



DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 02-01-2025

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World Audio Visual Entertainment Summit(WAVES) 2025

Syllabus: GS-1; Art & Culture.

Context:

The upcoming **World Audio Visual Entertainment Summit (WAVES) 2025**, hosted by India, represents a significant milestone in showcasing the nation's creative potential and cultural heritage.

The initiative, spearheaded by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, highlights the critical role of young creators and honors the contributions of legendary figures in Indian cinema.

Significance of WAVES 2025

- **Global Platform:** WAVES 2025 will unite industry leaders, creators, and innovators to discuss trends, challenges, and opportunities in the global audio-visual sector.
- **Cultural Diplomacy:** Hosting the summit reinforces India's vision to expand its cultural influence globally.
- **Economic Impact:** The event will promote the growth of India's creative industries, aligning with the country's broader economic development goals.

Empowering Young Creators

- **Innovation Drivers:** Young creators bring fresh ideas and perspectives, essential for shaping meaningful discussions and driving innovation within the creative economy.
- **Youth-Centric Approach:** Prime Minister Modi underscored the energy and enthusiasm of India's youth as pivotal for building a robust creator economy and fostering sustainable growth in the sector.

Tribute to Indian Cinema Legends

- **Celebrating Excellence:** Prime Minister Modi recently honored iconic figures in Indian cinema on their 100th birth anniversaries:
 - **Raj Kapoor:** Renowned for portraying India's cultural richness through timeless films.
 - **Mohammed Rafi:** Celebrated for a voice that transcends generations, embodying the spirit of Indian music.
 - **Akkineni Nageswara Rao:** Remembered for his transformative role in Telugu cinema and preserving Indian traditions.
- **Legacy and Inspiration:** These legends symbolize the golden age of Indian cinema, serving as inspirations for new generations of creators. Their work underscores the importance of cultural preservation amidst modern advancements.

Conclusion

WAVES 2025 is poised to be a landmark event, offering a unique opportunity for India to assert its leadership in the global creative landscape. By emphasizing the contributions of young creators and drawing inspiration from the enduring legacy of its cinema legends, India is set to redefine its cultural narrative on the world stage.

Rupee Depreciation Against the Dollar

Syllabus: GS-3: Indian Economy – Trade

Context:

- The Indian rupee has breached the psychological barrier of ₹85 against the US dollar, reaching its all-time low.

Internal Economic Challenges

Slowing Growth, Rising Worries:

- GDP growth has hit a three-quarter low, shaking investor confidence.
- Manufacturing and industrial production remain underwhelming.

Trade Imbalance Pressures:

- A growing trade deficit, driven by rising crude oil imports and sluggish exports, strains the rupee.
- Higher import bills create excess demand for dollars.

Inflation's Double Whammy:

- High domestic inflation weakens the rupee's value and deters investments.
- Costlier imports of energy and technology exacerbate price pressures.

Global Forces at Play

Dollar Dominance:

- The US dollar's strength stems from robust US economic performance and investor preference for stability.

Federal Reserve's Tight Grip:

- Hawkish monetary policies in the US attract capital flows away from emerging markets like India.

Global Uncertainty Fuels the Dollar:

- Geopolitical tensions, energy crises, and supply chain disruptions drive investors toward safer currencies.

- Impact of Rupee Depreciation: Challenges and Opportunities

The Dark Side

Soaring Import Costs:

- Higher costs for crude oil, fertilizers, and technology translate into increased inflation.

Capital Flight Risk:

- Foreign investors withdrawing funds drain forex reserves and impact market stability.

Corporate Setbacks:

- Firms relying on imported inputs face higher costs, while foreign-currency loans become costlier to repay.

Pressure on Reserves and Fiscal Health:

- RBI interventions to stabilize the rupee reduce forex reserves.
- Increased import bills can widen the fiscal deficit, challenging economic stability.

The Silver Lining

Competitive Exports:

- Indian goods become more attractive in global markets, boosting export-driven sectors like IT and textiles.

Push for Self-Reliance:

- Costlier imports encourage domestic production, reducing reliance on foreign goods.

Window for Structural Reforms:

- The depreciation highlights the need for reforms to strengthen domestic industries and reduce import dependency.

Navigating the Storm: Policy Actions

Short-Term Measures

RBI in Action:

- Stabilize the rupee through forex market interventions and strategic interest rate adjustments.

Taming Inflation:

- Tight monetary policies, including repo rate hikes, to ease inflationary pressures.

Building Long-Term Resilience

Strengthening Domestic Manufacturing:

- Bolster initiatives like “Make in India” to reduce import dependency, especially in critical sectors.

Boosting Export Potential:

Provide targeted incentives to diversify export products and markets.

Achieving Energy Independence:

- Invest in renewable energy and expand domestic energy production to lower crude oil dependency.

Upgrading Infrastructure:

- Enhance trade and logistics to support export growth and domestic manufacturing efficiency.

Strategic Priorities for Stability

Smart Spending:

- Focus on productive investments while minimizing unproductive expenditures.

Securing Forex Reserves:

- Diversify reserves to safeguard against external shocks.

Strengthening Global Ties:

- Deepen trade relations with stable economies to attract investments and expand markets.

Mitigating Geopolitical Risks:

- Proactively address tensions affecting trade and energy prices through diplomacy.

Conclusion

- The rupee's historic depreciation highlights vulnerabilities in India's economy amid global volatility. With strategic fiscal and monetary policies, coupled with bold reforms, these challenges can serve as a stepping stone toward economic resilience and sustainable growth.

Norovirus

Syllabus: GS-3: General Science – diseases

Context:

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has reported a significant increase in norovirus cases across the United States this winter.
- Early December saw double the usual number of cases, raising concerns among health officials.

About Norovirus

Often called the “winter vomiting bug” or stomach flu, norovirus causes inflammation of the stomach and intestines, leading to vomiting and diarrhea. Symptoms include:

- **Nausea**
- **Stomach pain**
- **Body aches**
- **Headaches**
- **Weakness**

Transmission of Norovirus

Norovirus is highly contagious, requiring just 10 viral particles to cause infection. It spreads through:

- **Contact with infected individuals**
- **Contaminated food or beverages**
- **Touching infected surfaces**

Poor hand hygiene plays a significant role in transmission. Vulnerable groups, such as children under five and adults over 85, face a higher risk of severe illness.

Symptoms and Duration

- **Onset:** Symptoms appear 12 hours to two days after exposure.
- **Duration:** They usually last one to two days.
- **Severity:** Symptoms like severe nausea and frequent vomiting can strike suddenly.

Treatment and Recovery

Currently, no specific treatment exists for norovirus, as antibiotics are ineffective against viruses. Recovery focuses on managing symptoms, with the CDC emphasizing the importance of staying hydrated through fluids such as sports drinks or Pedialyte.

Prevention Measures

The CDC recommends these practices to curb the spread of norovirus:

- **Stay home** for at least two days after symptoms subside.
- **Wash hands** frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- **Disinfect surfaces** thoroughly.
- **Clean food properly:** Wash fruits, vegetables, and shellfish.
- **Wash contaminated clothing** in hot water.

Adhering to these measures can significantly reduce infection risks and help control outbreaks.

First Made-in-India Surgical Robot

Syllabus: GS-3: Science and Technology – Medical Science.

Context:

The SSI Mantra, India's first indigenous surgical robot, represents a significant leap in the country's medical technology landscape.

Recently installed at the **Noble Hospital and Research Centre in Pune, Maharashtra**, the system has gained **approval from the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO)**. Marathi actor **Prasad Oak** attended the installation ceremony, underscoring the achievement in India's healthcare advancements.

Key Features of SSI Mantra

- **Five Robotic Arms:** Enhances precision and flexibility during surgical procedures.
- **3D HD Headset:** Provides surgeons with an immersive view of the operating field.
- **Vision Cart:** Offers advanced 3D 4K imaging for superior clarity and control.

Applications in Surgery

The SSI Mantra is equipped to handle a wide array of surgeries, including:

- **General Surgery**
- **Cardiac and Thoracic Procedures**
- **Urology**
- **Gynecology**
- **Complex Surgical Operations**

The robot's first use at Noble Hospital was a **robotic right extended hemicolectomy** performed on a colon cancer patient, showcasing its capability in complex procedures.

Advantages of Robotic Surgery

- **Minimally Invasive:** Tiny fingertip-sized incisions reduce physical trauma.
- **Faster Recovery:** Patients experience reduced pain, quicker healing, and a faster return to daily activities.
- **Enhanced Surgeon Control:** The console with a 3D monitor and safety camera allows precise manipulation of surgical instruments.

Development and Expansion

Developed in **2017** by **Dr. Sudhir Srivastava**, the SSI Mantra features a modular design with detachable arms for diverse surgical needs. Installations include:

- **Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute, New Delhi**
- **Hospitals in Hyderabad and Raipur**

Telesurgery and Teleproctoring

The SSI Mantra is the **first CDSCO-approved surgical robot for Telesurgery and Teleproctoring**, enabling:

- Remote surgeries in underserved areas.
- Training for medical professionals via telecommunication technology.

International Reach

- Beyond India, the SSI Mantra has been installed at **B&B Hospital in Lalitpur, Nepal**, reflecting its potential to revolutionize surgical practices internationally.
- The installation at Noble Hospital represents a **milestone for India's healthcare innovation**, making advanced surgical technology more accessible and signaling the nation's progress in indigenous medical advancements.

Stellaria bengalensis

Syllabus: GS-3: Biodiversity.

Context:

- The discovery of **Stellaria bengalensis** in Kalimpong, West Bengal, highlights the rich biodiversity of India's Himalayan region and underscores the importance of continued botanical exploration.

Discovery Details

- **Researchers:** Arya S. (PSG College of Arts and Science) and Harsh Singh (North-Eastern Hill University).
- **Publication:** Findings published in the journal *Phytotaxa*.
- **Context:** *Stellaria bengalensis* is the second *Stellaria* species discovered in India this year. Earlier, in May, ***Stellaria mcclintockiae*** was identified in the Nelliampathy Hills of Kerala, showcasing the diverse habitats these species occupy.

Habitat and Altitude

- **Location:** Sangser forest, Kalimpong district, West Bengal.
- **Altitude:** Found between 2,245 and 2,450 meters, indicating a preference for high-altitude, specific ecological niches.
- **Habitat:** Both new species thrive on muddy slopes, emphasizing their dependence on unique environmental conditions.

Plant Characteristics

- **Type:** Small annual herb.
- **Height:** Ranges from 8 to 10.5 cm.
- **Flowers:** White, without bracts, with short petals hidden within the sepals.
- **Seeds:** Produces pointed seeds.
- **Blooming Season:** Flowers from May to September.

Distribution and Conservation

- **Stellaria in India:** Approximately 22 species, mostly found in the Himalayan region.
- **Potential Range:** Researchers believe *Stellaria bengalensis* may also exist in parts of the western Himalayas.
- **Conservation Status:** Classified as "Data Deficient" by the IUCN, highlighting the necessity for detailed studies to assess its population, threats, and conservation requirements.

Significance

The discovery of *Stellaria bengalensis* emphasizes:

- **Biodiversity:** The Himalayan region's role as a biodiversity hotspot.
- **Ecological Insights:** The ecological adaptations of *Stellaria* species to specific habitats.
- **Conservation Importance:** The urgent need for research to ensure the protection of such newly discovered species.

This discovery enhances our understanding of India's flora and the ecological importance of preserving unique habitats.