

## UPSC Daily Current Affairs| Prelim Bits 29-03-2025

### Eczema

**Prelims** - Current events of national and international importance.

**Mains** - GS III | Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

### Why in news?

Recently, public health experts have advised the public to be aware of different types of eczema for correct diagnosis and appropriate management of the disease.

- **Eczema** - **A skin disorder** that induces skin inflammation while creating dryness and producing an *intense itching sensation* in millions of patients every year, globally.
- **Non-contagious** - It can't spread through person-to-person contact.
- **Causes**
  - o A family history of eczema, exposure to environmental triggers (such as Pollen, dust mites, mold, cigarette smoke), stress, etc.,
- **Pathology** - It *weakens skin's barrier function*, which is responsible for helping skin retain moisture.

7 Types of Eczema	
<b>Atopic Dermatitis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Development</b> - From inherited characteristics as well as allergic processes.</li> <li>• <b>Controlled by</b> - Using ceramide-rich moisturizers, a healthy diet, and a well-balanced lifestyle.</li> </ul>
<b>Dyshidrotic Eczema</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A stressed person with allergic issues being exposed to metal can develop.</li> <li>• Itchy blisters appears on one's feet and hands.</li> </ul>
<b>Contact Dermatitis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Allergic contact dermatitis</b> - Caused by a reaction to allergic elements, metals, cosmetics, etc.,</li> <li>• <b>Irritant contact dermatitis</b> - Caused as an immediate response to ingredients present in acids, soaps, detergents, or cleaning agents.</li> </ul>
<b>Nummular Eczema</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A <i>coin-like appearance</i> of scaly patches.</li> <li>• It usually appearing on the arms and legs.</li> </ul>
<b>Stasis Dermatitis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is a condition of very little to poor blood circulation in their legs.</li> </ul>
<b>Seborrhoeic Dermatitis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Non-contagious skin condition</b> - Patchy, red, fungal-like formations <i>and white flakes</i> around the glands that produce oil in the body.</li> </ul>

- **Challenges** - The *appearance of eczema differs across skin tones*, often leading to ***incorrect diagnoses***.
  - **In light skin tones** - Appearing red and inflamed symptoms.
  - **In dark skin tones** - Appearing purple, grey, or brown
- Several *other skin conditions have similar symptoms*.

#### Psoriasis vs. Eczema

- **Similarities** - Dry and itchy skin.
- Eczema demonstrates more inflammation.
- Psoriasis shows evident silvery scales and clear borders.

#### Fungal Infections vs. Eczema

- **Fungal infections** - Specific border characteristics that tend to appear in ring-shaped patterns.
- **Eczema** - Diffuse spreading is observed.

#### Rosacea vs. Eczema

- **Eczema** - It shows up across the body instead of only on the face.
- **Rosacea** - It makes the skin red, causing blood vessels to become visible.

- **Management** - There is no cure and can only be treated.
- Using topical steroids, *application of moisturisers*, taking *natural oatmeal baths* and implementing stress management practices.

**A topical steroid** is an anti-inflammatory preparation used to control eczema and other skin conditions.

## Reference

[The Hindu | Understanding the Different Types of Eczema](#)

## Global Dam Safety: A Growing Crisis

**Prelims** - Currents events of national and international events.

**Mains** - [General Studies III](#) | Disaster and disaster management.

## Why in news?

A study published in *Nature Water* (March 7, 2025) has highlighted the increasing failure rates of newly built dams, particularly in low-income countries.

- Dams are critical infrastructure for water management, energy and flood control.
- However, recent study indicate a rising trend of dam failures, especially in low-income countries.
- The consequences of these failures are often catastrophic, leading to significant loss of

life and property.

- **Study Conducted by** – Researchers from Deltares, IHE Delft and Imperial College London.

### Key findings of the report/study

- **Increased Failure Rate** – A study in Nature Water predicts 23 large dam failures globally by 2035.
- 4.4% of large dams have a failure probability exceeding 1/10,000.
- **Infant Mortality of Dams** – Newly constructed embankment dams have a higher failure probability in their initial years.
- Modern concrete dams exhibit greater resilience.
- **Ageing Dams** – Older embankment dams (15-70m height, built in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century) are prone to future failures.
- **Regional Disparities** – Low-income countries, particularly those in monsoon-dominated regions, show a higher rate of new dam failures.
- This coincides with areas with untapped hydropower potential.

### Factors Contributing to Failures

- Inadequate monitoring and maintenance.
- Changing hydrological scenarios (e.g., increased flooding).
- Deglaciating basins, extreme weather events, and geopolitical conflicts.
- Limited resources for upkeep.

### Reference

1. [Down to Earth | Dam Safety](#)

## Draft Telecommunications (Standards, Conformity Assessment and Certification) Rules, 2025

**Prelims** – Indian Polity and Governance

**Mains** – GS III | Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano technology, bio-technology and issues relating to intellectual property rights.

### Why in News?

*The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has released the draft Telecommunications (Standards, Conformity Assessment and Certification) Rules, 2025.*

- It revised and streamlined the framework for the **standardisation and certification of the telecom equipment** in India.
- It is notified under Section 19 of the Telecommunications Act, 2023.
- Currently, the regulatory framework governing the testing and certification of telegraph equipment is prescribed under the Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Rules, 2017.

- Once the draft is finalised, will supersede and **replace the Telegraph (Amendment) Rules, 2017.**
- However, the Draft Rules will not impact the validity of existing standards, essential requirements, specifications, testing requirements, and conformity assessments issued by the Central Government or its authorised entities.
- **Proposed changes** - The Telecommunication Engineering Centre and the National Centre for Communication Security are the authorities that can
  - o Change or review rules, standards and conformity measures;
  - o Establish guidelines for laboratories to become conformity assessment bodies and issue conformity certificates.
- Operators must ensure that the validity of their product's conformity certificate is prominently displayed.
- Exemptions for research, development, demonstration, testing, or personal use exist.
- Penalties can be imposed for non-compliance.
- A dedicated digital portal for all compliance requirements, with changes and other updates.
- The draft rules will be applicable to telecoms equipment, including original equipment manufacturers, authorised Indian representatives, importers, distributors, sellers, authorised entities, licensees and users.
- The Draft Rules seek to enhance security, standardisation, and compliance oversight, thereby strengthening India's telecom infrastructure and safeguard national telecommunications networks.

## References

[PIB | Draft Telecommunications \(Standards, Conformity Assessment and Certification\) Rules, 2025](#)

## Malleco Spiny-chest Frog (*Alsodes vittatus*)

**Prelims** - General issues on Environmental ecology, Bio-diversity and Climate Change.

**Mains** - GS III | Conservation.

## Why in News?

*Researchers discovered a rare amphibian, once thought to be extinct has resurfaced in Chile, South America recently.*

- *Alsodes vittatus* is a rare small frog known as **endemic to Chile, America.**
- **First described by** - The German-born naturalist **Rudolph Amandus Philippi** in 1902 (based on specimens collected in 1893).
- **Habitat** - Limited, in isolated mountain streams of Chile.
- **Appearance** - Adult males ranged from light brown with yellow and green hues to

olive brown, while some juveniles showed darker brown colors.

- **Distinctive feature** - A yellowish stripe running the length of its back.
- In some individuals, this stripe was prominent, while in others, it was completely absent.
- The *Alsodes vittatus* populations were found to be genetically close to *Alsodes neuquensis*, a species previously known only from Argentina.
- **Conservation Status** - Despite significant threats to the species, researchers have suggested reevaluating the frog's conservation category from Critically Endangered to Endangered.
- **Threats** - Deforestation, the expansion of livestock grazing, invasive species like introduced trout (which may prey on tadpoles), and the looming dangers of climate change.



## Reference

[Daily Galaxy | Alsodes Vittatus](#)

## Vikramshila University

*Prelims - History of India.*

*Mains - GS I | Indian Heritage and Culture.*

## Why in News?

*A decade after the revival of Nalanda University in Rajgir, the process of reviving another ancient centre of learning ' Vikramashila University' in Bihar has gained momentum.*

- **Location** - Situated in Bhagalpur, Bihar, along the banks of the river Ganges.
- **Founded by** - **King Dharmapala** of the Pala dynasty in the late 8<sup>th</sup> to early 9<sup>th</sup> Century AD.
- It simultaneously existed and flourished during Nalanda's time.
- **Architecture** - Cruciform brick stupa is the centrepiece of the Vikramshila site.
- All around the stupa are the cells, 208 of them, 52 on each side where student-monks

of one of the most splendid universities of its times practised Tantrayana.

*Tantrayana is the last of the 3 great vehicles of Indian Buddhism after Hinayana and Mahayana.*

- It included a library equipped with a **unique cooling system**, channeling water from a nearby reservoir to preserve delicate manuscripts.
- **Education** - Vikramshila was the only university that specialised in tantric and occult studies.
- At its peak, subjects such as theology, philosophy, grammar, metaphysics and logic were taught at Vikramshila.
- The university produced several eminent scholars, among them, **Atisa Dipankara**, who played a key role in the establishment of Buddhism in Tibet.
- Vikramashila attracted numerous teachers and students, it is said that during the time of **King Ramapala** there were 160 teachers and 1,000 students.
- Students flocked to the university from all over north India as well as Kashmir, Java, Nepal and Tibet.
- Nalanda is the older of the two universities; at one point, the two centres of learning, which had a typical patron in King Dharmapala, exchanged knowledge and even teachers, who were called **Acharyas**.
- **Downfall** - It was destroyed by **Muhammad Bin Bakhtiyar Khalji**'s forces Around 1203 AD.
- **Revival** - Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has, since December last year, been developing the site of the ancient Vikramshila university to attract more tourists.

## Reference

[The Indian Express | Vikramshila university](#)

## GSAT-18

**Prelims** - General Science.

**Mains** - GS III | Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano technology, bio-technology and issues relating to intellectual property rights.

## Why in News?

*Parliament's Public Accounts Committee has expressed "dismay" at the avoidable expenditure on the launch of GSAT-18 communication satellite, which had 6 extended C-band transponders for use in 2027.*

- It is a **high-power satellite** being inducted into the INSAT/GSAT system.
- **Purpose** - It aims to augment and support existing telecommunication, television, Digital Satellite News Gathering (DSNG), and VSAT services in India.
- It is designed to provide continuity of services on operational satellites in C-band,

Extended C-band and Ku-bands.

- **Mission Life** - About 15 years.
- **Type of Satellite** - Communication.
- **Manufacturer** - ISRO.
- **Orbit Type** - GSO (Geosynchronous Orbit).

## References

1. [Business Standard | GSAT-18 communication satellite](#)
2. [ISRO | GSAT-18](#)

### One Liners 28-03-2025

#### History, Art and Culture

##### **India's Cultural Outreach: Global Engagement Scheme**

*Recently, Ministry of Culture implements "Global Engagement Scheme" to promote India's rich cultural heritage internationally and enhance India's global image.*

- **Scheme Objective** - Aims to elevate India's global cultural profile and strengthen international ties.
- **Festival of India** - Showcasing diverse Indian art forms globally, including folk, classical, and contemporary performances, through "Festival of India" events.
- **Indo-Foreign Cultural Societies** - Providing grants to foster cultural exchange and friendship between India and foreign nations.
- **ICCR's Role** - The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) promotes Indian culture through centers worldwide, teaching arts, organizing events, and leveraging digital platforms.
- **Digital Promotion** - Utilizing digital and social media to enhance cultural outreach and promote Indian heritage.
- **Digital Platforms & Initiatives** - ICCR's AIMS, A2A (Admission 2 Alumni), and Gyan Setu portals streamline global operations, student admissions, and scholarship distribution.
- **Universalization of Traditional Indian Knowledge Systems (UTIKS)** - Platform offers online courses on Indian knowledge systems.



### **Swadesh Darshan (SD) Scheme**

*After an in-depth evaluation, the Ministry of Tourism has revamped this initiative, now called Swadesh Darshan 2.0, aiming to foster sustainable and responsible tourism destinations.*

- **Launched in** - 2015.
- It is 100% centrally funded scheme.
- Under the scheme, the Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance to State governments, Union Territory Administrations or Central Agencies for development of tourism infrastructure in the country.
- **Original Scheme (SD 1.0)** - Thematic circuits were developed, encompassing multiple destinations per circuit, to boost tourism.
- **Scheme Revamp (SD 2.0)** - Aiming for sustainable and responsible tourism, SD 2.0 focuses on delineated areas and includes niche tourism elements.
- **Impact Assessment (SD 1.0)** - A 2019 study by the National Productivity Council highlighted the scheme's positive impact on local livelihood and employment during construction phases.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation (SD 2.0)** - SD 2.0 guidelines mandate regular evaluation and monitoring based on various parameters to ensure project success.

### **Sri Sri Harichand Thakur: Social Reformer**

*PM pays tribute to Sri Sri Harichand Thakur Ji on his Jayanti*

- **Birth and Background:** Born in 1812 in Orakandi, Bangladesh, Harichand Thakur belonged to a peasant farmer family of the Thakur (SC) community.
- **Matua Sect Foundation:** He established the Matua sect, a Vaishnavite Hinduism offshoot, based on truth, love, and sanity.
- **Rejection of Traditional Teachings** - Thakur differed from earlier Hindu saints, emphasizing family life and work as integral to spiritual fulfillment.
- **Social Upliftment** - His teachings resonated with the Namasudra community, challenging caste oppression and attracting other marginalized groups.
- **Divine Status** - Followers consider him an avatar of Vishnu or Krishna, addressing him as Sri Sri Harichand Thakur.
- **Legacy** - He dedicated his life to improving the lives of oppressed and deprived people in pre-independence Bengal, passing away in 1878.

### **Social Issues**

#### **PM VIKAS: Uplifting Minority Communities**

- **Scheme** - Is a Central Sector Scheme, consolidates five former initiatives to empower six notified minority communities. (Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Jain and Zorastrians (Parsis))
- **Skilling and Training** - Provides both traditional and non-traditional skill development opportunities.
- **Women Empowerment** - Focuses on leadership and entrepreneurship programs for women.
- **Educational Support** - Facilitates education through the National Institute of Open Schooling.
- **Infrastructure Development** - Integrates with the Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram for infrastructure improvements.
- **Credit Linkages** - Connects beneficiaries with loan programs from the National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC).
- **Implementation and Outreach** - The Ministry is currently processing proposals and collaborating with government entities. Awareness is spread through events like Hunar Haat, Lok Samvardhan Parv, and digital media.

### **Polity & Governance**



### **India Measures to improve dak services in rural areas**

*Recently, Revenue generated by post offices is tracked at various levels at regular intervals. The Department has implemented several initiatives to enhance postal services in rural regions.*

- **Real-Time Delivery** - Mobile app updates provide delivery status during door-to-door service.
- **Digitalized Branch Post Offices** - Equipped with digital tools for various transactions (postal, financial, and insurance).
- **Enhanced Savings Access** - Internet banking, mobile banking, eKYC, and e-Passbook improve convenience.
- **Streamlined Parcel Delivery** - Has been established to streamline parcel distribution through mechanized delivery.

### **Zero Hour: Indian Parliamentary Innovation**

- **Unique Origin** - Zero Hour is an Indian Parliament creation, not found in formal rulebooks.
- **Timing** - It follows Question Hour, preceding the day's agenda.
- **Informal Mechanism** - Not in the Rules of Procedure, it allows raising issues without notice.
- **Duration** - Begins post-Question Hour, ending when the House's daily business starts.
- **Purpose** - Provides MPs an avenue for immediate, unplanned issue presentation.
- **Historical Context** - This practice, an Indian innovation, has been operational since 1962.

## **Economy**

### **Treasury Bills**

*The Government of India, in consultation with Reserve Bank of India, hereby, notifies the calendar for the issuance of Treasury Bills for the quarter ending June 2025.*

- **Definition** - Treasury Bills (T-bills) are short-term government debt instruments, allowing investors to park surplus funds.
- **Issuance** - Auctioned by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) at a discount to face value.
- **Market Context** - T-bills operate within India's money market, alongside commercial bills.
- **Issuer Distinction** - T-bills are issued by the Central Government, while commercial bills are issued by financial institutions.
- **Risk Advantage** - T-bills have zero risk weightage, due to their sovereign backing.
- **Liquidity** - High liquidity is ensured by short-term maturities, such as 91 and 364 days.
- **Who can buy** - Individuals, trusts, institutions and banks can purchase T-Bills. But they are usually held by financial institutions.

### White Revolution 2.0: Cooperative Dairy Expansion

*The Ministry of Cooperation has launched cooperative-led "White Revolution 2.0" aimed at expanding cooperative coverage, employment generation and women's empowerment.*

- **Objective**- Aims to increase dairy cooperative milk procurement by 50% within five years.
- **SOP and Targets**- Launched on September 19, 2024, the initiative targets 1007 lakh kg of daily procurement by 2028-29.
- **Strategies** - Achieving this through expanding dairy cooperative coverage and deepening their reach.
- **Implementation** - Plans include establishing 75,000 new Dairy Cooperative Societies (DCSs) in uncovered areas and strengthening 46,422 existing ones.
- **Women Empowerment** - Recognizing women's crucial role in dairy farming, the initiative seeks to empower them by bringing more into the organized cooperative sector.
- **Punjab Initiative** - Punjab aims to create 2,378 new DCSs and strengthen 2,440, with 87 already registered, contributing to the national goal. **NDDB (National Dairy Development Board is a statutory body)** will coordinate the activities.

### Wholesale Price Index (WPI): Tracking Wholesale Inflation

*The annual rate of inflation based on all India Wholesale Price Index (WPI) number is 2.38% (provisional) for the month of February, 2025 (over February, 2024).*

- **Definition**: WPI measures price changes of goods before retail, indicating wholesale-level inflation.
- **Scope**- Excludes services, focusing solely on commodity prices.
- **Issuing Authority**- Released by the Office of Economic Adviser, DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- **Base Year** - The current base year for WPI calculation is 2011-2012.
- **Index Categories** - The WPI basket comprises three main categories: Manufactured Products (64.2%), Primary Articles (22.6%), and Fuel & Power (13.2%).
- **Purpose** - Provides a macroeconomic overview of price fluctuations at the wholesale stage of the economy.

### Miscellaneous

#### Digital Bharat Nidhi & NABARD: Rural Digital Empowerment

*Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN) under Department of Telecommunications (DoT), signed a MoU with National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) for Digital Rural Empowerment for rural areas of the across the country.*

- **Partnership Objective** - To enhance rural development via digital services and high-speed broadband under BharatNet.
- **Reference Data Sharing** - Geo-coordinates and contact details of rural institutions will be shared, enabling targeted broadband connectivity.
- **Digital Content & Services** - Both entities will exchange digital content and integrate their digital services for wider dissemination.
- **Capacity Building** - Joint awareness programs will empower rural entrepreneurs and institutions.
- **Digital Economy Promotion** - Leveraging BharatNet, they will foster a digital economy through high-speed broadband access.
- **Information & Communication Technology (ICT) Infrastructure Inclusion** - NABARD will integrate ICT infrastructure into its schemes, ensuring broadband support for rural institutions.



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