About the Jnanpith Award

- The Jnanpith Award is India’s highest literary award.
- It was instituted in 1961 by the organization Bharatiya Jnanpith.
- The first award (1965) was given to G. Sankara Kurup for Malayalam literature.
- It is awarded for outstanding contribution to literature in languages listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution and English.

Previous Tamil Jnanpith Award Winners

- Before Vairamuthu, the award had been given to:
 - Akilan – 1975
 - Jayakanthan – 2002
- Thus, Vairamuthu becomes the third Tamil writer to receive the honour.

Language Coverage

- The award recognises writers from 22 languages listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, including Tamil, Hindi, Bengali, Kannada, Malayalam, Telugu, and others.

BCCI Naman Awards 2026: Shubman Gill and Smriti Mandhana Honoured



The Board of Control for Cricket in India presented its annual Naman Awards 2026 in New Delhi, recognising outstanding performances by Indian cricketers during the 2024–25 season. The ceremony honoured achievements in international and domestic cricket as well as contributions to the sport.

Top Individual Honours

- Indian batter Shubman Gill received the prestigious Polly Umrigar Award for Best International Cricketer (Men). This was his second time winning the honour, reflecting his consistent performances for India across formats.
- Meanwhile, star opener Smriti Mandhana won the Best International Cricketer (Women) award for the fifth time, the highest number of wins in the category.

Recognition of Other Performers

- The awards also recognised several domestic and international performers. Among them:
- Ira Jadhav received the Jagmohan Dalmiya Trophy for Best Woman Cricketer (Domestic).
- Shafali Verma won the Jagmohan Dalmiya Trophy for Best Senior Women's Domestic One-Day Cricketer.
- Ayush Mhatre and Harsh Dubey were honoured with the Lala Amarnath Award for Best All-Rounder in domestic competitions.

Special Recognition

- During the ceremony, the BCCI also felicitated Indian teams that recently won ICC titles,

highlighting India's strong performance in international cricket.

About the BCCI Naman Awards

- Instituted by the Board of Control for Cricket in India to honour outstanding Indian cricket performers annually.
- The awards were first given in 2006–07.
- The C. K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award was first presented in 1994. It is the highest honour bestowed by BCCI on a former player.
- Most awards: Virat Kohli (M) (5), Smriti Mandhana (W) (5)

Polly Umrigar Award

- Named after former Indian cricketer Polly Umrigar.
- Instituted in 2007.
- First recipient: Sachin Tendulkar.
- Includes a trophy, citation, and cash prize awarded to the Best International Cricketer (Men).

Government Grants Perpetual Validity to FSSAI Licences and Registrations

Benefits of fssai State License



- The Government of India has approved a major reform in the food safety regulatory framework by granting perpetual validity to licences and registration certificates issued by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). With this change, food businesses will no longer need to periodically renew their

licences, which earlier had to be renewed every 1 to 5 years.

Objective of the Reform

- The reform aims to reduce regulatory burden, paperwork, and compliance costs for food business operators (FBOs). It will also reduce frequent interactions with licensing authorities and allow regulators to focus more on inspection, monitoring, and enforcement of food safety standards.

Changes in Registration and Licensing Framework

- Earlier, food businesses had to renew their licences periodically before expiry. Under the new system, FSSAI licences and registrations will remain valid indefinitely, unless suspended or cancelled due to violations.
- Additionally, the government has revised turnover thresholds for registration and licensing, which will simplify compliance for smaller businesses. For example, the basic registration threshold has been increased from ₹12 lakh to ₹1.5 crore, allowing more small food businesses to operate under simpler registration procedures.

Benefits for Street Food Vendors

- Street food vendors registered with urban local bodies or under the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014 will be treated as “deemed registered” under FSSAI, eliminating the need for dual licensing and easing regulatory requirements.

About FSSAI

- Food Safety and Standards Authority of India was established under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.
- It functions under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- Headquarters: New Delhi
- Chairperson: Punya Salila Srivastava

- Chief executive officer: Rajit Punhani
- Responsible for regulation, monitoring, and supervision of food safety in India.

Types of FSSAI Licences

- Basic Registration – For small food businesses.
- State Licence – For medium-scale businesses operating within a state.
- Central Licence – For large food businesses, importers, exporters, and companies operating in multiple states.

Role of FSSAI

- Sets food safety standards in India.
- Regulates manufacture, storage, distribution, sale, and import of food products.
- Conducts food testing, surveillance, and awareness programmes such as Eat Right India.

Centre Sets Conditions for States to Receive Jal Jeevan Mission Funds



- The Union Government has laid down specific conditions for states and Union Territories to receive funds under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM). States will have to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Centre and meet certain operational benchmarks before central funds are released.
- The move aims to improve accountability, transparency, and performance in implementing the rural drinking water scheme.

Key Conditions Imposed by the Centre

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- According to officials, states must fulfil several requirements, including:
- Signing an MoU with the Central Government committing to the scheme's targets.
- Ensuring regular and sustainable water supply systems in villages.
- Maintaining functional tap connections and infrastructure under the mission.
- Strengthening monitoring, reporting, and digital tracking of projects.
- Only after these conditions are met will the next instalments of central funds be released to states.

Objective of the Move

- The conditions have been introduced to ensure that public funds are utilised efficiently and that water supply infrastructure remains functional after installation. The Centre aims to shift the focus from simply creating infrastructure to ensuring reliable water service delivery in rural areas.

About Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)

- Launched in 2019 by the Government of India.
- Implemented by the Ministry of Jal Shakti.
- Objective: Provide Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTC) to every rural household.
- Target supply: 55 litres of water per person per day.

"Har Ghar Jal" Initiative

- Jal Jeevan Mission is popularly known as the Har Ghar Jal programme.
- It aims to ensure safe and adequate drinking water through individual household tap connections in rural India.

Funding Pattern

- Cost-sharing between Centre and states:
- 90:10 – Northeastern and Himalayan states
- 50:50 – Other states
- 100% central funding – Union Territories.

Progress of the Scheme

- When JJM was launched in 2019, only about 18% of rural households had piped water connections, which the mission aims to significantly expand.

Recent Policy Development

- The Union Cabinet recently extended Jal Jeevan Mission till 2028 with a multi-lakh-crore outlay, focusing more on sustainability and service delivery rather than only building infrastructure.

ISRO Successfully Tests CE20 Cryogenic Engine at 22-Tonne Thrust



- The Indian Space Research Organisation successfully conducted a sea-level hot test of its CE20 cryogenic engine at 22-tonne thrust at the ISRO Propulsion Complex in Mahendragiri, Tamil Nadu. The test ran for about 165 seconds, validating the engine's performance at a higher thrust level.

Purpose of the Test

- The CE20 cryogenic engine powers the upper stage of the LVM3 launch vehicle, India's heaviest rocket. The successful test will help increase the payload capacity of LVM3 and strengthen its capability for future space missions.

Significance for Future Missions

- The upgraded engine is expected to support major upcoming missions, including India's human spaceflight programme, Gaganyaan, and other heavy satellite launches. Higher thrust

levels will enable the rocket to carry heavier payloads into orbit and support more complex missions.

About the CE20 Cryogenic Engine

- CE20 is India's most powerful indigenous cryogenic rocket engine.
- Developed by the Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC) of ISRO.
- It uses liquid hydrogen (LH₂) as fuel and liquid oxygen (LOX) as oxidiser.
- Designed to power the C25 cryogenic upper stage of the LVM3 rocket.

About Cryogenic Engines

- Cryogenic engines operate using super-cooled propellants (typically liquid hydrogen and liquid oxygen).
- They provide higher efficiency and thrust, making them suitable for heavy satellite launches and deep-space missions.

About LVM3 (Launch Vehicle Mark-3)

- Formerly called GSLV Mk-III.
- India's heaviest launch vehicle.
- Capable of placing about 8,000 kg payload into Low Earth Orbit (LEO).
- It will be used for the Gaganyaan human spaceflight mission.

ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC)

- Located at Mahendragiri in Tamil Nadu.
- Main facility for testing liquid and cryogenic rocket engines.

Atomic Clock Failure in NavIC Satellite Raises Concerns for India's Indigenous GPS

Recent Technical Issue

- India's indigenous satellite navigation system NavIC has faced a technical setback after the atomic clock onboard the satellite IRNSS-1F malfunctioned. The atomic clock is a critical component that provides extremely precise timing signals required for satellite navigation and positioning services. The malfunction could affect the accuracy and reliability of navigation services provided by the system.



Importance of Atomic Clocks in Navigation Satellites

- Each navigation satellite carries three rubidium atomic clocks that generate precise time signals. Navigation receivers calculate a user's location by comparing signals from multiple satellites; therefore, accurate timekeeping is essential. If atomic clocks fail, the satellite may not be able to provide reliable positioning data.

Impact on NavIC Constellation

- Navigation systems typically require at least four operational satellites to provide accurate positioning services. With clock failures in some satellites, the number of fully functional satellites in the NavIC constellation has reduced, raising concerns about the system's redundancy and long-term reliability.

Earlier Instances of Atomic Clock Failures

- Technical issues with atomic clocks have occurred previously in NavIC satellites. For example, all three atomic clocks onboard the satellite IRNSS-1A failed, rendering the satellite ineffective for navigation services and necessitating replacement launches.

About NavIC (India's GPS)

- Full name: Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC).
- Developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation.
- Earlier known as Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS).
- Provides positioning, navigation, and timing (PNT) services over India and up to about 1,500 km beyond its borders.

Satellite Constellation

- The original system consists of 7 satellites (3 in geostationary orbit and 4 in geosynchronous orbit).
- Replacement and next-generation satellites are being launched under the NVS series.

Types of NavIC Services

- Standard Positioning Service (SPS) – for civilian and commercial users.
- Restricted Service (RS) – encrypted service for defence and strategic applications.

Strategic Importance

- NavIC reduces India's dependence on foreign navigation systems such as:
- GPS
- GLONASS
- Galileo
- BeiDou

Uses of NavIC

- Navigation for transport, aviation, and maritime sectors
- Disaster management and search-and-rescue operations
- Military and strategic applications
- Vehicle tracking and mobile navigation services.

China Passes New Ethnic Unity Law



Law Approved by Chinese Legislature

- China has enacted a new law titled “Law on Promoting Ethnic Unity and Progress” to strengthen national integration among its diverse ethnic communities. The law was passed by the National People's Congress on 12 March 2026 and signed by Chinese President **Xi Jinping. It is scheduled to come into force on 1 July 2026.
- The legislation aims to foster a shared national identity and unity among China's ethnic groups, but it has also raised concerns among scholars and rights groups about its potential impact on minority cultures and languages.

Key Provisions of the Law

- The law requires government bodies, schools, and social organisations to promote “a common consciousness of the Chinese nation.” It also emphasises the use of Mandarin Chinese in education and public life, even though it formally states that minority languages will be respected.

Other provisions include:

- Promoting interaction and integration among different ethnic groups.
- Strengthening national unity, sovereignty, and social stability.
- Encouraging patriotic education and loyalty to the state.
- Penalising activities that allegedly undermine ethnic unity or promote separatism.

Concerns and Criticism

- Critics argue that the law could increase assimilation pressure on minority communities, particularly in regions such as Xinjiang, Tibet, and Inner Mongolia, where minority languages and cultural practices have already faced restrictions.
- Human rights groups warn that the legislation could limit cultural and religious freedoms of minorities and further institutionalise existing assimilation policies in China.

Ethnic Diversity in China

- China officially recognises 56 ethnic groups, including the majority Han Chinese and 55 minority groups.
- Major minorities include Uyghurs, Tibetans, Mongols, Hui, and Zhuang.

Concept of Zhonghua Minzu

- The Chinese government promotes the idea of Zhonghua Minzu, which refers to a unified Chinese nation composed of all ethnic groups.

China's Ethnic Autonomy System

- The Chinese Constitution provides for regional ethnic autonomy in minority-dominated areas such as Xinjiang, Tibet, Ningxia, Inner Mongolia, and Guangxi.

Background of Ethnic Policies

- Since the 2010s, China has emphasised stronger national integration policies under President Xi Jinping, focusing on cultural assimilation and political stability in minority regions.

Lets Revise

- ❖ Whose detention under the National Security Act was revoked by the Centre in March 2026? **Sonam Wangchuk.**
- ❖ Which film won Best Picture at the 98th Academy Awards? **One Battle After Another.**
- ❖ Who won the Best Actor award at the 2026 Oscars? **Michael B. Jordan.**
- ❖ Which film had the highest number of nominations at the 98th Academy Awards? **Sinners (16 nominations).**
- ❖ Which new category was introduced at the 98th Academy Awards? **Best Casting.**
- ❖ Which veteran Bollywood actress known for films like Hero and Satte Pe Satta passed away in March 2026? **Madhu Malhotra.**

- ❖ Who was named the winner of the 2025 Jnanpith Award? **Vairamuthu.**
- ❖ Who won the Polly Umrigar Award for Best International Cricketer (Men) at the 2026 BCCI Naman Awards? **Shubman Gill.**
- ❖ Which Indian woman cricketer won the Best International Cricketer (Women) award at the 2026 BCCI Naman Awards? **Smriti Mandhana.**
- ❖ Street vendors registered under which act will be deemed registered under FSSAI? **Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014.**
- ❖ Under which scheme has the Centre set new conditions for states to receive funds for rural drinking water projects? **Jal Jeevan Mission.**
- ❖ Which organisation successfully tested the CE20 cryogenic engine at 22-tonne thrust in 2026? **Indian Space Research Organisation.**
- ❖ What is NavIC, developed by ISRO? **India's indigenous satellite navigation system.**
- ❖ How many satellites were originally planned in the NavIC constellation? **Seven.**
- ❖ Which country recently passed the "Law on Promoting Ethnic Unity and Progress"? **China.**

Current affairs form the dynamic backbone of preparation for competitive examinations such as UPSC, SSC, and banking services. They bridge the gap between theoretical concepts and real-world developments, transforming static knowledge into practical understanding. In an age marked by rapid geopolitical changes, economic reforms, and policy innovations, a significant portion of these exams—often 30–35%—draws directly or indirectly from recent events.

Mastery of current affairs not only enhances scores but also cultivates analytical thinking, clarity of perspective, and decision-making skills—qualities indispensable for future administrators and professionals.

Key Dimensions of Importance

- **Syllabus Integration:** Current events seamlessly connect with core subjects like polity, economy, history, and geography. For instance, understanding constitutional provisions becomes more meaningful when linked to recent judicial reforms or landmark judgments.
- **Scoring Edge:** Many questions in prelims and mains are derived from contemporary developments. A well-prepared aspirant can secure quick and confident marks through accurate knowledge of high-yield topics from reliable news sources.
- **Interview Excellence:** In personality tests and interviews, panels evaluate awareness of pressing national and global issues—ranging from climate diplomacy to economic policy—requiring thoughtful, balanced responses.

As many toppers emphasize, current affairs are not a separate subject but the soul of exam preparation. Consistent engagement with credible sources like The Hindu, PIB releases, and Yojana magazine strengthens critical thinking and nurtures a well-rounded outlook, moving beyond rote memorization.

In a competitive landscape where millions aspire for limited opportunities, current affairs serve as a decisive differentiator. Adopting structured habits—daily news analysis, monthly revisions, and regular mock tests—empowers candidates to adapt confidently to evolving exam patterns. Ignoring this essential component is like navigating uncertain waters without direction—while mastering it ensures clarity, confidence, and a competitive advantage.

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