DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 19-02-2026

Mapping Perspective

1. Tulbul Navigation Barrage Project

Prelims Perspective

2. SAHI and BODH initiative

3. Loggerhead Turtle

Mains Perspective

4. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India
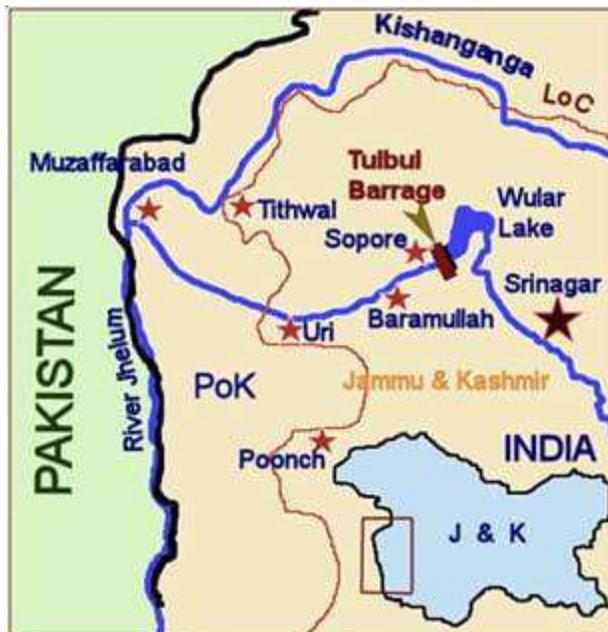
5. India-South Korea Relations

Tulbul Navigation Barrage Project

Syllabus: Prelims Bits – Mapping.

Context:

➢ The **Jammu & Kashmir government** is considering revival of the project amid discussions around the status of the **Indus Waters Treaty (IWT)**.

➢ Parallel proposals include diverting additional water resources toward the Jammu region to enhance irrigation, navigation, and hydropower stability.

About Tulbul Navigation Barrage Project

➢ **Location:** Outlet of **Wular Lake** on the **Jhelum River**, Bandipora district, J&K.

➢ **Nature:** Navigation lock–cum–control barrage.

➢ **Objective:**

o Maintain navigable water depth in the Jhelum during lean winter months (Oct–Feb).

o Improve water regulation from Wular Lake.

➢ **Timeline & Dispute**

o Construction began **1984**.

o Work halted after objections from Pakistan under the IWT, citing potential violation of storage provisions.

➢ **Technical Features**

- o   Length: **439 ft** | Width: **40 ft**.

- o   Storage capacity: **0.30 million acre-feet (MAF)**.

- o   Designed to maintain **minimum draft of ~4.4 ft** in Jhelum.

- ➢ **Expected Benefits**

  - o   Year-round navigation over **~20 km stretch (Baramulla–Sopore)**.

  - o   Flow regulation and flood moderation.

  - o   Improved firm power generation for downstream projects such as **Uri-I and Uri-II hydropower plants**.

Key Facts about Wular Lake

- ➢ **Type:** Largest freshwater lake in India; among the largest in Asia.

- ➢ **Location:** Bandipora district, Jammu & Kashmir.

- ➢ **Hydrology:** Fed primarily by the **Jhelum River**.

- ➢ **Altitude:** ~1,580 m; situated at foothills of **Haramukh Mountain**.

- ➢ **Geomorphology:** Tectonic origin basin.

- ➢ **Extent:** ~200 sq km (seasonally variable).

- ➢ **Ecological status:** Designated **Ramsar Wetland (1990)**.

SAHI and BODH initiative

Syllabus: GS-2: Social Justice – Health.

Context:

- ➢ Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare to launch **SAHI** and **BODH** initiatives at the **India AI Summit** held at **Bharat Mandapam**.

SAHI (Strategy for Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare for India)

- ➢ **Nature:** National guidance framework for AI adoption in healthcare.

- ➢ **Objective:** Ensure **safe, ethical, evidence-based and inclusive** use of AI in India's health system.

- ➢ **Key focus areas**

  - o   Governance and regulatory oversight

  - o   Data stewardship and interoperability

- o Clinical validation and monitoring of AI tools
- o Deployment aligned with **public health priorities**
- ➢ **Role:** Supports States and institutions in responsible AI implementation.

BODH (Benchmarking Open Data Platform for Health AI)

- ➢ **Developed by:** IIT Kanpur + National Health Authority.
- ➢ **Nature:** Privacy-preserving benchmarking platform for evaluation of health AI models.
- ➢ **Core feature:** Enables testing of AI models on **diverse real-world datasets without sharing raw data** (federated/secure evaluation approach).
- ➢ **Status:** Digital Public Good under Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission.

Significance

- ➢ Enhances **trust, transparency and quality assurance** in Health AI.
- ➢ Facilitates innovation while ensuring **data privacy and ethical safeguards**.
- ➢ Strengthens India's digital health ecosystem and AI governance architecture.
- ➢ Supports standardisation and interoperability across healthcare institutions.

Loggerhead Turtle

Syllabus: Prelims Bits – Species in news.

Context:

> Rising **ocean temperatures** and **decline in prey availability** are altering the **reproductive cycles, migration routes, and body size** of Loggerhead turtles.

> Warmer sands can skew **sex ratios** (temperature-dependent sex determination), while warming oceans affect **foraging grounds and growth rates**.

About Loggerhead Turtle

> Belongs to **family Cheloniidae** (hard-shelled sea turtles).

> Named for its **large head** with powerful crushing jaws.

> **Largest hard-shelled turtle**; second largest living turtle after the Leatherback sea turtle.

Photo Credit: NOAA via Wikimedia Commons

Navigation

> Uses **geomagnetic imprinting** to navigate long migratory routes and return to natal beaches.

Habitat

> Occurs in **open ocean** as well as **coastal habitats** — bays, lagoons, salt marshes and estuaries.

Distribution

> Found across **Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans**, and the **Mediterranean Sea**.

Diet

➢ **Omnivorous**, primarily feeds on **benthic invertebrates** — gastropods, bivalves and crustaceans.

Lifespan

➢ Can live **80+ years** with late sexual maturity.

Conservation Status

➢ **IUCN:** Vulnerable.

Major Threats

➢ Climate change (temperature rise, sea-level rise)

➢ Loss of nesting beaches and coastal development

➢ Egg harvesting and direct exploitation

➢ Marine pollution and plastic ingestion

➢ Bycatch in trawls, longlines and gillnets

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India

Syllabus: GS-2: Indian Polity - Statutory Body

Context:

➢ The Supreme Court of India asked the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to examine **front-of-pack warning labels** for foods high in sugar, salt and unhealthy fats.

Background:

➢ Direction arose from a **PIL citing rising lifestyle diseases** such as diabetes, obesity and heart ailments.

➢ FSSAI stated it is conducting **scientific studies, stakeholder consultations and consumer feedback analysis** before finalising norms.

➢ Issue highlights judicial focus on **nutrition transparency, preventive public health and consumer welfare**.

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) — Brief Notes

➢ **Statutory body:** Established under the **Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006**.

➢ **Nodal ministry:** Works under the **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare**.

➢ **Mandate:**

- o Regulates and supervises **food safety, standards, manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import** of food.
- o Frames **science-based food standards** to protect public health.

➢ **Key functions:**

- o Licensing and registration of food businesses.
- o Food quality surveillance, inspections and enforcement.
- o Risk assessment, labelling regulations and consumer awareness campaigns (e.g., *Eat Right India*).

➢ **Structure:** Headed by a **Chairperson** with a governing body including representatives from government, industry, consumers and experts.

➢ **Headquarters:** New Delhi.

India-South Korea Relations

Syllabus: GS-2: International Relation – Bilateral Relations – Strategic.

Context:

➢ India and **South Korea** reaffirmed commitment to deepen the **Special Strategic Partnership** during the **6th Foreign Policy and Security Dialogue (FPSD)** held in **Seoul**.

➢ Indicates sustained diplomatic momentum ahead of **2026 high-level engagements**.

High-Level Dialogue

➢ Co-chaired by:

- o **P. Kumaran** — Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs (India)
- o **Park Yoon-joo** — First Vice Foreign Minister (Republic of Korea)

➢ Covered cooperation in:

- o Defence & security
- o Science & technology
- o Culture and people-to-people ties

➢ Agreement to conduct **high-level visits and Joint Commission meetings in 2026**.

Economic & Technological Cooperation

➢ Opportunities for Korean investment in:

- o **Shipbuilding**
- o Maritime infrastructure

➤ Focus areas:

- o Economic security and resilient supply chains
- o Industrial competitiveness
- o **Critical minerals collaboration**

➤ Priority emerging technologies:

- o Artificial Intelligence
- o Semiconductors
- o **Green hydrogen**

➤ Expected outcomes:

- o Innovation boost
- o Clean energy transition
- o Long-term industrial growth

Regional Security & Multilateral Issues

➤ Discussions on:

- o Korean Peninsula developments
- o Indo-Pacific strategic dynamics

➤ Shared emphasis on:

- o Rules-based order
- o Peace and stability
- o Coordination in multilateral forums
- o Global governance reforms and sustainable development

Broader Diplomatic Engagement

➤ Meetings with South Korea's Foreign Minister and National Security Office officials.

➤ Part of continuous high-level diplomatic engagement to strengthen bilateral ties.