

UPSC Daily Current Affairs| Prelim Bits 20-02-2025

OPEC+

Why in News?

Brazil's government recently approved joining OPEC+, rising status as a key oil player.

- **OPEC** - Stands for the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries.
- It is a permanent, intergovernmental Organization refers to a group of 12 of the world's major oil-exporting nations.
- **Founded in** - Baghdad in 1960.
- **Founding members** - Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela.
- **Headquarters** - Vienna, Austria.
- **OPEC Members** - Algeria, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Venezuela.
- It will meet on every year to discuss their joint oil production policy
- **Aim** - To control the global oil supply and price.
- **Objectives** - It is to co-ordinate and unify petroleum policies among Member Countries, in order to secure fair and stable prices for petroleum producers.
- To give an efficient, economic and regular supply of petroleum to consuming nations; and a fair return on capital to those investing in the industry.
- OPEC membership is open to any country, substantial exporter of oil and which shares the ideals of the organization.

OPEC+

- The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and allies including Russia are known collectively as OPEC+.
- **Formed in** - 2016.
- **Members**



- **Significance of Brazil** - Brazil was officially invited to join in 2023.

- Brazil is currently the ***world's 7th-largest oil producer***, pumping around 4.3 million barrels per day, or 4% of global output.
- In 2024, crude oil overtook soy as the country's top export, making up 13.3% of total foreign sales.

References

1. [Times of India | OPEC+](#)
2. [OPEC | About](#)

International Organization of Aids to Marine Navigation (IALA)

Why in News?

India is elected to the vice presidency of the International Organization of Aids to Marine Navigation (IALA) in Singapore.

- **Established in - 1957**, as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) and a non-profit making international technical association.
- **NGO to IGO** - It officially changed its status from an NGO to an Intergovernmental Organization (IGO) based on a *convention ratified by 34 states* on 2024.
- It is previously known as ***International Association of Lighthouse Authorities (IALA)***.
- **Motto** - Successful Voyages, Sustainable Planet.
- **Aim** - To foster the safe, economic and efficient movement of vessels, through,
 - Improvement and harmonization of aids to navigation worldwide
 - Other appropriate means, for the benefit of the maritime community and the protection of the environment.
- **Membership** - 200 members, 80 of which are national authorities and 60 are commercial firms.
 - **India** - Member ***since 1957***.

India will host the IALA Council meeting, December 2025 and IALA Conference & General Assembly, September 2027 in Mumbai.

- **Collaborated member states** - It encourages its members to work together in a common effort to harmonize aids to navigation worldwide.
- It ensures that the movements of vessels are safe, expeditious and cost effective.
- It also encourages co-operation between nations to give developing countries the opportunity to make use of new aids to navigation techniques.
- **Support SDGs** - It recommends its members and other marine aids to navigation authorities responsible for the provision of Marine Aids to Navigation endeavour to support the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

References

1. [PIB| India Elected to Vice Presidency of IALA](#)
2. [IALA| About the Organization](#)
3. [Irishlights| IALA Members](#)

Killer Whales

Why in News?

Australian authorities are euthanizing approximately 90 false killer whales that survived a mass stranding on a remote Tasmanian beach.

- It is a **toothed whale** and the **largest member** of the oceanic dolphin family.
- It is also known as Orcas.
- **Scientific Name** - Orcinus orca.
- **Type** - Mammals.
- **Weight** - Up to 6 tons.
- **Appearance** - They are immediately recognizable by their distinctive black-and-white coloring.
- **Distribution** - Though they often frequent cold, coastal waters, orcas can be found from the Polar Regions to the Equator.
- Orcas are highly intelligent and able to coordinate hunting tactics.
- These are extremely fast swimmers and have been recorded at speeds of **up to 54kph.**
- Whales are **highly social mammals** and are well known for stranding in groups because they travel in large, close-knit communities which rely on constant communication.
- **Diet** - Carnivores.
- They use echolocation to communicate and hunt, making sounds that travel underwater until they encounter objects, then bounce back, revealing their location, size, and shape.
- **Conservation Status**
 - **IUCN** - Data Deficient.



References

1. [BBC | Killer Whales](#)
2. [Times of India | Killer Whales](#)

One Liners 20-02-2025

Sea Ice, Iceberg, Glacier, Ice Sheet, Ice Shelves

- **Sea ice** - It refers to the *free-floating ice* in the Polar Regions.
- **Iceberg** - It is a *large piece of floating ice* that has broken off from a glacier or ice shelf.
- **Glacier** - It is an *accumulation of ice and snow* that slowly flows over land.
- **Ice sheet** - It is a *mass of glacial ice* more than 50,000 square kilometres (19,000 square miles).
- **Ice shelves** - They are *large floating platforms of ice* that extend from the land to the ocean.

Polity & Governance

Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS)

- **PLFS** - It is the primary source of *data on employment and unemployment* situation in India.
- **Released by** - National Statistics Office (NSO).
- **Nodal Ministry** - Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
- **Objectives** - To estimate the employment and unemployment indicators in the *short time interval of 3 months* for the urban areas only in the Current Weekly Status (CWS).
- Indicators in both usual status (principal status+subsidiary status) and CWS in both rural and urban areas annually.
- **Data usage** - Planning, policy formulation, decision support, etc.

National eVidhan Application (NeVA)

- **Launched in** - 2022.
- **Umbrella scheme** - Mission Mode Projects (MMPs).
- **Nodal Ministry** - Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs (MPA)
- **NeVA** - It is a work-flow system deployed on NIC Cloud, MeghRaj helps the chair of the house to conduct the proceedings in a paperless manner.
- **Aim** - To bring all the legislatures of the country together, in one platform thereby creating a massive data depository without having the complexity of multiple applications.

Aravali Safari Park Project

Aravali Safari Park Project still faces opposition ever since it mooted.

- It is an ambitious project proposed by the Haryana government.
- It will be the *world's largest safari park*.
- **Area** - 3,858 hectare.
- **Coverage** - 17 villages in Gurugram and Nuh.
- **Transferred to** - Forest department and an expert committee to oversee the project's set up.

Economy

Non-Resident Indian (NRI) Deposit Scheme

Overseas Indians into NRI deposit schemes rose by 42.8% in April, 2024.

- **NRI scheme** - It is for Non-Resident Indians (NRIs)/Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs)/ Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs) that allows them to transact in the secondary markets in India with foreign funds deposited in their NRE accounts.
- **Non-Resident Rupee (NRE) Account** - It is an Indian rupee (INR) denominated account in the form of savings, current, recurring, or fixed deposits. The foreign currency deposited into the account is converted to INR.
- It includes foreign currency non-resident (FCNR) deposits, non-resident external (NRE) deposits, and non-resident ordinary (NRO) deposits.

National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA)

- **Established in** - 2018, under section 132 of the Companies Act, 2013.
- **Functions & Duties** - Recommend accounting and auditing policies & standards to be adopted by companies for approval by the central government.
- Monitor and enforce compliance with accounting standards and auditing standards.
- Oversee the quality of service of the professions associated with ensuring compliance with such standards and suggest measures for improvement in the quality of service.

Agriculture

National Horticulture Fair 2025

- **Organized by** - ICAR-Indian Institute of Horticultural Research (ICAR-IIHR).
- **Theme** - Horticulture for Viksit Bharat - Nutrition, Empowerment and Livelihood.
- **Premier event** - To brings together the best in horticulture, featuring innovations that promise to transform the industry and improve the lives of farmers across India.
- **Focus** - To improve nutrition through the promotion of nutritionally rich crops and varieties.

Environment

Lithium

- It is a chemical element of Group 1 in the alkali metal group of periodic table.
- **Properties** - It is the *lightest* of the solid elements and the metal is soft, white and lustrous.
- **Usage** - Pharmaceutical, electronics, automobile, ceramics & glass, rubber & plastics, aluminium.
- **Lithium triangle countries** - Argentina, Bolivia and Chile.
- **Largest producers** - Australia, Chile and China.

Miscellaneous

1st edition of SOUL Leadership Conclave

- **SOUL** - School of Ultimate Leadership.
- It is an *upcoming leadership institution in Gujarat* to enable authentic leaders to advance public good.
- **Aim** - To broaden the landscape of *political leadership* in India through formal training.
- To include those who rise through merit, commitment, and passion for public service and not just from political lineage.

World Day of Social Justice

- **Observed on** - *20th February* annually by the United Nations.
- **Theme 2025** - Empowering Inclusion: Bridging Gaps Of Social Justice.
- **Objectives** - It serves as a global call to action for addressing poverty, exclusion, unemployment, gender inequality, and human rights.
- It promoting solidarity, harmony, and equality of opportunity within and between societies.

