DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 20-11-2025

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1. Raulane Festival

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Raulane Festival

Syllabus: GS-1; Art & Culture

Context

> Vibrant images of the centuries-old Raulane festival from Himachal Pradesh recently went viral, highlighting its unique rituals and cultural significance.

About the Raulane Festival

> A traditional festival of **Kalpa, Kinnaur (Himachal Pradesh)**, celebrated in **winter or early spring**.
> Believed to be **around 5,000 years old**.
> Honours **Saunis** – celestial fairies believed to protect villagers during harsh winters.
> Two men symbolically "marry" and embody the divine couple **Raula (groom)** and **Raulane (bride)**.
> Participants wear **woollen robes, ornaments, and distinctive masks**.
> A slow, devotional dance is performed at the **Nagin Narayan Temple**, with community participation.
> The festival preserves ancient **Himalayan cultural and spiritual traditions**.

New Initiatives to Improve the Public Distribution System

Syllabus: GS-2; Government policies and Interventions

Context

➤ The Ministry of Food and Public Distribution has launched major digital tools to modernise warehousing, streamline supply chains, and improve transparency in PDS.

ASHA (Anna Sahayata Holistic AI Solution)

➤ AI-based feedback platform for PDS beneficiaries via multilingual AI calls.
➤ Cost: ₹5 lakh; reaches 20 lakh beneficiaries monthly.
➤ Uses translation, sentiment analysis, automated grievance sorting, and real-time dashboards.
➤ Developed with Wadhwani Foundation and supported by India AI (Bhashini).

Bhandaran 360

➤ New ERP system of Central Warehousing Corporation.
➤ Integrates 41 modules + 35 external systems (ICEGATE, FCI, NAFED, ports, WDRA).
➤ Features: Single Sign-On, encryption, audit trails, real-time dashboards, chatbots, RPA, predictive analytics.
➤ Adds HRMS, SAP FICO, smart material management, biometric attendance, mobile apps.

Smart EXIM Warehouse System

➤ For container freight stations and general warehouses.
➤ Uses AI, IoT, FASTag, OCR/ANPR, GNSS.
➤ Key features: Gate automation, Digital Twin-based yard management, real-time smart inventory tracking.

ANNA DARPAN

➤ FCI's new microservices-based platform replacing Depot Online System.
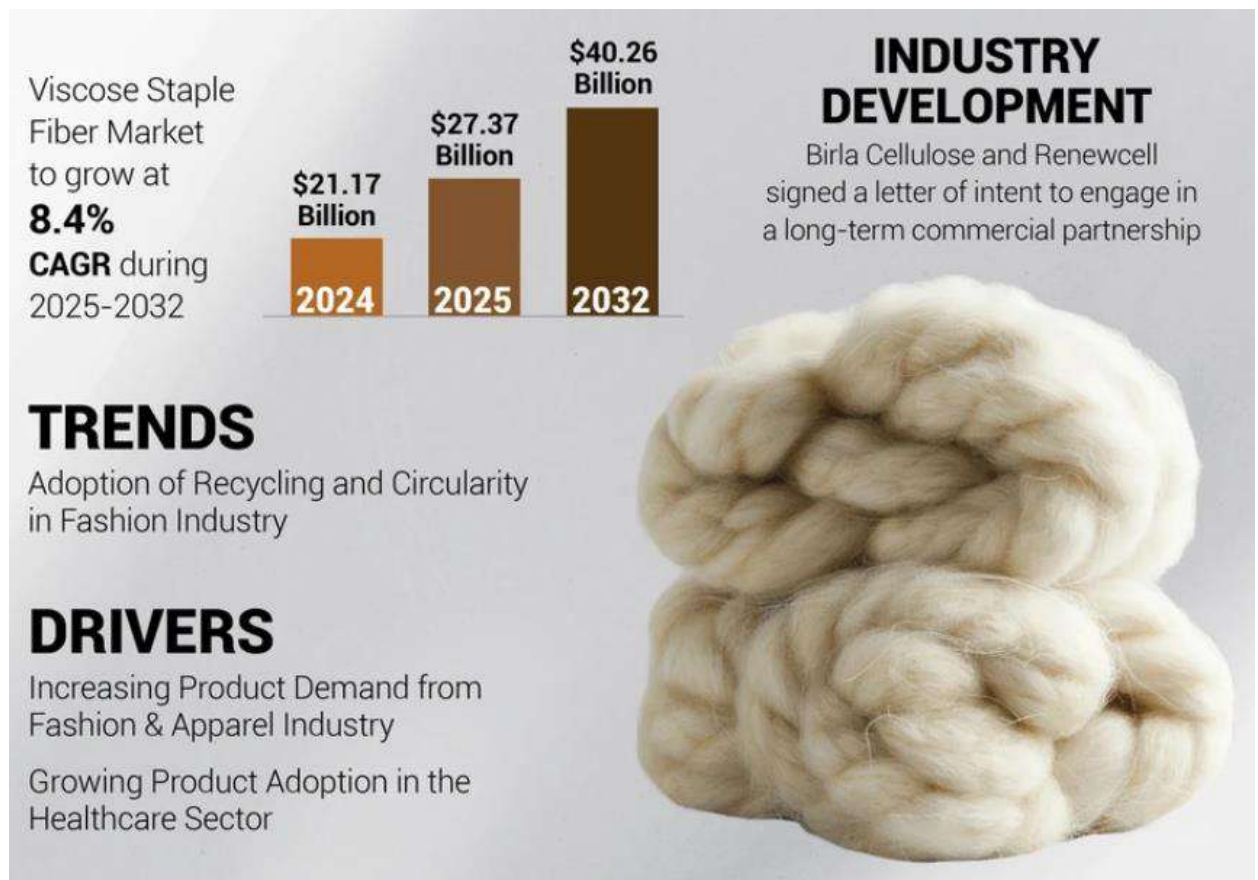➤ Integrates procurement, storage, movement, sales, quality checks, labour and contract management.

➢ Provides mobile-first access, unified data, and real-time dashboards across the supply chain.

Viscose Staple Fibre (VSF)

Syllabus: GS-3; Agriculture

Context

➢ The Central Government has **revoked the Quality Control Order (QCO)** requirement for **Viscose Staple Fibre (VSF)** with immediate effect.

About Viscose Staple Fibre

➢ A **natural, biodegradable fibre** with properties similar to cotton.
➢ Produced by regenerating natural materials like **cotton linters** or **wood pulp**.

Production Process

- Cellulose from wood/plant fibres is converted into **cellulose xanthate**, forming a **viscous solution**.
- This is chemically processed and spun into fibres.

Key Characteristics

- Acts as a **substitute for cotton or polyester**.
- **Highly breathable**, good **moisture absorbency**, and comfortable.
- **Lightweight**, blends easily with other fibres, and has **excellent colour retention**.
- Chemically resembles cotton but can be engineered for varied qualities.

Applications

- Widely used in **fashion & apparel**, **home textiles**, **dress materials**, **knitted wear**, and **non-woven products**.

African Swine Fever

Syllabus: GS-3; General Science

Context

- The Assam Government has **banned inter-district movement of live pigs** to contain the spread of African Swine Fever (ASF), a highly contagious and fatal disease in pigs.

About ASF

- A **highly contagious, hemorrhagic viral disease** affecting **pigs and wild boars**.
- **Not zoonotic** – does **not** infect humans or other livestock.
- Causes **90–100% mortality**, leading to severe economic losses.

➤ First detected in **sub-Saharan Africa**; now widespread in **Europe, Asia, and Africa**.
➤ **India's first outbreak:** January 2020 in **Assam & Arunachal Pradesh**.

Transmission

➤ Virus survives for long on **clothes, boots, vehicles**, and in pork products (ham, bacon, sausages).
➤ Spread through:
  o Direct contact between pigs/boars
  o **Soft ticks** in tropical/subtropical regions
  o Contaminated feed/equipment/materials

Symptoms

➤ Fever, weakness, loss of appetite
➤ Red skin, inflamed eyes
➤ Vomiting and **bloody diarrhea**
➤ Symptoms mimic **Classical Swine Fever**

Prevention

➤ **No treatment or vaccine** available.
➤ Strict **biosecurity**, isolation, and **culling** of infected animals are the only effective measures.

Leadership Group for Industry Transition (LeadIT)

Syllabus: GS-3; International Institutions

Context

➤ Recently, the Union Environment Minister addressed the **LeadIT Industry Leaders' Roundtable** during **UNFCCC COP30 at Belém, Brazil**.

About LeadIT

> ➤ **Launched:** 2019 by **India and Sweden** at the UN Climate Action Summit.
> ➤ **Supported by:** World Economic Forum.
> ➤ **Focus:** First global high-level initiative targeting **net-zero emissions in heavy industries**.
> ➤ **Goal:** Enable countries and companies to achieve **net-zero industrial emissions by 2050**.

Functions

> ➤ Promotes **public–private partnerships**.

➢ Facilitates **policy frameworks**, **finance mobilisation**, and **sharing of best practices** for a **just and inclusive industry transition**.

LeadIT 2.0 (2024–26) – Launched at COP28, Dubai

Focus areas:

1. **Inclusive & Just Industry Transition**
2. **Co-development & transfer of low-carbon technologies**
3. **Financial support to emerging economies**

➢ Guided by a **three-year Mission Statement (2024–26)** adopted at COP28.

Other Details

➢ **Secretariat:** Stockholm Environment Institute.
➢ **Membership: 18 countries** and **27 companies**.