



# **DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS**

**>> 01 JULY 2025**

## NATIONAL AFFAIRS

### 1. Cabinet Approves ₹99,446 Crore ELI Scheme to Create 3.5 Crore Jobs Over Two Years.



On July 1, 2025, the Union Cabinet, chaired by PM Narendra Modi, approved the Employment-Linked Incentive (ELI) Scheme—a ₹99,446 crore initiative aimed at creating over 3.5 crore formal jobs between August 2025 and July 2027, through direct incentives for first-time hires and employers.

- The scheme offers a one-month EPF wage subsidy (up to ₹15,000)—distributed in two parts—to first-time employees registered via EPFO earning up to ₹1 lakh/month. Eligibility is tracked through the EPFO database, and includes a mandatory financial literacy module for releasing the second installment.

- Employers also receive monthly incentives (₹1,000–₹3,000) per new employee retained for at least six months. Under this framework, manufacturing firms hiring additional staff can claim these incentives for up to four years, while other sectors are covered for two years.

- The scheme prominently targets young first-time workers, aiming to bring 1.92 crore new entrants into formal employment via EPFO registration. It is expected to formalize jobs previously outside the social security net.

### Key Points:-

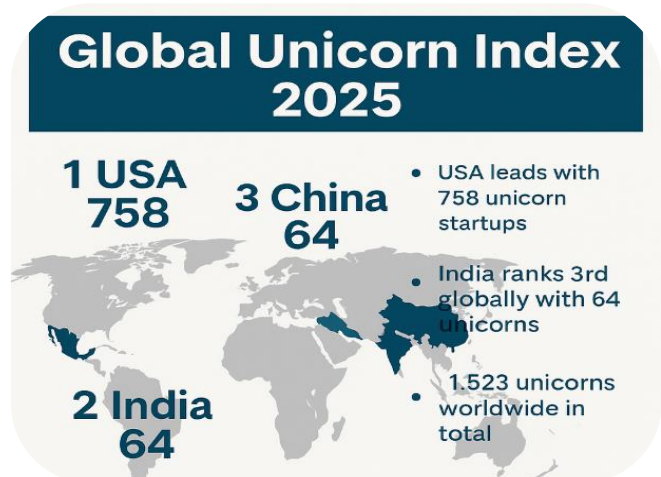
(i) A special feature ensures digital transparency: subsidies to employees and employers will be disbursed through Aadhaar-linked DBT and EPFO/PAN accounts, minimizing leakages and ensuring accountability.

(ii) Labor Minister Bhupender Yadav (MoLE) clarified that employee subsidies apply to first-time jobholders, identified via EPFO data, while employers must meet hiring criteria—minimum two for micro-firms, five for larger units—with wage and retention norms verified digitally.

(iii) The ELI scheme aligns with the Union Budget 2024–25 employment package, complementing initiatives by MSDE and MoLE. It also forms part of a broader strategy to skilling and formalisation, alongside RDI and National Sports Policy—all approved in the same Cabinet session.

## INTERNATIONAL

### 1. Global Unicorn Index 2025: USA Leads with 758 Unicorns and India Holds Third Spot with 64.



In June 2025, the Shanghai-based Hurun Research Institute released its 7th edition of the Global Unicorn Index 2025. The United



States topped the list with 758 unicorns, while India secured third place with 64 unicorns, reflecting its growing prominence in the global startup ecosystem.

- Hurun's report recorded a total of 1,523 unicorns worldwide—privately held startups valued at over US \$1 billion—operating across 52 countries, marking a 5% increase over 2024. Their combined valuation reached a staggering US \$5.6 trillion, up 22% globally.

- The United States continued its dominance, accounting for nearly 49.8% of the world's unicorns with 758 companies—a net increase of 55 from the previous year. China followed as the second-largest hub with 343 unicorns, rising by 3 over 2024.

#### Key Points:-

(i) India maintained its position at the third rank with 64 unicorns, a marginal drop from 67 the previous year. Leading Indian cities in unicorn count are Bengaluru (rank 7 globally), Mumbai (22), and Gurugram (27)—reinforcing urban innovation hubs.

(ii) Sector-wise, global unicorn formation was led by FinTech (197 unicorns), SaaS (151), and AI-driven companies (128). Notably, SpaceX (valued at US \$350 bn) and OpenAI (US \$300 bn) emerged as the top two most valuable unicorns in the world.

(iii) As unicorn creation continues to accelerate, Hurun noted that nearly one new unicorn emerged every two days during January 2024–January 2025. Investors like Tiger Global, SoftBank, and Sequoia Capital remain the most influential backers in this ecosystem.

## 2. 22nd SCO Defence Ministers' Meeting Held in Qingdao, China and Focus on Regional Security, Terrorism, and Bilateral Dialogue.



From June 25–26, 2025, defence ministers of the 10-member Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) met in Qingdao, China, chaired by Chinese Defence Minister Dong Jun. The conference focused on strengthening regional security, expanding military cooperation, and enhancing strategic communication, while notable bilateral dialogues addressed border tensions and defence modernization.

- China's Defence Minister Dong Jun, acting as SCO chair, opened the session by emphasizing the need to uphold the "Shanghai Spirit" through stronger communication and shared security. Participants unanimously agreed to intensify practical cooperation such as joint exercises, information sharing, and military-medical collaboration to tackle contemporary threats.

- India's Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, attending his first high-level visit to China since the 2020 standoff, emphasized counter-terrorism. He urged SCO members to "condemn terror without bias," warning nations using terrorism as state policy and advocating action

against Weapons of Mass Destruction and non-state actors.

- Rajnath Singh also declined to endorse the joint declaration due to omission of references to terrorism. He demanded explicit acknowledgment of the April 22 Pahalgam attack, emphasizing India's stance that terrorism must be addressed rather than glossed over.

#### Key Points:-

(i) On bilateral sidelines, Rajnath Singh met Chinese counterpart Dong Jun to discuss a "permanent solution" for the India-China border conflict. He proposed structured dialogue on disengagement, improved communication, and eventual demarcation, signaling a thaw post-Galwan while restoring trust.

(ii) Another important diplomatic move saw Singh engage Russia's Andrey Belousov, securing assurances for timely S-400 air defence system deliveries by 2027, upgrades for Su-30MKI fighter jets, and progress on DRDO's Project Kusha, enhancing India's strategic capabilities.

(iii) All 10 SCO nations, including Pakistan, Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Iran, and India, attended the meeting. The gathering underlined the SCO's role as a stabilizing regional forum amid rising global tensions and highlighted cooperation across defence, counter-terrorism, and non-traditional security.

### 3. Teghbir Singh Becomes World's Youngest to Summit Mount Elbrus at Age 6.



On June 28, 2025, Teghbir Singh, a 6-year-old from Rupnagar (Punjab), became the youngest person in the world to summit Mount Elbrus (5,642 m), the highest peak in Europe. The feat has been officially certified by Russian mountaineering authorities.

- Teghbir began the climb on June 20, 2025, and reached the summit after overcoming extreme cold ( $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$ ), low oxygen, and two failed attempts due to snowstorms. His final successful ascent was accomplished in 9 days under harsh alpine conditions in the Caucasus Mountains of Russia.

- Mount Elbrus is part of the Seven Summits and poses challenges like rapid altitude gain, sub-zero nights, and unpredictable weather. His achievement surpasses the previous record set by Wagah Kushagra (7 yrs, 3 months) in 2024, also from India.

#### Key Points:-

(i) Teghbir was trained by mountaineer Bikramjit Singh Ghuman, with his father Sukhinderdeep Singh joining the expedition and his mother Dr. Manpreet Kaur, a doctor, overseeing his physical preparation and nutrition for months prior.

(ii) This is not his first high-altitude milestone—he previously trekked to Everest

Base Camp (April 2024) and summited Mount Kilimanjaro (August 2024) at age 5, becoming the youngest Asian to do so. These climbs were part of his training path to Elbrus.

(iii) His climb was certified by the Mountaineering, Rock Climbing and Sports Tourism Federation of the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic, making him a global symbol of youth endurance, discipline, and India's growing prominence in adventure sports.

## BANKING & FINANCE

### 1. RBI Data Confirms "India's Overseas Financial Assets Surge by 72% in FY 2024–25".



The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) reported that India's overseas financial assets rose sharply from US \$1,033.8 billion (Mar 2024) to US \$1,139.2 billion (Mar 2025)—a 72% increase—powered by robust overseas direct investments, higher currency and deposit holdings, and reserve assets, reflecting a growing global financial presence.

- India's total external financial assets grew by US \$105.4 billion during FY 2024–25, outpacing the increase in foreign-owned assets in India, which rose by US \$74.2 billion. As a result, net

claims of non-residents on India fell by US \$31.2 billion, signaling improved external financial health.

- Over 54% of the growth in overseas financial assets came from reserve assets, which include foreign currency and gold holdings. The remaining increase was driven by currency and deposit balances held abroad and overseas direct investments by Indians.

- By March 2025, the ratio of India's international financial assets to liabilities improved to 77.5%, up from 74.1% a year earlier. This wider cushion underscores enhanced external financial resilience and a more balanced international investment position.

#### Key Points:-

(i) In the January–March 2025 quarter alone, Indian residents' overseas financial assets increased by US \$60 billion, compared to foreign-owned assets in India rising only US \$25.8 billion—emphasising outbound capital preferences.

(ii) Net claims of non-residents on India declined to US \$330 billion by March 2025, compared to US \$364.2 billion in December 2024, largely due to outsized asset growth—a positive sign in reducing foreign net exposure.

(iii) RBI data reflects a strategic shift by Indian entities—both private and public—toward higher global investment and currency diversification, aligning with broader financial stability goals and a strengthened global positioning.

## ECONOMY & BUSINESS

### 1. HDFC Mutual Fund Acquires 0.65% Stake in Sundram Fasteners for ₹137 Crore via Open Market Deal.



HDFC Mutual Fund, a subsidiary of HDFC Asset Management Company (AMC), recently purchased 13.70 lakh equity shares of Sundram Fasteners Ltd in June 2025, equating to a 0.65% stake. The ₹137.02 crore investment was carried out through an open market transaction at an average share price of ₹1,000, raising HDFC MF's total holding in the company from 4.27% to 5.02%.

- Sundram Fasteners Ltd, headquartered in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, is a major automotive component supplier under the TVS Group. Founded in 1966, the company has grown to become a leading manufacturer for both domestic and global automotive original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), with a strong reputation for innovation, engineering, and diversified product lines.

- The company's product portfolio spans fasteners, powertrain components, sintered metal products, radiator caps, cold extruded parts, water pumps, oil pumps, and wind energy components. It also maintains a robust international presence with manufacturing units

in India, China, and Europe, and serves clients across North America and European markets.

#### Key Points:-

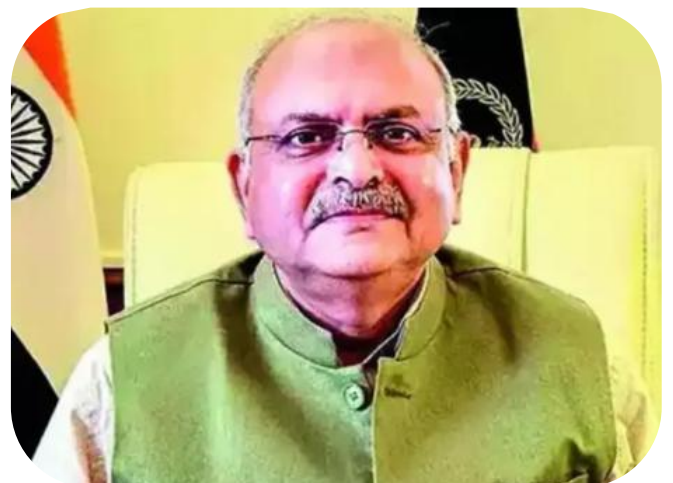
(i) HDFC MF's strategic investment comes amid a broader recovery in India's auto ancillary sector, which is being driven by rising electric vehicle (EV) production and a global shift towards diversified, resilient supply chains. Sundram Fasteners' strong balance sheet, export capability, and investments in R&D position it well to benefit from sectoral tailwinds.

(ii) In a related market event, Singapore-based Cube Mobility Investments offloaded a 0.59% stake (approximately 79.25 lakh units) in Cube Highways Trust—an infrastructure investment trust (InvIT) based in Noida, Uttar Pradesh—for ₹101 crore at ₹127.50 per unit.

(iii) Cube Highways Trust, which invests in toll roads and highway assets, remains attractive to long-term institutional investors seeking stable returns through InvITs.

## APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

### 1. Centre Extends Ravi Agrawal's Tenure as CBDT Chairman Until June 2026.





On June 28, 2025, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet approved a one-year extension of Ravi Agrawal's tenure as Chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT). His new term runs from July 1, 2025, until June 30, 2026, reinforcing continuity in India's direct tax leadership.

- Ravi Agrawal, an IRS officer from the 1988 batch, originally assumed charge as CBDT Chairman in June 2024 and was retained on a contractual basis through June 2025. The latest extension, effective July 1, 2025, sustains experienced leadership amid ongoing reforms in direct tax administration.

- A key reason for the extension is continuity in resolving complex tax disputes and fulfilling the government's commitment to tax justice. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman recently urged Income Tax officials to prioritize transparency, taxpayer-friendly processes, and speedy disposal of over 577,000 pending tax appeals.

- Under his stewardship, the CBDT oversees policy and administrative planning for the Income Tax Department, including senior appointments, departmental transfers, and representation in global tax forums such as the OECD and UN. Agrawal's deep expertise has positioned him as a trusted advisor to the Finance Ministry.

### Key Points:-

(i) Ravi Agrawal reappointment continues the practice of employing experienced IRS officers on contract basis, with relaxed rules allowing re-employed central government officials to serve beyond retirement age. These terms ensure regulatory flexibility and institutional memory in the tax machinery.

(ii) The CBDT, led by Agrawal, is also

directing Principal Chief Commissioners of Income Tax to exercise effective supervision, ensure relevant questioning in assessments, and eliminate frivolous scrutiny notices. This aligns with the broader push for simplicity and transparency in the tax system.

(iii) Agrawal's contract extension caps a distinguished career spanning over 35 years in the Income Tax Department and reinforces the government's focus on stability within the apex tax policy body. His continued leadership is seen as critical to strengthening tax compliance and dispute resolution efforts in FY2025–26.

## 2. ACC Appoints Parag Jain as New Chief of Research & Analysis Wing (R&AW), Term Starting July 1, 2025.



On June 28, 2025, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) approved the appointment of Parag Jain, a 1989-batch IPS officer (Punjab cadre), as the new Secretary of the Research & Analysis Wing (R&AW). He will commence a two-year tenure on July 1, succeeding Ravi Sinha.

- Parag Jain currently leads the Aviation Research Centre (ARC)—R&AW's technical wing responsible for aerial surveillance and imagery

intelligence. His elevation reflects his two-decade experience in both technical and human intelligence domains, with specific handling of Pakistan-linked operations.

- He is best known for his strategic role in Operation Sindoor, during which ARC provided critical inputs for precision strikes on terrorist training camps in Pakistan. This operation showcased his deep expertise in technical intelligence and operational planning.

#### Key Points:-

(i) Parag Jain 's background includes key assignments in counter-terror operations in Punjab, tenure on the Pakistan desk, and leading intelligence during the Abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu & Kashmir. He has also served in Indian missions in Sri Lanka and Canada, where he worked on info-gathering and counter-terrorism.

(ii) A recipient of the Police Medal for Meritorious Service (2005), Jain is noted for his discreet leadership style and operational rigor. His appointment, effective July 1 2025, reaffirms continuity and enhanced focus on external intelligence, highlighting India's strategic commitment amid evolving geopolitical challenges.

### 3. Kesavan Ramachandran Appointed as RBI's New Executive Director.



On July 1, 2025, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) appointed Kesavan Ramachandran as Executive Director, taking charge of the Prudential Regulation Division. Previously serving as Principal Chief General Manager in the Risk Monitoring Department, he brings over 30 years of expertise in currency and banking supervision.

- With a career spanning more than three decades, Ramachandran has handled key roles in currency management, banking and non-banking supervision, financial training, and administration. Before this promotion, he led the RBI's Risk Monitoring Department, reflecting deep experience in ensuring banking stability.

#### Key Points:-

(i) Ramachandran has served as Principal of the Reserve Bank Staff College, where he oversaw professional development. He was also the RBI's nominee on the Canara Bank board for over five years and contributed to the ICAI's Auditing and Assurance Standards Board for two years, enriching his regulatory perspective.

(ii) Educationally, Ramachandran holds an MBA in Banking & Finance, along with a postgraduate diploma in International Financial Reporting accredited by ACCA, UK. He is a Certified Associate of the Indian



Institute of Banking & Finance (IIBF)—credentials that support his extensive regulatory responsibilities.

(iii) As Executive Director, he will lead the Department of Regulation, focusing on formalizing prudential norms for banks and NBFCs, reinforcing financial stability. His promotion aligns with RBI's emphasis on risk governance and regulatory oversight to ensure a resilient financial ecosystem.

## SPORTS

### 1. Lando Norris Wins 2025 Austrian Grand Prix, Secures His 3rd F1 Victory of the Season.



In June 2025, McLaren's British Formula 1 (F1) driver Lando Norris clinched his third win of the 2025 F1 season by securing first place at the Austrian Grand Prix held at the Red Bull Ring in Spielberg, Styria. The race was officially titled the 2025 Austrian Grand Prix (GP) and included in the F1 MSC Cruises Austrian GP calendar.

● **Norris' recent win marks his 7th career Grand Prix victory overall and significantly boosts his standing in the 2025 Drivers' Championship. He now holds the 2nd spot with 201 points, trailing teammate Oscar Piastri, who leads with 216**

points. The podium was completed by Ferrari's Charles Leclerc, who finished third.

● During the race, Norris skillfully maintained his lead position throughout. He overtook Ferrari's Charles Leclerc and managed to hold a consistent gap, eventually finishing 2.695 seconds ahead of Piastri. This victory further reflects McLaren's continued dominance in the 2025 season.

● Charles Leclerc, who had started the race from pole position, could not convert the lead into a win and ended in third place. Meanwhile, Mercedes drivers Lewis Hamilton and George Russell finished fourth and fifth respectively, showing a modest recovery from their qualifying positions.

#### Key Points:-

(i) A major incident occurred in the opening lap when 4-time World Champion Max Verstappen from Red Bull was forced to retire due to a crash involving Kimi Antonelli from Mercedes. Verstappen's early exit affected his standing in the title race, where he now trails both McLaren drivers significantly.

(ii) With 25 points from this win, Norris is now in close competition with teammate Piastri for the top spot. The standings after the Austrian GP show Piastri at 216 points, Norris at 201, and Verstappen lagging at 155 points. This internal McLaren battle is set to intensify in upcoming races like the British GP.

(iii) The Austrian GP, part of F1 history since its first official World Championship race in 1964, was contested over 71 laps of a 4.326-km circuit, totaling a race distance of 307.236 km. The event is organized under the Fédération Internationale de

l'Automobile (FIA), headquartered in Paris, France.

## 2. ICC Approves New Playing Conditions for International Cricket Effective from July 2025.



The International Cricket Council (ICC) has recently introduced a comprehensive set of changes to playing conditions across all international formats, effective from June–July 2025. These changes aim to improve the pace of play, enhance player safety, and ensure fairness in decision-making through new technology and procedural updates.

- In a major shift for Test cricket, the ICC has introduced a 60-second stop clock rule between overs starting from June 17, 2025. If a fielding side exceeds this limit more than twice in an innings, a five-run penalty will be imposed. The rule encourages quicker over rates and maintains match momentum.

- From July 2, 2025, ODIs will return to using only one ball for the final 16 overs. After the 34th over, captains must choose one of the two used balls to continue. This change is aimed at restoring reverse swing and balancing the bat-ball contest during death overs.

- The ICC has clarified the rule regarding boundary catches. Fielders can now only make contact with the ball once while airborne beyond the boundary, and must land fully inside the rope to complete a catch. This eliminates grey areas and ensures uniform interpretation across matches and formats.

### Key Points:-

(i) New provisions have been added to the Decision Review System (DRS). If a batter is ruled out in one mode, like caught, fielding teams may still review for a second mode, like LBW. Also, in cases of multiple dismissal types, decisions will now be evaluated in a logical, chronological sequence.

(ii) In a strong move to protect players, teams are now required to name five concussion substitutes before matches. If a player is diagnosed with a concussion during the match, they will be ruled out for a minimum of seven days. Domestic leagues will also trial full-time like-for-like injury replacements.

(iii) The ICC has continued its ban on saliva for ball polishing but has relaxed the automatic ball replacement requirement. Umpires will now assess if the ball condition is visibly changed. Any deliberate use of saliva will result in a five-run penalty, reinforcing hygiene without unnecessary disruption to gameplay.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

1. GST Day 2025 Observed on July 1, Marks 8 Years of India's Unified Indirect Tax Reform.



India celebrated GST Day on July 1, 2025, marking eight years since the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax in 2017. The day commemorates India's shift to a unified indirect tax system, aimed at simplifying compliance and strengthening the formal economy.

- In 2025, the official theme for GST Day was "GST – Simplifying Taxes; Empowering Citizens." The theme was declared by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), and it emphasized the role of GST in reducing taxpayer burden and increasing economic transparency. The Thiruvananthapuram CGST Zone received national recognition for excellence in taxpayer services.

- Leading up to GST Day, the CBIC observed GST Pakhwada from June 17 to 30, 2025, as an awareness campaign. This included outreach programs such as taxpayer facilitation desks, GST return filing help centers, and public events under the Fit India banner. The initiative aimed to educate stakeholders about new compliance norms and the benefits of the GST system.

#### Key Points:-

(i) Effective July 2025, key compliance reforms were introduced. GSTR-3B returns were made auto-populated from GSTR-1

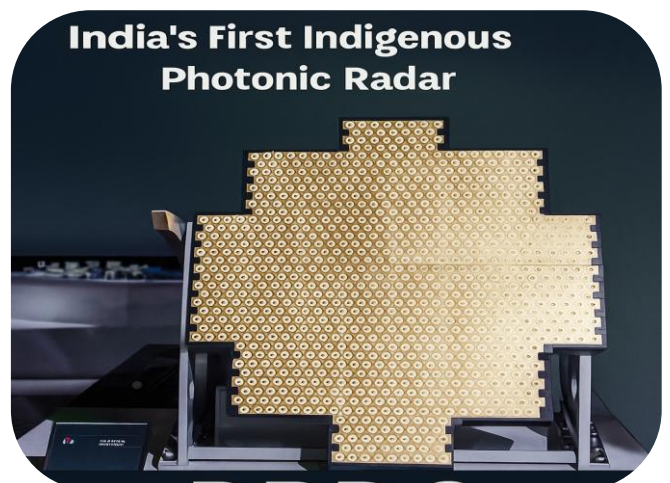
and became non-editable after submission, while a revised GSTR-1A would now be required for corrections. A new three-year limitation period for filing returns was also implemented to improve accountability and reduce misuse of the system.

(ii) GST collections in May 2025 reached an all-time high of ₹2.01 lakh crore, a 16.4% rise over the previous year's figures. This growth reflected increased economic activity, improved compliance, and the broadening of the tax base. In FY 2024–25, total GST revenues crossed ₹18.3 lakh crore, making it the strongest financial year since GST's rollout.

(iii) GST Day 2025 highlighted the scheme's long-term benefits in unifying the Indian market, increasing transparency, and strengthening federal tax cooperation via the GST Council. It also aligned India's tax framework with international standards followed in countries like Canada and Australia, positioning GST as one of the most successful tax reforms in independent India.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### 1. DRDO Unveils India's First Indigenous Photonic Radar for Advanced Stealth Detection.





In late June 2025, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) announced the development of India's first photonic radar, marking a major leap in radar technology. The system, currently at Technology Readiness Level 6, integrates photonic components for ultra-high resolution and anti-stealth capabilities ahead of upcoming trials.

- India's photonic radar uses laser-modulated optical signals—instead of traditional radio waves—to detect objects with superior clarity, sub-millimeter resolution, and reduced electronic interference. It operates across the 100 GHz–THz spectrum, delivering sharper target imaging and improved stealth detection.

- This system is built entirely with indigenous components, such as high-speed optical modulators and fibre-based signal processors, enhancing India's self-reliance in critical defense technologies. The radar also offers lower detectability, making it difficult for adversaries to intercept using conventional electronic warfare.

#### Key Points:-

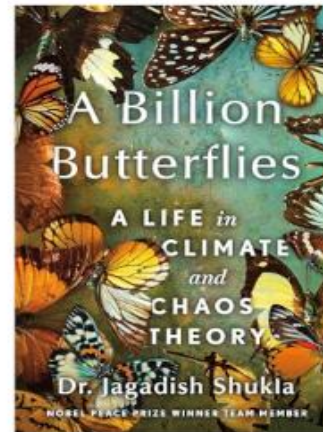
(i) DRDO aims to integrate the radar onto stationary platforms, followed by UAVs and naval vessels for maritime and airborne surveillance. Operational trials are expected soon, positioning India among a small group of nations like the U.S., China, EU, and Japan that are testing photonic radar systems.

(ii) This technology presents multiple applications: detecting stealth aircraft, tracking hypersonic missiles, space debris surveillance, and secure civilian uses in traffic control or disaster monitoring. With trials upcoming, this indigenous radar is set to become a strategic asset in India's

defense toolkit.

## BOOKS & AUTHORS

### 1. Jagadish Shukla Releases Memoir "A Billion Butterflies" on Climate and Chaos Theory.



Jagadish Shukla, a renowned Indian meteorologist, has authored a memoir titled "A Billion Butterflies: A Life in Climate and Chaos Theory", recently published by Pan Macmillan India. The book chronicles his personal and scientific journey in understanding climate dynamics, predictability, and the evolution of meteorological science.

- In the book, Shukla shares his rise from a rural Indian village to becoming a leading global climate scientist. He introduces the concept of "billion butterfly" experiments, which challenged long-standing ideas about the unpredictability of weather, emphasizing the role of chaos theory in climate forecasting.

#### Key Points:-

(i) The memoir highlights his leadership role in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which was jointly awarded the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize with U.S. Vice President Al Gore. That same year, he

received the prestigious IMO Prize, the highest global honor in meteorology.

(ii) Jagadish Shukla was conferred the Padma Shri by the Government of India in 2012 for his contributions to science and engineering. He currently serves as a Professor at George Mason University, Virginia, USA, and continues to be an influential voice in global climate policy and research.

**Static GK**

<b>Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA)</b>	President : Mohammed Ben Sulayem	Headquarters : Paris, France
<b>ICC</b>	Founded: 1909	Headquarters: Dubai
<b>SCO</b>	Headquarters: Beijing, China	Founded: 15 June 2001
<b>RBI</b>	Founder: British Raj	Founded: 1 April 1935
<b>Research &amp; Analysis Wing (R&amp;AW)</b>	Founders: R. N. Kao, Indira Gandhi	Headquarters: New Delhi
<b>DRDO</b>	Chairman : Samir V. Kamat	Headquarters: New Delhi