



## **DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 20-08-2025**

### **GS-2**

1. SWAYAM Portal
2. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

### **GS-3**

3. Minimum Public Shareholding
4. Indian Polyvalent Antivenom
5. Ranthambore National Park

## **SWAYAM Portal**

**Syllabus: GS-2: Reforms and Innovations in education sector.**

### **Context:**

- The **Ministry of Education** is now offering **free Artificial Intelligence (AI) courses** on SWAYAM to equip students with **future-ready digital skills** in line with rising AI demand.

### **About SWAYAM**

- **Full form:** *Study Webs of Active–Learning for Young Aspiring Minds*
- **Launched:** 2017, by the **Ministry of Education (MoE)**.
- **Purpose:** Bridge the **digital divide** in education and make high-quality learning accessible to all.
- **Nature:** India's **MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) platform** – indigenously developed.

### **Key Features**

- Covers courses from **Class 9 to Post-Graduation**.
- **Free access** to courses; **nominal fee** for certification.
- **Four-quadrant model:**
  - Video lectures
  - Downloadable/printable reading material
  - Self-assessment tests & quizzes
  - Online discussion forum
- **Categories of courses:** Engineering, Science, Humanities, Management, Commerce, Arts, Education, etc.
- **Examinations:** Proctored exams; scores can be transferred to **academic records**.
- **Regulation:** UGC (Credit Framework for Online Courses through SWAYAM), 2016.

### **National Coordinators**

- **AICTE** – Self-paced & international courses
- **NPTEL** – Engineering

- **UGC** – Non-technical post-graduation
- **CEC** – Undergraduate education
- **NCERT & NIOS** – School education
- **IGNOU** – Out-of-school students
- **IIMB** – Management studies
- **NITTTR** – Teacher training
- **INI (Institutes of National Importance)** – Non-Technical Courses

### **SWAYAM Plus Platform**

- **Industry-academia collaboration** – IIT Madras operates it.
- **Focus:** Enhance employability and lifelong learning.
- **Sectors:** Manufacturing, IT/ITES, Healthcare, Tourism, Indian Knowledge Systems, etc.
- **Features:**
  - Multilingual content (12 Indian languages)
  - AI-enabled guidance
  - Credit recognition & job pathways

## **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**

**Syllabus: GS-2: International Organisations.**

### **Context:**

- UNHCR **suspended repatriation of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees from India** after some returnees were arrested in Sri Lanka under immigration laws.

### **What is UNHCR?**

- A **UN agency** mandated to protect and support **refugees, stateless persons, and internally displaced people (IDPs)** worldwide.

➤ Promotes **durable solutions**:

- Voluntary repatriation
- Local integration
- Resettlement in third countries

### Establishment

- **Created in 1950** by UN General Assembly (post-World War II refugee crisis).
- Began operations in **1951**, initially with a 3-year mandate → later made **permanent**.

### Leadership

- Headed by the **UN High Commissioner for Refugees** (elected by UNGA).
- Current High Commissioner: **Filippo Grandi (Italy)**, since 2016.

### Organisational Structure

- **Executive Committee (ExCom)**: Policy guidance body with **100+ member states**.
- **Secretariat**: Led by High Commissioner, includes regional & field offices worldwide.
- **Funding**: Entirely **voluntary contributions** (governments, private donors, organisations).

### Functions & Powers

- **Protection of Refugees**
  - Ensure **non-refoulement** (no forced return to danger).
- **Humanitarian Assistance**
  - Provide **shelter, food, healthcare, and education** to displaced populations.
- **Repatriation & Resettlement**
  - Facilitate **voluntary return** or **local/third-country integration**.
- **Advocacy**
  - Work with governments to improve **refugee rights and asylum laws**.
- **Statelessness Reduction**
  - Lead global efforts to **eliminate statelessness**.

## **Minimum Public Shareholding**

**Syllabus: GS-3: Indian Capital Market – Stock market.**

### **Context:**

SEBI recently proposed to increase the flexibility of minimum public shareholding (MPS) and minimum public offer (MPO) for companies aspiring to get listed, aimed at “simplifying fund-raising by issuers in India.

### **Background:**

- MPS rule: All listed companies must maintain at least **25% public shareholding** (non-promoters).
- Mandated under **Securities Contracts (Regulation) Rules, 1957** and **SEBI LODR Regulations**.
- Objectives:
  - Enhance liquidity.
  - Ensure fair price discovery.
  - Broaden investor participation & strengthen corporate governance.

### **Existing Framework**

- Listed companies with >75% promoter holding must dilute excess to meet 25% MPS.
- Stake reduction methods:
  - Institutional placements.
  - Rights issues.
  - Offer for sale.
- Timeline:
  - General: 3 years from listing.
  - For firms with market cap > ₹1 trillion: 5 years.
  - If public shareholding falls below 25%, must restore within 12 months.

### **Recent SEBI Proposals (2025)**

#### **Reduced IPO Dilution for Large Firms**

- Companies with **post-IPO market cap > ₹5 lakh crore** may dilute only **2.5%** at IPO stage (earlier minimum ~5%).

### **Extended Timeline for Achieving 25% MPS**

- **₹50,000 Cr – ₹1 Lakh Cr:** 25% in 5 years.
- **₹1 Lakh Cr – ₹5 Lakh Cr:**
  - If <15% at listing: reach 15% in 5 years, 25% in 10 years.
  - If ≥15% at listing: 25% in 5 years.
- **>₹5 Lakh Cr:** Same as above; minimum dilution at IPO is 2.5%.

### **Segmented Minimum Public Offer (MPO) Framework**

- MPO thresholds linked to company size:
  - ₹50,000 Cr – ₹1 Lakh Cr: ≥₹1,000 Cr + 8% of capital.
  - ₹1 Lakh Cr – ₹5 Lakh Cr: ₹6,250 Cr + 2.75%.
  - ₹5 Lakh Cr: ₹15,000 Cr + ≥1% (min 2.5% dilution).

### **Retail Investor Quota**

- **Retail quota retained at 35%** (proposal to reduce to 25% was dropped).

### **Consultation Phase**

- Public feedback invited on draft proposals (deadline: September 2025).

### **Significance**

- **For Large Companies:** More flexibility in fundraising, less immediate promoter dilution.
- **For Market Stability:** Phased compliance prevents oversupply of shares.
- **For Investors:** Ensures retail participation is protected.
- **For Economy:** Encourages mega-IPOs, positioning India as a global listing hub

## Indian Polyvalent Antivenom

**Syllabus: GS-3: Science and Technology – Biotechnology.**

### **Context:**

- Experts demanded **region-specific antivenoms** for Northeast India.
- Highlighted urgent need to expand beyond the “Big Four” model.
- Emphasized investment in **research, regional venom banks, and local serum production.**

### **What it is?**

- A life-saving serum therapy to neutralize venom from snakebites.
- Designed as a *broad-spectrum antidote* covering multiple snake species.



### **Developed by:**

- Indian manufacturers with support from institutes like **Haffkine Institute** and **Madras Crocodile Bank Trust.**
- Traditionally derived from venom of the “**Big Four**” snakes.

### **Objective**

- Reduce fatalities from snakebites across India.
- Ensure a *single antidote works nationwide*, avoiding the need for region-specific antivenoms.

### **Features**

- Neutralizes venom of:
  - Indian Cobra
  - Common Krait
  - Russell's Viper
  - Saw-scaled Viper
- Widely available in **government and private hospitals**.
- **Affordable** compared to specialized alternatives.
- Backbone of India's snakebite treatment strategy.

#### Issues with Current Polyvalent Antivenom

- **Regional Mismatch** – Ineffective in Northeast India where **pit vipers, king cobras, and other species** dominate.
- **Delayed Recovery** – Patients often suffer complications despite treatment.
- **Fatality Risk** – Limited neutralization may lead to **higher mortality**.
- **Overdependence** – Reliance on “one-size-fits-all” ignores **India's snake diversity**.

## Ranthambore National Park

**Syllabus: GS-3: Wildlife Conservation – Protected Areas – National Parks.**

#### Context:

- Ranthambore tiger safari turns into nightmare as guide leaves tourists in the middle of jungle, chilling video emerges.

#### Ranthambore National Park

##### Location

- Sawai Madhopur district, Rajasthan.
- Lies at the junction of **Aravalli & Vindhya ranges**.
- Area: **1,334 sq. km** (core ~275 sq. km).





## History

- Declared **Sawai Madhopur Game Sanctuary** – 1955.
- Became **Project Tiger Reserve** – 1973.
- Upgraded to **National Park** – 1980.
- Buffer forests: **Sawai Mansingh & Kailadevi Sanctuaries**.

## Features

- **Terrain:** Dry deciduous forests, rocky outcrops, grassy meadows, lakes.
- **Fort Heritage:** 10th-century *Ranthambore Fort* (UNESCO tentative list). Temples – Ganesh, Shiva, Jain.
- **Water Bodies:** *Padam Talao* (largest lake); *Jogi Mahal* at its edge.

## Flora & Fauna

- **Flora:** 300+ plant species, incl. medicinal plants.
- **Fauna:**
  - *Flagship:* **Royal Bengal Tiger** (notable for daytime sightings).
  - Other mammals: Leopard, Sloth bear, Hyena, Jackal, Nilgai, Sambar, Chital, Langur.
  - Avifauna: 270+ bird species.