



DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 18-06-2026

Mapping Perspective

1. Kishau Dam Project

Prelims Perspective

2. Vitamin C
3. Mortonagrion santha

Mains Perspective

4. Dancing Girl Controversy: History, Interpretation and the NCERT Debate
5. Memory Chip Shortage Driving India's Inflation

Kishau Dam Project

Syllabus: GS-1; Geography (River Valley Projects); GS- 3; Infrastructure, Water Resources, Environment

Context

The long-pending **Kishau Dam Project** has received a major boost after the Union Government and beneficiary states reached an agreement on sharing the project cost. The consensus ends an eight-year stalemate that had delayed the implementation of one of the key storage projects in the Yamuna basin.

About the Kishau Dam Project

- The Kishau Dam is a **multipurpose storage project** proposed on the **Tons River**, the largest tributary of the **Yamuna River**, along the border of **Uttarakhand** and **Himachal Pradesh**.
- It is a part of efforts to improve water availability in the Yamuna basin and address increasing water demands in northern India.
- Beneficiary states include **Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana, Uttarakhand, and Himachal Pradesh**.

Key Features

- Construction of a **236-metre-high concrete dam**.
- Hydropower generation capacity of **660 MW (4 × 165 MW)**.
- Creation of an irrigation potential of around **97,000 hectares**.
- Annual supply of **517 Million Cubic Metres (MCM)** of water to Delhi, Rajasthan, and Haryana.
- Augmentation of freshwater flows into the Yamuna, particularly during lean seasons, thereby improving river health and water security.

Institutional Mechanism

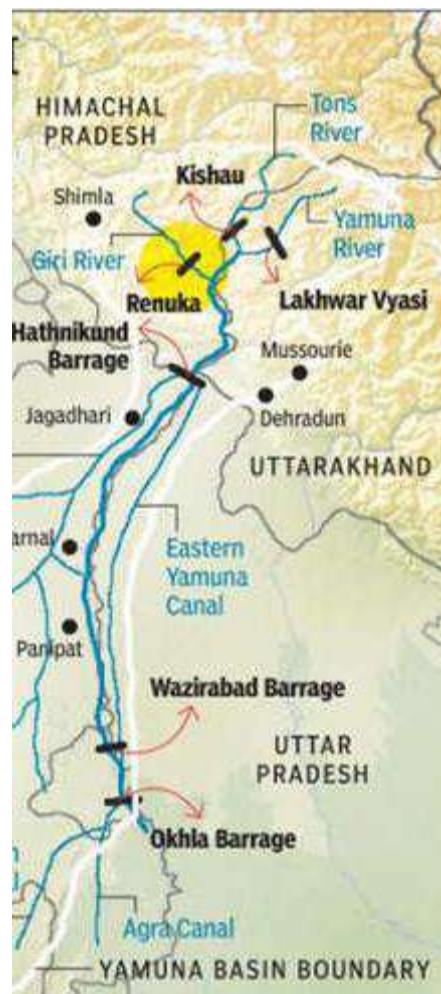
- **Kishau Corporation Limited (KCL)** was established in **2017** as a joint venture between the Governments of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh for project implementation.

Recent Consensus

- The **water component cost** will be financed with **90% Central Assistance** and **10% contribution from beneficiary states**.
- Delhi and Rajasthan will share the cost of Himachal Pradesh's power component in return for receiving Himachal Pradesh's allocated share of water.
- The agreement has paved the way for the project's implementation after years of inter-state disagreements over cost-sharing.

Significance

- Enhances **water security** in northern India.
- Supports **irrigation, drinking water supply, and hydropower generation**.
- Contributes to the rejuvenation of the **Yamuna River** by ensuring regulated freshwater flows.
- Strengthens **cooperative federalism** through inter-state collaboration on water resource management.



Vitamin C

Syllabus: GS-3; Science & Technology – Human Health

Context

Researchers in Japan recently found that older adults with higher blood levels of vitamin C have greater grey matter volume and stronger connectivity among brain regions associated with memory and attention.

About Vitamin C

- Also known as **L-ascorbic acid** or **ascorbate**.
- A water-soluble vitamin.

Functions

- Acts as a powerful antioxidant by neutralizing harmful free radicals.
- Required for growth and repair of body tissues.
- Helps produce several hormones and chemical messengers used by the brain and nervous system.

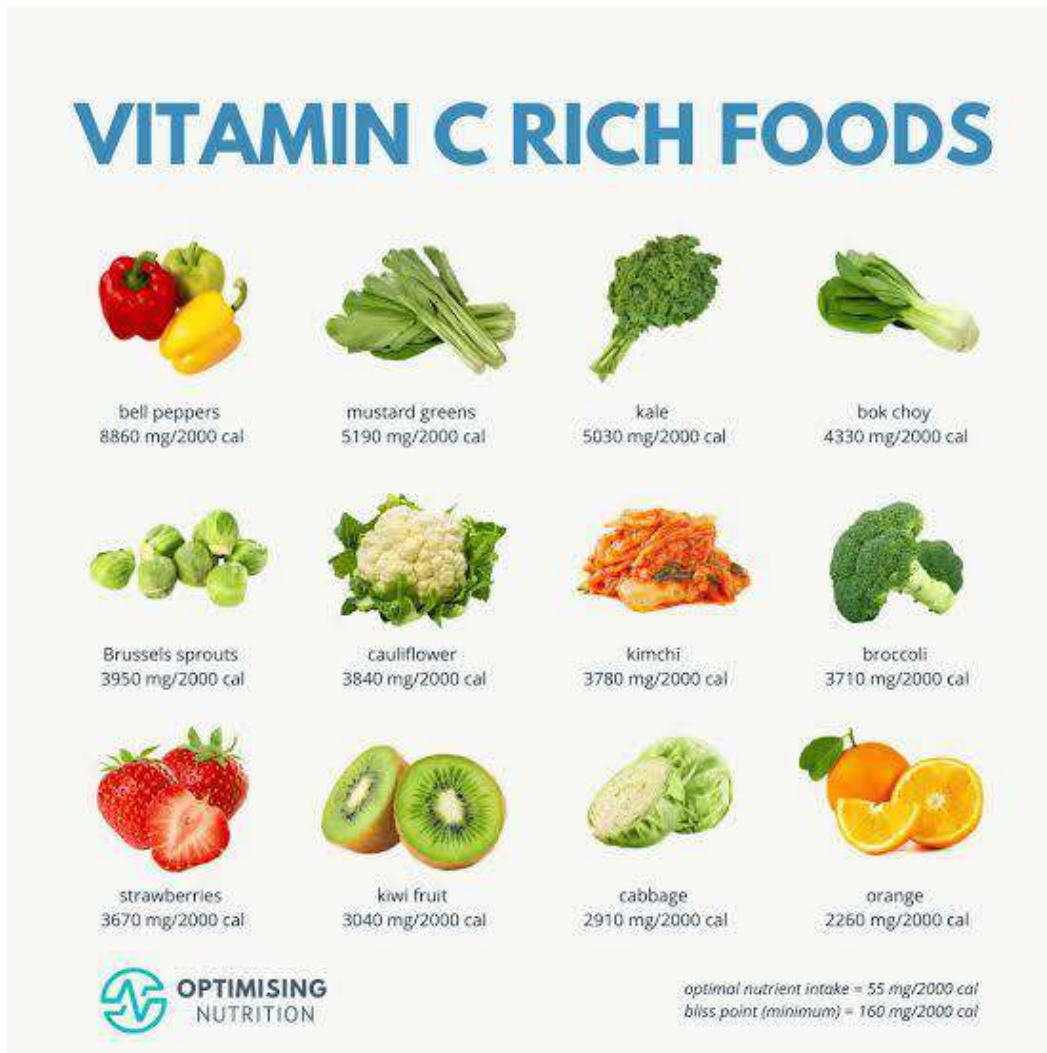
Uses

- Formation of collagen, an important protein required for:
 - Skin
 - Tendons
 - Ligaments
 - Blood vessels
- Wound healing and scar tissue formation.
- Maintenance and repair of:
 - Cartilage
 - Bones
 - Teeth
- Improves iron absorption.

Sources

- Humans cannot synthesize vitamin C and must obtain it through diet.
- Good dietary sources include:
 - Berries

- Cantaloupe
- Tomatoes
- Peppers
- Potatoes
- Cabbage
- Brussels sprouts
- Broccoli
- Spinach
- Citrus fruits such as oranges



Deficiency

Risk factors include:

- Smoking or exposure to secondhand smoke

- Certain digestive disorders
- Certain cancers
- Inadequate consumption of fruits and vegetables

Disease Caused by Deficiency

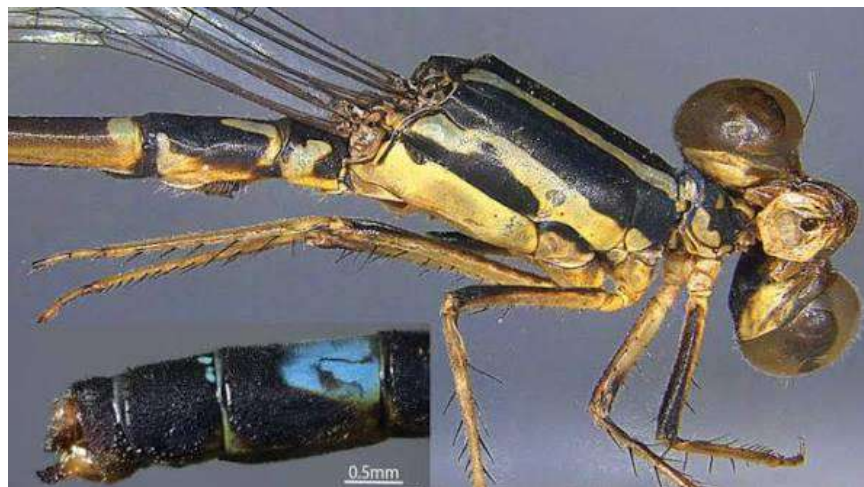
- **Scurvy**
 - Anaemia
 - Bleeding gums
 - Easy bruising
 - Poor wound healing

Mortonagrion santha

Syllabus: GS-3; Environment & Ecology – Biodiversity

Context

Scientists from the Zoological Survey of India and the University of Madras recently discovered a new species of damselfly named *Mortonagrion santha* in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.



About *Mortonagrion santha*

- A newly discovered species of **damselfly**.
- Found near a farm pond surrounded by coconut plantations in **Dasarathpur, Rangat Tehsil, Andaman and Nicobar Islands**.

- Belongs to a genus known for its highly secretive nature and camouflage within shaded coastal vegetation.

Distinctive Features

- Differs from its closest known relative, *Mortonagrion arthuri*, found in Southeast Asia.
- Possesses pale-blue crescent-shaped postocular spots behind the eyes.
- Features a bright-blue marking on the **ninth abdominal segment**.
- Displays a uniquely **shaped three-lobed prothorax**.
- Upper mating appendages are approximately half the length of the lower appendages.

Dancing Girl Controversy: History, Interpretation and the NCERT Debate

Syllabus: GS-1: Indian History – Art and Culture.

Context:

- NCERT's Class 9 Arts Education textbook carried a digitally modified image of the iconic Harappan bronze figurine — the '**Dancing Girl**' — with its torso covered, creating the impression of clothing.



- Following widespread criticism, NCERT restored the original image.
- The controversy has revived debates on **historical authenticity vs contemporary moral sensibilities** in educational content.

Dancing Girl: Key Facts

Aspect	Details
Civilisation	Harappan (Indus Valley Civilisation), c. 2600–1900 BCE
Discovered in	1926, Mohenjo-daro (present-day Pakistan)
Discovered by	John Marshall
Material	Bronze
Height	10.8 cm
Technique	Lost-wax casting (Cire Perdue)
Present Location	National Museum
Features	Bare-torso female figure; 24–25 bangles on left arm, 4 on right; necklace; head tilted back; knees slightly bent

Significance

- Demonstrates the advanced state of **Harappan metallurgy** nearly 4,500 years ago.
- Reflects the use of **lost-wax casting technique**, which continues to be practised in many parts of India today.

Why is it Called the ‘Dancing Girl’? — Colonial Label

Origin of the Term

- The label was assigned by **John Marshall** during the 1926 excavation.
- Marshall described it as a “**young aboriginal nautch girl**” in a dancing posture.

Criticism of the Label

- No textual or archaeological evidence confirms that the figure was a dancer.
- Upinder Singh argues that the figurine may not have been dancing and may not represent a professional dancer.

- Gregory Possehl also questioned the dancer interpretation.
- Historian Ashish Kumar suggests colonial officials' familiarity with nautch girls may have influenced the identification.
- Marshall further linked the figurine with the Devadasi tradition, a continuity claim now regarded as speculative.

Analysis

- The label reflects **colonial interpretive bias rather than archaeological evidence**.
- Artefact interpretations must be understood within the historical context in which they were produced.

Colonial Morality and the 'Vulgarity' Debate

Colonial Perceptions

- Colonial officials often viewed nudity in Indian art as **immoral** and **vulgar**.
- Greek and Roman art were considered superior due to their perceived anatomical realism.
- Indian depictions featuring multiple limbs, heads, or nude forms were dismissed as irrational and culturally inferior.

Double Standards

- Numerous nude terracotta female figurines from Harappan sites were classified as **Mother Goddess** representations.
- The bronze figurine alone was labelled a **nautch girl**.
- Highlights how colonial moral frameworks shaped interpretations of India's archaeological heritage.

Multiple Historical Interpretations

1. Mother Goddess / Ritual Figure

- Associated with the Mother Goddess cult believed to be prevalent at Harappan sites.

2. Parvati-Shakti Interpretation

- Based on the association of Harappan religion with proto-Shiva imagery (Pashupati Seal).
- Suggests the existence of a corresponding Shakti figure.

- Not universally accepted among scholars.

3. Warrior Figure

- Left arm contains an empty socket, indicating it may have held an object such as a spear.
- Greater ornamentation on the left arm compared to the right.
- Some scholars interpret the right arm as being free for combat purposes.

Limitation

- Absence of deciphered Harappan written records makes all interpretations speculative.

India–Pakistan Dispute over the Artefact

Background

- At Partition, nearly **12,000 Harappan artefacts** from Mohenjo-daro were in Delhi, having been brought for exhibition by Mortimer Wheeler.
- Pakistan demanded their return, arguing the archaeological sites lay within its territory.

India's Position

- India maintained that the Harappan Civilisation represented a **shared South Asian heritage**, not an exclusively Pakistani one.

Settlement

- Both countries agreed to a **50:50 division** of artefacts from Mohenjo-daro and Chanhudaro.

Dancing Girl vs Priest King

- Pakistan sought both the Dancing Girl and the Priest King.
- India agreed to part with only one artefact.
- Pakistan chose the **Priest King**, reportedly to avoid domestic opposition over a nude female figurine.

Significance

- Illustrates the intersection of **heritage politics, nationalism, and cultural identity** in the post-Partition period.

NCERT Controversy and the Textbook Debate

Recent Instances

- **2023:** A fully clothed and contemporised version of the Dancing Girl was unveiled as the mascot of the International Museum Expo.
- **2026:** NCERT Class 9 textbook published a digitally altered image covering the torso; later restored after criticism.

Core Issue

- Whether historical artefacts should be presented:
 - As they originally existed, reflecting their civilisational context; or
 - Modified to suit contemporary moral standards.

Concerns

- Alteration misrepresents Harappan material culture.
- Imposes present-day value judgements on historical artefacts.
- Raises concerns regarding academic integrity and historical accuracy.

Issues Involved

- Historical authenticity vs contemporary morality.
- Colonial legacy in archaeological interpretation.
- Heritage conservation and representation.
- Politics of memory and cultural nationalism.
- Educational ethics and textbook content.

Broader Lessons

- Historical artefacts should be interpreted through evidence-based scholarship rather than contemporary social sensitivities.
- Critical engagement with history requires acknowledging its complexity rather than sanitising it.

Conclusion

- The **Dancing Girl** is more than a 4,500-year-old bronze figurine; it reflects debates surrounding **colonial biases, post-Partition heritage politics, archaeological interpretation, and contemporary cultural values.**

- The controversy underscores the importance of preserving historical authenticity in educational materials and promoting an evidence-based understanding of India's past.

Memory Chip Shortage Driving India's Inflation

Syllabus: GS-3: Indian Economy – Inflation.

Context:

- A global shortage of memory chips, driven by the AI investment boom, is pushing up prices of consumer electronics in India, with retail inflation data reflecting sustained price increases in smartphones, laptops, fridges, and pen drives.

Understanding Memory Chips

What are Memory Chips?

- Essential semiconductor components that enable modern electronic devices to store and process data.

Major Categories

- **Dynamic Random Access Memory (DRAM):** Used for temporary data storage and active processing.
- **NAND Flash Memory:** Used for permanent storage in devices.

Applications

- Smartphones and tablets.
- Laptops and computers.
- Refrigerators, televisions, and washing machines.
- Pen drives, hard disks, and earphones.
- Electric batteries and data centres.
- Without memory chips, modern electronics cannot function.

Global Supply Chain for Memory Chips

- Global semiconductor industry is highly concentrated, with production dominated by a few firms:
 - TSMC: World's largest contract chip manufacturer.

- Samsung: Major producer of memory and logic chips.
 - SK Hynix: Leading producer of DRAM memory chips.
 - Micron: Major supplier of DRAM and NAND memory.
- High concentration makes the global supply chain vulnerable to disruptions.

How the AI Boom is Causing a Memory Chip Shortage

Shift in Production Priorities

- Chipmakers are increasingly diverting production capacity towards high-end chips needed for AI systems:
- High Bandwidth Memory (HBM) used in AI computing.
 - Server DRAM required for data centres.
 - Advanced processors for AI training and inference.

Reduced Production of Consumer Electronics Chips

- Lower production of:
- LPDDR4 (Low Power Double Data Rate 4) memory chips used in smartphones.
 - Standard DRAM chips for household appliances.
 - Storage chips used in personal electronic devices.

LPDDR4 Significance

- Most widely used working memory in mobile devices worldwide.
- Provides 32 Gbps bandwidth.
- 1.7 times faster than LPDDR3 memory.
- 2 times faster than DDR3 RAM.

Supply-Demand Imbalance

- According to Counterpoint Research, global supply of LPDDR4 chips may decline by more than 40% in 2026 as capacity shifts towards AI-oriented chips.
- Nomura analysts warn that chip demand could exceed supply for 3–5 years, making the shortage structural rather than temporary.

- Buyers are increasingly entering multi-year contracts and pre-funding production, reducing chip availability in spot markets.

Impact on India: Electronics Inflation

Sequential Price Increases

- Laptops, computers, and tablets: Prices increased for seven consecutive months.
- Mobile phones: Prices rose for six consecutive months.
- Refrigerators, washing machines, and televisions: Prices increased for four months in a row.
- Air conditioners, batteries, headphones, and earphones: Prices rose for three straight months.
- Pen drives and hard disks: Prices increased in 15 of the last 16 months, recording the steepest monthly rise of nearly 3%.
- Most electronics categories are witnessing monthly price increases approaching 1%, indicating sustained inflationary pressure.

Global Concerns About Chip-Driven Inflation

- Policymakers globally are recognising semiconductor shortages as a new inflationary challenge.
- Economists at the US Federal Reserve have identified unusually high price increases in the “Computer Software and Accessories” category as a contributor to core inflation.
- Rising electronics prices are increasingly influencing monetary policy discussions.

Implications for India

Impact on Consumers

- Higher semiconductor costs are reducing affordability of essential electronic products.
- May delay purchases and affect household consumption.

Impact on Industry

- Make in India initiatives could face component shortages.
- Beneficiaries under the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme may experience rising input costs.

- Mobile phone manufacturing, a flagship export sector, could face production disruptions.
- Micron executives have warned that Indian firms are not making sufficient long-term purchase commitments, increasing future shortage risks.

Inflation Outlook

- Electronics constitute only around 1% of India's Consumer Price Index (CPI) basket; therefore, impact on headline inflation remains moderate.
- Manufacturers are increasingly unable to absorb rising costs.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) projects CPI inflation at 5.9% in the final quarter of 2026, close to the upper limit of its inflation target range.
- Persistent chip shortages could make electronics a larger contributor to inflation in coming years.

Long-Term Concerns and Policy Response

- Experts warn that the shortage may persist for 3–5 years, implying prolonged price pressures.
- India may need to accelerate efforts under the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM).
- Expansion of domestic semiconductor manufacturing capacity is necessary to reduce vulnerability.
- Policymakers may require supply-side interventions beyond conventional demand management to address this emerging source of inflation.