



DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 13-02-2026

Mapping Perspective

1. Dalma Wild Life Sanctuary

Prelims Perspective

2. ETF and Mutual Funds

Mains Perspective

3. Black Carbon
4. Removal of Speaker
5. Vande Mataram

Dalma Wild Life Sanctuary

Syllabus: Prelims Bits – Protected Area

Context:

- Jharkhand Tourism Minister:
 - Launched **jungle safari**
 - Laid foundation stone for **30 eco-cottages**
- Objective:
 - Promote **eco-tourism**
 - Generate **local livelihood**
 - Enhance **conservation awareness**

Location & Physiography

- Located near **Jamshedpur**
- East Singhbhum district, Jharkhand
- Lies in the **Dalma Hills** of the **Chotanagpur Plateau**
- Terrain:
 - Hilly and rocky
 - Dense forests interspersed with grasslands

Origin of Name & Cultural Significance

- Named after “**Dalma Mai**”, a local tribal goddess
- Worshipped by surrounding tribal communities
- **Dalma Temple (Lord Shiva)** located within sanctuary premises

Hydrology

- Entire sanctuary lies in the catchment of:
 - Subarnarekha River
 - Dimna Lake
- Important for **water security of Jamshedpur**
- Waterfalls:
 - Sitaguldi
 - **Dassam Falls**

History & Legal Status

- Inaugurated: **1975**
- One of the earliest wildlife sanctuaries of Jharkhand
- Known for **significant population of Indian elephants**



Vegetation (Forest Type)

- Dry Peninsular Sal Forests
- Northern Dry Mixed Deciduous Forests
- Seasonal characteristic:
 - Leaf shedding in summer
 - Full bloom with monsoon onset

Flora

- Rich in **medicinal plants**:
 - Ananatmula
 - Satawari
 - Sargandha
- Diverse plant forms:

- Trees
- Shrubs
- Herbs
- Climbers
- Orchids

Fauna

Mammals

- Indian Elephant (flagship species)
- Barking deer
- Wild boar
- Giant squirrel
- Porcupine
- Pangolin
- Sloth bear

Avifauna

- Falcons
- Golden oriole
- Indian tree pie
- Paradise flycatcher
- Grey hornbill
- Indian peafowl

Significance

- **Elephant corridor** in eastern India
- Critical for **biodiversity conservation**
- Balances:
 - Conservation
 - Eco-tourism
 - Tribal livelihoods

ETF and Mutual Funds

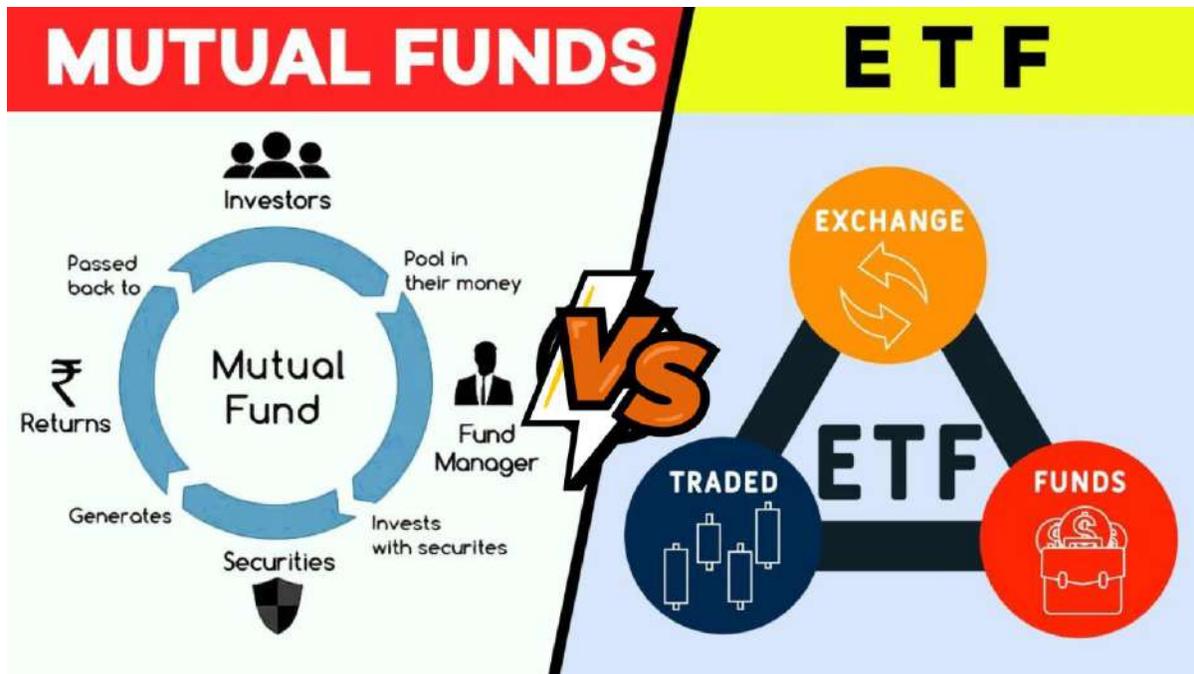
Syllabus: GS-3: Indian Economy – Capital Market

Context:

For the first time in Indian financial history, net monthly inflows into **Gold Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs)** surpassed inflows into **Equity Mutual Funds** in January 2026.

Key Data Points (January 2026)

- **Gold ETFs Inflow:** ₹24,040 crore (Record high; more than doubled from December 2025).
- **Equity Mutual Funds Inflow:** ₹24,029 crore (A 14% month-on-month decline).
- **Gold Price Context:** Gold prices doubled within the last year (reaching approx. \$5,600/oz globally) due to safe-haven demand.
- **Equity Performance:** The Nifty 50 and Sensex fell by over 3% in January 2026, leading to a "risk-off" sentiment among retail investors.



Reasons for the Surge in Gold ETFs

- **Geopolitical Instability:** Global conflicts (e.g., US intervention in Venezuela) and trade tensions have heightened the "Safe Haven" appeal of gold.
- **Trade Policy Shifts:** A turnaround in sentiment followed the reduction of US tariffs on Indian goods (from 50% to 18%), but the preceding uncertainty drove investors toward bullion.

- **Portfolio Rebalancing:** At the start of the calendar year, institutional and retail investors often rebalance portfolios, using gold as a hedge against equity volatility.
- **Central Bank Actions:** Robust buying of gold by central banks globally has provided a floor for prices, signaling long-term value to retail investors.
- **Inflation Hedge:** Persistent concerns over currency depreciation (weakening US Dollar) make gold an attractive store of value.

Understanding the Instruments (Prelims Focus)

Feature	Gold ETF	Equity Mutual Fund
Asset Class	Commodity (Physical Gold)	Stocks/Securities
Nature	Passive (Tracks gold prices)	Active/Passive (Depends on scheme)
Requirement	Demat & Trading Account mandatory	Demat not mandatory
Purity	99.5% (Regulated by SEBI)	N/A
Transaction	Traded like stocks on NSE/BSE	Units bought/sold via AMC

Broader Economic Implications

- **Financialization of Savings:** The shift from physical gold (jewelry/bars) to Gold ETFs indicates an increasing "financialization" of Indian household savings. This is positive for the formal economy as it reduces "idle" capital.
- **Current Account Deficit (CAD):** While ETFs are financial instruments, they are backed by physical gold. High demand for gold often leads to increased imports, which can widen the CAD and put pressure on the Indian Rupee.
- **Market Maturity:** The ability of Indian investors to switch between asset classes (Equity to Gold) based on macro-indicators shows a growing level of financial literacy and risk awareness.
- **Resilience of SIPs:** Despite the dip in lump-sum equity inflows, **Systematic Investment Plans (SIPs)** remained stable at ₹31,002 crore, showing that long-term disciplined investing is becoming a structural part of the Indian economy.

Associated Risks

- **Concentration Risk:** Excessive shifting to gold based on "recency bias" (past 1-year performance) may lead to lower long-term wealth creation compared to equities.
- **Global Macro Dependency:** Gold is highly sensitive to US Fed interest rate decisions and global dollar strength, making it volatile for short-term retail traders.

Black Carbon

Syllabus: GS-3: Environment – Pollutants.

Context:

"Black carbon" in Arctic an increasing concern amid other issues in region.

Black Carbon (BC)

- Black Carbon is a **short-lived climate pollutant (SLCP)** formed from **incomplete combustion** of fossil fuels, biofuels, and biomass.
- It is a **component of PM2.5** and distinct from CO₂ (not a greenhouse gas, but a strong **climate forcer**).

Major Sources

- Diesel engines (especially shipping & transport)
- Biomass burning (forest fires, crop residue burning)
- Household solid fuels (coal, firewood)
- Gas flaring and industrial combustion

Key Properties

- Strongly absorbs sunlight → **atmospheric warming**
- Lifetime: **days to weeks**
- Can travel long distances and deposit on snow/ice

Impacts

- **Climate:** Second only to CO₂ in warming potential (short term)
- **Cryosphere:** Reduces **albedo** when deposited on snow/ice
- **Health:** Causes respiratory and cardiovascular diseases
- **Agriculture:** Damages crops via reduced sunlight & ozone interaction

Black Carbon and the Arctic

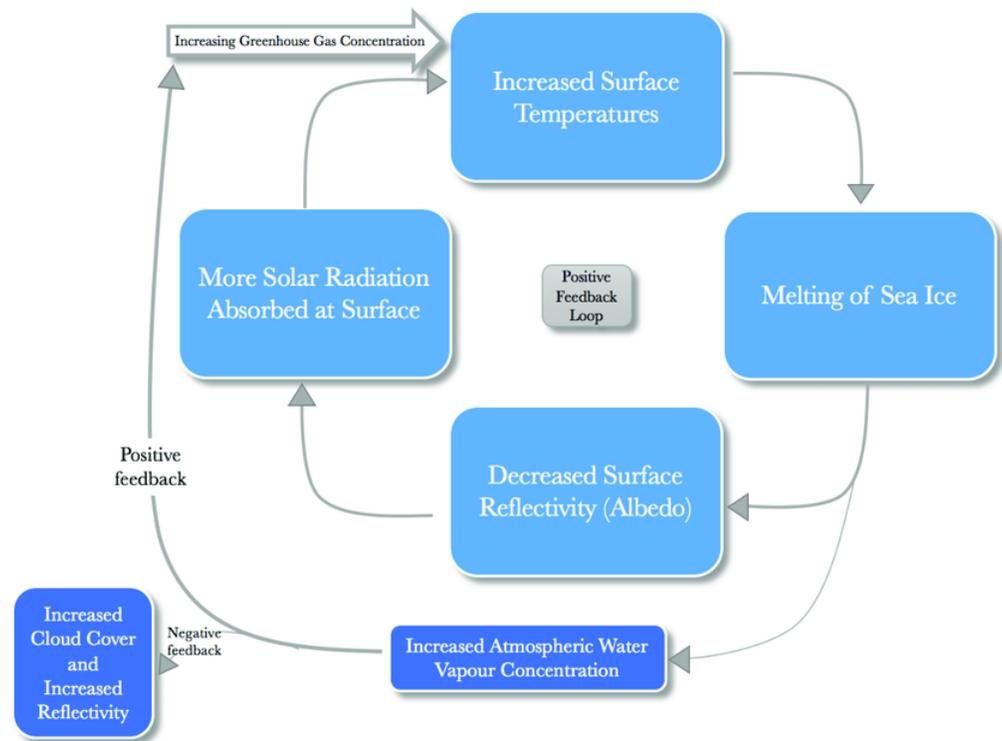
Why the Arctic is Highly Vulnerable

- Arctic warms **3–4 times faster** than global average (**Arctic amplification**)
- Snow and ice surfaces are highly reflective → sensitive to BC deposition

Mechanism of Impact

- BC settles on snow/sea ice → **albedo decreases**
- More solar absorption → accelerated ice melt

- Creates a **positive feedback loop** (melting → darker surface → more heat absorption)



Major Arctic BC Sources

- Shipping emissions
- Oil & gas extraction (flaring)
- Forest fires in boreal regions
- Long-range transport from mid-latitudes (Asia, Europe)

Consequences

- Shrinking sea ice & glaciers
- Sea-level rise
- Disruption of Arctic ecosystems
- Threats to indigenous livelihoods
- Altered global atmospheric circulation (jet streams)

Arctic Ocean: Strategic & Climatic Importance

About the Arctic Ocean

- Smallest and shallowest of the world's oceans

- Surrounded by Eurasia & North America
- Largely ice-covered historically

Significance

- Regulates global climate and ocean circulation
- Acts as a heat sink
- Contains untapped hydrocarbons & minerals
- Emerging geopolitical hotspot

Marine Shipping Routes in the Arctic



Key Arctic Shipping Routes

- **Northern Sea Route (NSR)** – Along Russia’s Siberian coast
- **Northwest Passage (NWP)** – Through Canadian Arctic Archipelago
- **Transpolar Sea Route (future)** – Across central Arctic Ocean

Why They Matter

- Shorten Europe–Asia distance by **30–40%**
- Reduce fuel cost and transit time

- Increase strategic and economic importance of Arctic Ocean

Link Between Marine Shipping & Black Carbon

How Shipping Aggravates Arctic Warming

- Ships emit **black carbon directly over ice-covered waters**
- BC from ships is **more climate-damaging** than lower-latitude emissions
- Heavy fuel oil (HFO) produces high BC emissions

Environmental Impacts

- Faster sea-ice melt
- Higher local warming
- Risk of oil spills in fragile ecosystems
- Noise & disturbance to marine life

Global Governance & Initiatives

International Efforts

- **IMO (International Maritime Organization):**
 - Considering BC emission controls
 - Restrictions on **Heavy Fuel Oil (HFO)** use in Arctic
- **Arctic Council:** Scientific cooperation & environmental protection
- **Climate & Clean Air Coalition (CCAC):** BC mitigation focus

Mitigation Measures

- Shift to cleaner fuels (LNG, low-sulphur fuels)
- BC-specific emission standards
- Improved ship design & slow steaming
- Monitoring & reporting of Arctic BC emissions

India's Relevance

- India is a **significant BC emitter** (biomass burning, diesel use)
- Arctic warming affects:
 - Indian monsoon variability
 - Sea-level rise impacting Indian coasts
- India has observer status in Arctic Council

- India's Arctic Policy (2022) emphasizes climate research

Removal of Speaker

Syllabus: GS-2: Indian Polity – Parliament – Speaker.

Context:

- The Opposition has moved a **no-confidence motion** against **Om Birla**, the Lok Sabha Speaker.
- Allegations include:
 - Disallowing the Leader of Opposition from quoting an **unpublished memoir of former Army Chief M.M. Naravane**.
 - Making a controversial remark suggesting the **Prime Minister could have been attacked inside the House**.
- Motion will be examined as per **constitutional provisions and Lok Sabha Rules**.



Constitutional Provisions Related to Removal of Speaker

Article 94 – Vacation of Office

The Speaker/Deputy Speaker vacates office in the following situations:

- **Article 94(a): Cessation of Membership**
 - Automatically vacates office if he/she ceases to be a member of the Lok Sabha.
- **Article 94(b): Resignation**
 - May resign at any time by writing to the Deputy Speaker (or Speaker, as applicable).
- **Article 94(c): Removal by Resolution**
 - Can be removed by a **resolution passed by a majority of all the then members of the Lok Sabha**.
 - Reflects a **high constitutional threshold** to ensure institutional stability.

Note: These provisions apply **only to Lok Sabha**, not Rajya Sabha.

Procedure for Removal of Lok Sabha Speaker / Deputy Speaker

- **Written notice** must be given to the **Secretary-General of Lok Sabha**.
- **Minimum notice period: 14 days**.
- Notice may be **jointly signed by two or more MPs**.
- After notice:
 - Motion for leave is listed in the **List of Business**.
 - Considered on a date **after completion of the 14-day period**.

Rules Governing No-Confidence Motion Against the Speaker

Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha

- Governed by **Rules 200–203**.
- **Rule 200A (Special Safeguards):**
 - Resolution must be:
 - Precise and specific
 - Free from defamatory language, irony, arguments, or imputations
 - Once admitted:
 - **Mover(s) cannot speak** on the motion (procedural neutrality of Speaker ensured).

Admission Stage: What Happens?

- Supporting members must **rise in their places**.

- **Minimum requirement: 50 MPs** must stand in support.
 - If **≥ 50 MPs** → Leave granted; motion scheduled **within 10 days**.
 - If **< 50 MPs** → Motion lapses at the preliminary stage.

Discussion & Voting Stage

- Motion listed in official business on the appointed day.
- Mover(s):
 - Allowed to speak for **up to 15 minutes**, subject to Speaker's permission.
- Debate strictly confined to **charges mentioned in the resolution**.
- **Voting:**
 - Requires **majority of total strength of Lok Sabha** (not just present and voting).

Speaker's Position During Removal Proceedings

- Speaker:
 - **Continues in office** during discussion.
 - Retains the **right to speak and vote** as an MP.
 - **Cannot exercise casting vote** in case of a tie (to maintain neutrality).

Historical Precedents

No-confidence motions against Lok Sabha Speakers have been moved **three times**:

Year	Speaker	Outcome
1954	G V Mavalankar	Failed
1966	Hukam Singh	Failed
1987	Balram Jakhar	Failed

None of the Speakers were removed, underscoring the **institutional resilience** of the office.

Conclusion

The stringent constitutional and procedural safeguards governing the removal of the Lok Sabha Speaker reflect India's commitment to **legislative stability, neutrality of the Chair, and democratic accountability**.

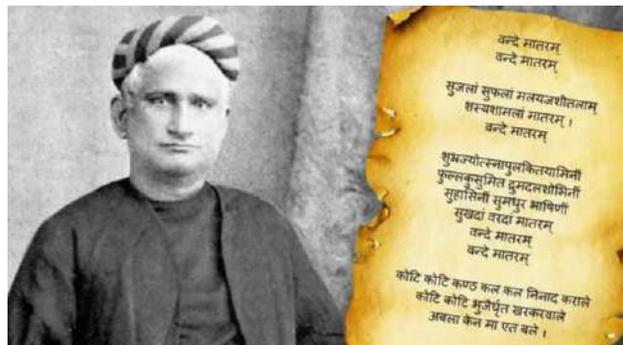
Vande Mataram

Syllabus: GS-2: Indian Polity – National Song.

Context:

- The **Ministry of Home Affairs** issued revised guidelines to mark the **150th anniversary** of *Vande Mataram*.
- The move aims to:
 - Re-emphasise the **historical role** of the National Song in India's freedom struggle.
 - Ensure **uniformity and dignity** in its performance across the country.
 - Clarify the **relationship between the National Song and the National Anthem**, avoiding ambiguity during official ceremonies.
- The directive reinforces the idea that national symbols are not merely ceremonial but are **tools of civic education and national integration**.

Core Directives Explained



Mandatory Rendition of All Six Stanzas

- Earlier, only selected stanzas were commonly used.
- The new guideline mandates the **complete six-stanza version**, which:
 - Preserves the **original literary and ideological integrity** of the song.
 - Prevents selective or fragmented usage that could dilute its meaning.
 - Reinforces respect for the composer's original vision.

Order of Performance with National Anthem

- When both are played:
 - **Vande Mataram must be rendered first**, followed by *Jana Gana Mana*.
- This reflects:

- The **chronological and historical role** of Vande Mataram in the freedom movement.
- The constitutional distinction where:
 - Vande Mataram = **National Song**
 - Jana Gana Mana = **National Anthem**
- The guideline removes confusion during official events and promotes **protocol clarity**.

Occasions for Playing the National Song – Explained

Formal State and Constitutional Events

- **Civil investiture ceremonies:**
 - Symbolises the link between **state authority and national ideals**.
- **Arrival and departure of the President of India:**
 - Underlines the President’s role as the **symbol of the unity of the nation**.
- **Presidential addresses to the nation:**
 - Playing the song before and after broadcasts creates a **solemn national atmosphere**.
- **Governor/Lieutenant Governor events:**
 - Reinforces constitutional federalism while maintaining **national unity**.
- **Ceremonial parading of the National Flag:**
 - Integrates visual and auditory national symbols to enhance **civic reverence**.

Discretionary Powers

- The Government of India retains the authority to prescribe **additional occasions**, ensuring flexibility in evolving ceremonial needs.

Ceremonial Band Protocol – Significance

- The requirement of a **seven-pace slow marching drumroll:**
 - Ensures discipline and standardisation in ceremonial performances.
 - Reflects military and ceremonial traditions that lend **gravity and solemnity** to national symbols.
- Allows alternative signals to maintain **operational flexibility**.

Mass Singing of Vande Mataram

Purpose and Significance

- Encouraged during **non-parade ceremonial and cultural events** to:
 - Transform the song from a passive performance into a **collective civic act**.
 - Strengthen emotional attachment to national symbols.
- During **President's arrival at public events**:
 - Creates a sense of **shared national participation**, not just elite protocol.

Uniformity Clause

- Only the **official six-stanza version** is permitted:
 - Prevents distortion or unofficial adaptations.
 - Maintains **national consistency** in public renditions.

Role of Educational Institutions

- Schools are advised to begin the day with **community singing**, aiming to:
 - Inculcate patriotism from an early age.
 - Develop respect for national symbols as part of **constitutional morality**.
- Institutions are encouraged to promote awareness of:
 - National Song
 - National Anthem
 - National Flag
- This aligns with **Article 51A (Fundamental Duties)**, which emphasises respect for national symbols.

About Vande Mataram – Historical Context

- Author: **Bankim Chandra Chatterjee**
- Composed in the **1870s**, published in *Anandamath* (1882).
- Played a pivotal role during the freedom struggle by:
 - Serving as a **mobilising slogan** against colonial rule.
 - Inspiring nationalist movements across regions and communities.
- Adopted as the **National Song on 24 January 1950**, reflecting:
 - Cultural nationalism alongside constitutional nationalism.
- Language:
 - Sanskritised Bengali, symbolising **India's civilisational heritage**.

National Anthem – Constitutional Position

- Written by **Rabindranath Tagore**.
- Adopted on **24 January 1950**, the same day as Vande Mataram.
- Represents:
 - Unity in diversity
 - Sovereignty of the Indian Republic
- Legally protected under the **Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act**, unlike the National Song which relies more on executive guidelines.

Legal and Constitutional Framework

Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971

- Criminalises deliberate disrespect to:
 - National Flag
 - National Anthem
 - Constitution of India
- Punishment:
 - Imprisonment up to three years, fine, or both.

Flag Code of India, 2002

- Provides **behavioral guidelines**, not criminal penalties.
- Ensures respectful and dignified display of the National Flag.

Judicial Interpretation

- The Supreme Court has repeatedly held that:
 - Respect for national symbols strengthens **unity, integrity, and constitutional values**.
 - Such respect must be balanced with **individual freedoms**.

Overall Significance

- The guidelines reflect a shift from **symbolic patriotism** to **participatory patriotism**.
- They aim to:
 - Standardise practices
 - Deepen civic consciousness
 - Reinforce national identity in a constitutional framework