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DAILY GK BYTES- 1/7/2025

1.337 tonnes of Union Carbide waste incinerated: residue to be buried:-

Context:-

- 337 tonnes of toxic waste from the Union Carbide factory (Bhopal gas tragedy site) has been completely incinerated.
- Marks a major step in concluding one of India's longest-running environmental clean-up efforts.

Key Facts:-

- Incineration site: Ramky Group's Industrial Waste Management plant, Pithampur, Dhar district, Madhya Pradesh.
- Incineration duration: Began on May 5, 2025, completed in 55 days (including breaks).
- Waste was moved from Bhopal on January 2, 2025.
- Remaining: 21 tonnes of mud-like waste still being incinerated.

Disposal & Environmental Measures:-

- Total ash/residue: Around 850 tonnes expected after full incineration.
- Final disposal: Will be safely buried in scientific landfill sites following environmental protocols to protect soil and groundwater.

Background: Bhopal Gas Tragedy:-

- Occurred in 1984, due to leak of methyl isocyanate (MIC) gas.

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- Official death toll: 5,479
- Over 5 lakh people suffered long-term health consequences.
- Site remained contaminated for decades due to improper disposal of toxic waste.

2. Manipur civil groups meet officials in Delhi - seeking peace

plan:-

Context:-

- Three civil society groups from Manipur met Union Home Ministry officials on June 30, 2025, to discuss a roadmap for peace and governance restoration in the violence-hit state.

Key Groups Involved:-

- Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI)
- All Manipur United Clubs' Organisation (AMUCO)
- Federation of Civil Society Organisations (FOCS)
- The delegation included both Meitei and non-Meitei members.

Political Context:-

- President's Rule imposed in Manipur since February 13, 2025.
- No assurance given by the Centre on ending it soon.

Main Demands Raised:-

- Free movement on highways
- Security for farmers near buffer zones
- Action against illegal migrants
- Resettlement of internally displaced persons
- Clarification on the May 20 'Manipur' bus incident
- Allegation: Security forces attempted to cover the word "Manipur" on a state transport bus during the Shirui Lily festival in Ukhrul.

Officials Present:-

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- A.K. Mishra, Adviser (Northeast), Ministry of Home Affairs
- Officials from the Intelligence Bureau (IB)

3. After 5-year gap, Railways announce 'rationalisation' of fares from July 1:-

- Effective from: July 1, 2025

Context:-

- The Ministry of Railways has announced a fare hike after a 5-year gap, citing the need for financial sustainability and streamlined fare structure.
- Described as a rationalisation, not a blanket hike.

» Key Fare Revisions:-

Non-Suburban, Ordinary Trains (Non-AC):

- 2nd Class Fare increased by 0.5 paisa/km
 - ◇ No change for travel up to 500 km
 - ◇ ₹5 hike: 501–1,500 km
 - ◇ ₹10 hike: 1,501–2,500 km
 - ◇ ₹15 hike: 2,501–3,000 km

- Sleeper & First Class: +0.5 paisa/km

Mail & Express Trains (Non-AC):-

- 2nd & 1st Class: +1 paisa/km

AC Classes (All Trains):-

- All AC categories (Chair Car, 3-Tier, 2-Tier, First AC, Executive, Anubhuti): +2 paise/km

Premium Trains Affected:-

- Fare hike applies to:
 - ◇ Rajdhani, Shatabdi, Duronto, Vande Bharat, Tejas, Humsafar, Amrit Bharat, Gatimaan, Jan Shatabdi, Yuva Express, Anubhuti, AC Vistadome, etc.

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No Change In:

- Suburban fares, Season tickets
- Reservation fees, superfast surcharge
- GST (levied as per applicable norms)

Railway Stats (FY 2024–25):-

- 715 crore passengers carried
- 634 crore: Unreserved
- 81 crore: AC & Sleeper
- Passenger revenue: ₹75,750 crore

4.683 species added to India's fauna, 433 taxa to its flora during 2024:-

Context:-

- India recorded a major biodiversity update in 2024 with 683 new faunal additions and 433 new floral taxa, highlighting its rich ecological diversity.
- Announced by Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav in Kolkata.

Fauna Discoveries:-

- Total: 683 species
- 459 new species
- 224 new records

Top States (Faunal Discoveries):

- Kerala – 101 (80 new species)
- Karnataka – 82
- Arunachal Pradesh – 72
- Tamil Nadu – 63
- West Bengal – 56
- Andaman & Nicobar Islands – 43

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Key Fauna Highlights:

- 2 new genera of reptiles
- 37 reptile species
- 5 amphibian species
- Notable discovery: *Anguiculus dicaprio* (Colubridae family), named after Leonardo DiCaprio.

Flora Discoveries:

- Total: 433 taxa
- 410 species, 23 infra-specific taxa

Top States (Floral Discoveries):

- Kerala – 58
- Maharashtra – 45
- Uttarakhand – 40

Key Floral Categories:

- Angiosperms – 154
- Fungi – 156
- Lichens – 63
- Bryophytes, Algae, Pteridophytes, Microbes – 60+

Significant Plant Discoveries:

- Orchids like *Bulbophyllum gopalianum*, *Coelogyne tripurensis*, *Gastrodia indica*, and *Gastrodia sikkimensis*.

Biodiversity Hotspots:-

- Western Ghats and Northeast India contributed to 35% of total discoveries.
- India's documented plant species now exceed 56,000.

5. Pakistan calls upon India to restore Indus Waters Treaty:-

Context:-

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- On June 27, 2025, the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA), The Hague issued a supplemental award concerning the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT).
- Following this, Pakistan has urged India to resume normal treaty operations, suspended by India since May 2025.

Background: Indus Waters Treaty (1960)

- A bilateral water-sharing agreement brokered by the World Bank.
- Signed between India and Pakistan in 1960.
- Allocates:
 - ◇ Eastern rivers (Ravi, Beas, Sutlej) to India
 - ◇ Western rivers (Indus, Jhelum, Chenab) to Pakistan
- One of the most durable water-sharing treaties globally, even during times of war.

Point of Contention:-

- Pakistan objected to design features of two Indian hydropower projects:
 - ◇ Kishenganga (Jammu & Kashmir)
 - ◇ Ratle (Jammu & Kashmir)
- Took the issue to the PCA under Treaty dispute resolution mechanisms.

India's Stand:-

- India does not recognise the PCA's jurisdiction in this matter.
- India's MEA rejected the supplemental award, calling it non-binding and legally invalid.

Pakistan's Response:-

- Claims the PCA's award vindicates its position that:
 - ◇ The IWT remains valid and operational.
 - ◇ India must resume engagement and compliance with the treaty