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Daily Current Affairs

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Parliament Approves President's Rule in Manipur

President's Rule:

- **Article 356:**

- Allows the **Union Government** to assume control over a state's administration if it **fails to function in accordance with constitutional provisions**.
- Initially valid for **6 months**, extendable in phases up to **3 years**.
- Can be **revoked by the President anytime** without needing parliamentary approval.

- **44th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1978:**

- Extension beyond one year is possible **only every 6 months** if:
 - **Elections cannot be held**, as certified by the **Election Commission**, or
 - A **National Emergency** is in force.

- **Article 365:**

- President's Rule can also be declared if a state **fails to follow directives from the Union Government**.

- **Historical Context:**

- First imposed in **PEPSU (1954)** and later in **Kerala (1959)**.
- The **term "President's Rule"** is **not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution**.

India holds fire as Trump slaps tariffs

Key Highlights of Reciprocal Tariffs

'Liberation Day' Declaration: On April 2, 2025, Trump announced the implementation of reciprocal tariffs, dubbing the day as 'Liberation Day' to symbolize a major step toward correcting trade imbalances.

Standard Tariff Introduction: A flat 10% tariff was applied to all imports, with elevated rates for countries maintaining large trade surpluses with the U.S.

Tariff Range and Impact: The new tariff rates varied between 10% and 50%, affecting key sectors like textiles, chemicals, machinery, and electronics.

Country-Specific Measures: India was subjected to a 26% reciprocal tariff, while China faced 34%, the European Union 20%, Japan 24%, and Taiwan 32%.

- **Economic Justification:** These tariffs aimed to reduce trade

India-USA Trade: Key Highlights

- **Total Trade:** The total goods trade between the U.S. and India was an estimated \$129.2 billion in 2024.
 1. **US Exports to India:** \$41.8 billion, up 3.4% from 2023.
 2. **US Imports from India:** \$87.4 billion in 2024, up 4.5% from 2023.
- **Trade Deficit:** \$45.7 billion in 2024, a 5.4% increase over 2023.

India's Top Exports to the USA

- **Precious Stones & Metals:** Diamonds and gold are among the highest-valued exports.
- **Pharmaceutical Products:** Generics and APIs form a major chunk of India's export to the USA.
- **Apparel & Textiles:** Garments, home textiles, and cotton fabrics dominate.
- **Engineering Goods:** Includes auto components, tools, industrial machinery.
- **Organic Chemicals:** Raw materials for chemicals and allied industries.
- **IT & Software Services:** Though not always visible in merchandise data, IT services are a massive contributor.

USA's Top Exports to India

- **Petroleum & Crude Oil:** Crude oil and LNG exports have risen significantly.
- **Aerospace & Defense Equipment:** Includes aircraft, parts, and defense systems.
- **Medical Devices & Instruments:** High-quality diagnostic and surgical tools.
- **Electronic Goods:** Semiconductors, computer parts, and more.
- **Industrial Machinery:** Automation, manufacturing, and power generation equipment.
- **Agricultural Products:** Notably almonds, apples, and soybeans.

Forest Rights Act (FRA)

- **Full Name:** *The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006.*
- **Purpose:**
 - Acknowledge **historical injustices** against forest-dwelling communities.
 - Provide **legal rights** over forest land and resources to **Scheduled Tribes (STs)** and **Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (OTFDs)**.
- **Role of Gram Sabha:**
 - **Gram Sabhas** are empowered to **verify and approve claims** at the grassroots level.
- **Protection Against Eviction:**
 - Ensures **no eviction without proper rehabilitation**, in line with the **Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013**.
- **Types of Rights Granted:**
 - **Individual and community rights** over:
 - Forest land
 - Minor forest produce
 - Grazing areas
 - Traditional knowledge

- **Undersea Cables**

The SEA-ME-WE 6 (SMW6) :

This is a 21,700 km long submarine cable network that links Singapore to Marseille, France, with a segment passing overland through Egypt.

The SMW6 consortium consists of telecom companies from a wide range of nations including Bangladesh, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, the UAE, Djibouti, Egypt, Turkey, Italy, France, Myanmar, and Yemen.

What Are Undersea Cables?

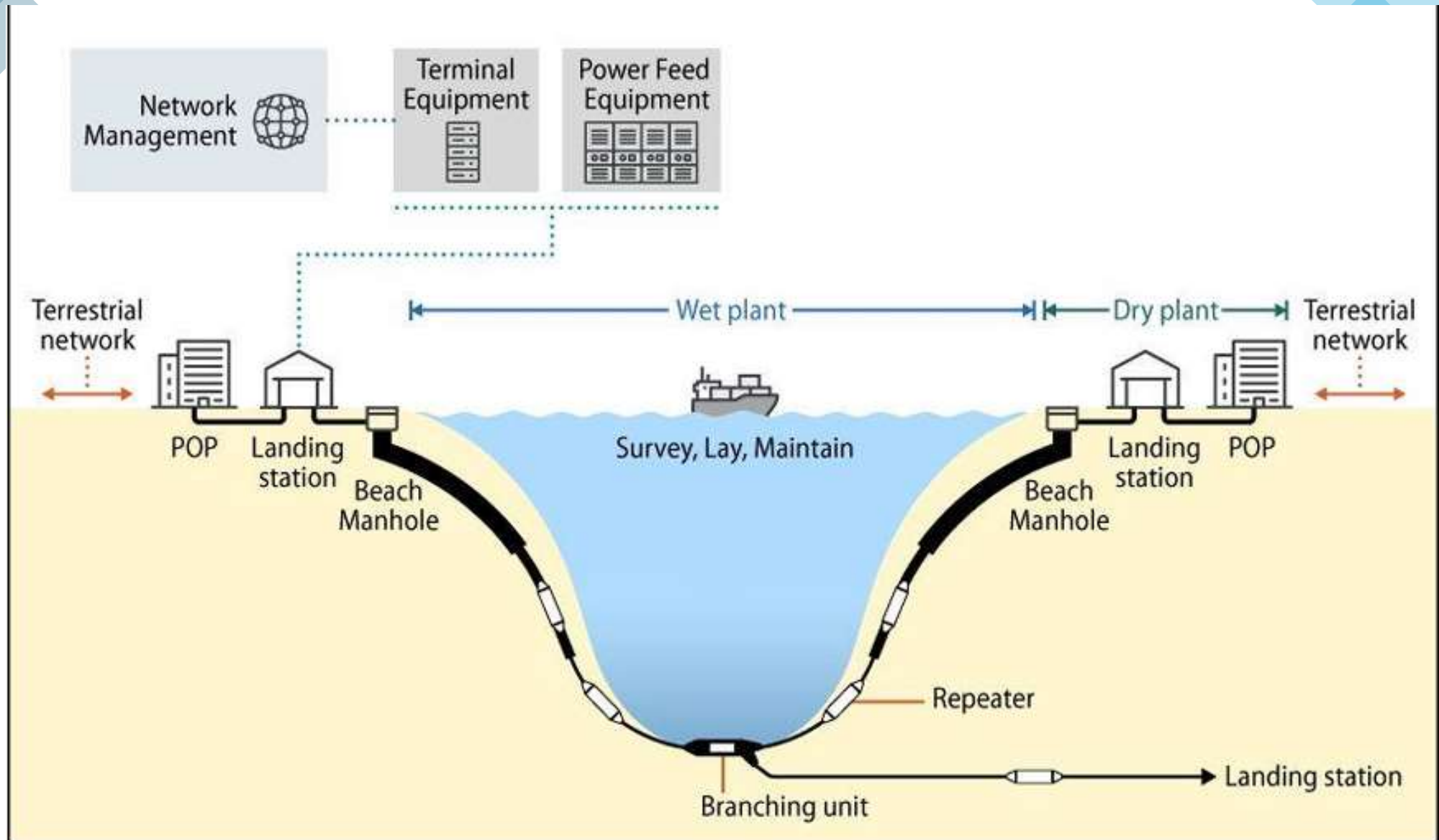
Undersea or submarine cables are vital components of the global internet infrastructure, using fiber optic technology to transmit vast amounts of data across continents.

They come ashore at specific landing stations and connect to terrestrial networks, enabling communication between ISPs and telecom providers across countries.

Though only a few inches in diameter, these cables are heavily reinforced to survive the harsh oceanic conditions.

Significance of Undersea Cables:

- Handle nearly 90% of global internet traffic
- Support 80% of international trade
- Facilitate critical financial and governmental communications



International Cable Protection Committee (ICPC):

- Founded in 1958, it is a global forum for governments and commercial entities in the submarine cable industry.
- Its mission is to improve the security of undersea cables by providing a platform for sharing technical, legal, and environmental information.

Project Waterworth by Meta:

- Meta introduced its subsea cable project, Project Waterworth, which will span 50,000 km, becoming the longest subsea cable project in the world.
- The project aims to enhance global connectivity, focusing on locations such as the U.S., India, Brazil, South Africa, and others.
- The investment for the project involves billions of dollars and is set to span multiple years, with a focus on providing AI access to users worldwide.

Impact on India:

- Project Waterworth will help accelerate India's digital infrastructure growth and support the country's plans for its digital economy.

Technical Details:

- The cables will be laid at depths of up to 7,000 meters.
- Special measures will be implemented to protect cables in high-

Tipitaka

Syllabus: GS1 – Art & Culture

In News:

During a diplomatic exchange, Thai Prime Minister **Paetongtarn Shinawatra** gifted Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** the *World Tipitaka: Sajjhaya Phonetic Edition*.

About Tipitaka:

- The word *Tipitaka* in **Pāli** translates to “**Three Baskets**”, symbolizing the three core sections of **Buddhist scriptures**.
- The three divisions include:
 - **Vinaya Piṭaka (Basket of Discipline)**: Covers the monastic code and guidelines for monks and nuns.
 - **Sutta Piṭaka (Basket of Discourses)**: Contains sermons and teachings delivered by the Buddha.
 - **Abhidhamma Piṭaka (Basket of Higher Doctrine)**: Provides detailed philosophical interpretations of Buddhist doctrines.
- These scriptures were compiled **after Buddha's passing** in the **5th century BCE**, during the **First Buddhist Council at Rajagaha** (modern-day Rajgir, India).

Bharani Festival

Syllabus: GS1 – Culture

Context:

The **Kodungalloor Bharani** is a prominent and vibrant religious festival in **Kerala**, observed during the **Malayalam month of Meenam (March–April)**.

About:

- The festival is held at the **Sree Kurumba Bhagavathy Temple** in **Kodungalloor**, located in **Thrissur district**.
- It is known for its **ritualistic intensity and mysticism**, featuring **Oracles (Komaram or Velichappadu)** dressed in **red robes**.
- The celebration honors the birth of **Goddess Bhadrakali**, who, according to mythology, was

Baku to Belém Roadmap

Syllabus: GS2 – International Relations

In the News:

India urged BRICS nations to come together in support of the *Baku to Belém Roadmap*, which seeks to mobilize **\$1.3 trillion annually** to help developing countries meet their **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)**.

What is the Baku to Belém Roadmap?

The *Baku to Belém Roadmap* is a strategic plan adopted during **COP29 (2024)** to steer future negotiations and actions on climate finance. Its core goals include:

- Establishing a **new collective quantified goal (NCQG)** on climate finance beyond 2025.
- Ensuring **climate finance is predictable, sufficient, and easily accessible**.
- Promoting **low-carbon and climate-resilient growth** in developing countries.
- Facilitating the **implementation of NDCs** in line with the Paris Agreement.

Why BRICS is Crucial in Climate Action:

- The BRICS group—**Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa** (now expanded to include six more countries)—accounts for **47% of the world's population** and around **36% of global GDP (PPP)**.
- These countries share similar developmental goals and environmental challenges, making their collaboration **essential for a fair and inclusive global climate transition**.

Why This Roadmap is Important:

- The existing climate finance target of **\$100 billion per year**, set in 2009, has never been fully met.
- Research indicates that developing nations require over **\$1.3 trillion annually by 2030** to achieve their NDC commitments and build climate resilience.

GI Tag for Chapata Chilli

Syllabus: GS3 – Economy

In the News:

The **Warangal Chapata Chilli**, also known as **Tomato Chilli**, from **Telangana** has received the **Geographical Indication (GI) tag** from the GI Registry.

About Chapata (Tomato) Chilli:

- This variety is recognized for its **bright red color** and **mild spiciness**.
- It is especially valued for containing **paprika oleoresin**, a **natural colouring compound** used in food processing.
- The Warangal Chapata Chilli comes in **three distinct types**:
 - **Single Patti**

GI Tag for Kannadippaya

Syllabus: GS3 – Economy / Science & Technology

In the News:

The traditional **Kannadippaya** has been awarded the **Geographical Indication (GI) tag**, granting it market protection and international recognition.

About Kannadippaya:

- The term "**Kannadippaya**" translates to "**mirror mat**", and it is a **tribal handicraft** from **Kerala**.
- These mats are crafted using the **soft inner layers of reed bamboo**, primarily **Teinostachyum wightii**, and also **Ochlandra species**.
- Noted for their **unique thermal properties**, these mats **keep warm in winter** and offer a **cooling effect in summer**.
- The craft is mainly preserved by tribal communities like the **Oorali, Mannan, Muthuva, Malayan, and Kadar**, particularly in the districts of **Idukki, Thrissur, Ernakulam, and Palakkad**.

Pope's Pit Viper Venom

Syllabus: GS3 – Species in News

In the News:

A recent study has revealed new insights into the **venom mechanism** of the **Pope's Pit Viper**, a snake species native to **northern and northeastern India**.

These findings could aid in understanding **venom toxicity**, pave the way for **medical innovations**, and contribute to developing more **effective antivenoms**.

Why It's Significant:

- There is currently **no dedicated antivenom** available for Pope's Pit Viper bites.
- Indian commercial antivenoms only cover the "**Big Four**" **snakes—Russell's Viper, Saw-scaled Viper, Spectacled Cobra, and Common Krait**.
- As a result, victims of **pit viper bites**, including those from Pope's Pit Viper, often remain **untreated or inadequately treated**.

About Pope's Pit Viper (*Trimeresurus popeiorum*):

- **Named after:** American herpetologist **Clifford H. Pope**
- **Habitat:** Thrives in **dense tropical and subtropical forests**

National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR)

Syllabus: GS3 – Science and Technology

Context:

The National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR) in Goa celebrated its 25th Foundation Day.

About NCPOR:

- It is an **autonomous institute** functioning under the **Ministry of Earth Sciences**.
- The centre was established to oversee **India's polar expeditions** and protect **strategic interests in the polar regions**.
- It operates **research stations** in:
 - **Antarctica:** *Maitri* and *Bharati*
 - **Arctic:** *Himadri*
 - **Himalayas:** *Himansh*
- NCPOR also manages the **floating oceanographic research platform – Sagar Kanya**.

Heard and McDonald Islands

Syllabus: GS1 – Places in News

Context:

As part of the “**Liberation Day Tariffs**”, the U.S. imposed a **10% base tariff** on all trading partners, including the **uninhabited Heard and McDonald Islands**.

About the Islands:

- **Territory:** These islands are **Australian territory** located in the **sub-Antarctic Indian Ocean**.
- **Geographical Location:** Situated approximately **1,700 km from Antarctica** and **4,100 km southwest of Australia**.
- **Volcanic Significance:** Home to the **only active sub-Antarctic volcanoes**, including **Big Ben (Heard Island)** and **McDonald Island volcano**.
- **Scientific Value:** Serve as critical sites for studying **tectonic activity, volcanism, glaciers, and climate change**.
- **Ecosystem:** Among the **last untouched natural ecosystems**, free of **invasive species** and rich in **marine bird and mammal populations**.
- **Wildlife:** Inhabited by **endemic species** such as the **Heard Island cormorant** and **sheathbill subspecies**, and act as major **breeding grounds** for **seals, penguins, petrels, and albatrosses**.
- **Conservation Status:** Protected under Australia's **Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999**, and recognized as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**.

