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Current Affairs Today – February 25, 2026

25 February 2026

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TKDL — INDIA-BRAZIL COOPERATION TO BLOCK BIOPIRACY

India's **CSIR (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research)** and Brazil's **INPI (National Institute of Industrial Property)** signed a cooperation arrangement on the **Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL)**, aiming to prevent wrongful patents on India's traditional medical knowledge before international patent offices.

About TKDL: Established in **2001** by CSIR and the **Ministry of AYUSH**, TKDL digitises and catalogues India's traditional knowledge — primarily from **Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa, and Yoga** — in five international languages (English, German, French, Japanese, Spanish), making it accessible to patent examiners worldwide as **prior art**.

Why it matters: Before TKDL, companies filed patents on traditional Indian remedies — the turmeric wound-healing patent (US, 1997) and basmati rice patent (US, 1997) were landmark cases that India had to fight. TKDL makes patent examiners aware that these “inventions” are centuries-old Indian knowledge.

UPSC angle: Biopiracy, CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity), Nagoya Protocol (Access and Benefit Sharing), TRIPS Agreement flexibilities, traditional knowledge protection under IPR.

LENACAPAVIR — ZIMBABWE'S HIV PREVENTION MILESTONE

Zimbabwe launched the nationwide rollout of **Lenacapavir** (brand: *Yeztugo*), developed by **Gilead Sciences** — the world's first **twice-yearly injectable PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis)** for HIV prevention.

Mechanism: Capsid inhibitor — blocks the HIV capsid protein that the virus uses to replicate

Effectiveness: ~99.9% prevention of HIV transmission (PURPOSE 1 and 2 clinical trials)

Advantage over daily oral PrEP: A six-month injection vs. daily pill — dramatically improves adherence

WHO prequalification: Approved for rollout in high-burden countries

Zimbabwe has one of the world's highest HIV prevalence rates (~11.9%). The rollout targets women and girls aged 16–25 — the most at-risk group in sub-Saharan Africa.

UPSC angle: Global health equity, WHO role, PEPFAR, TRIPS waiver for HIV medicines, India's generic drug manufacturing (CIPLA, Sun Pharma have generic versions in pipeline), SDG 3 (Good Health).

CONTARINIA ICARDIFLORES — NEW BLOSSOM MIDGE DISCOVERED

Scientists at **ICAR-DFRI (ICAR-Directorate of Floricultural Research)**, Pune, discovered a new blossom midge species — *Contarinia icardiflores* (family Cecidomyiidae) — whose larvae attack flower buds, causing significant yield losses in horticultural crops including marigold, chrysanthemum, and jasmine.

The species is named in honour of the institute's contributions to floricultural research.

UPSC angle: Biodiversity, insect taxonomy, ICAR research institutions, floriculture sector (worth ~₹15,000 crore in India; major export earner — cut flowers, essential oils), pest management.

NATIONAL MISSION ON NATURAL FARMING — UPDATE

The **National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF)**, launched as a centrally sponsored scheme (approved in 2023 Union Budget), crossed **12 lakh hectares** of land converted to natural farming practices across 15+ states. Andhra Pradesh leads with its **ZBNF (Zero Budget Natural Farming)** model under the **RySS (Rythu Sadhikara Samstha)**.

UPSC angle: Natural farming vs. organic farming (difference), chemical input reduction, soil health, carbon sequestration, ZBNF founder Subhash Palekar, SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), PM Pranam scheme (promoting alternative fertilisers).

FACTS CORNER — KNOWLEDGEPEDIA

TKDL — Core Data:

Established: **2001** | Institutions: **CSIR + Ministry of AYUSH**

Languages: **5** (English, German, French, Japanese, Spanish)

Covers: **Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa, Yoga**

Entries: **~9 lakh formulations** documented

Landmark cases: Turmeric (US patent 1997, revoked 1997) + Basmati (US, 1997)

Brazil cooperation agency: **INPI (National Institute of Industrial Property)**

Lenacapavir:

Developer: **Gilead Sciences** | Brand: **Yeztugo**

Type: **Capsid inhibitor** | Route: **Twice-yearly injection (6 months)**

Effectiveness: **~99.9%** HIV prevention

Indication: **Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)**

Zimbabwe HIV prevalence: ~**11.9%**

Trials: **PURPOSE 1 (Africa) + PURPOSE 2 (Global)**

Contarinia icardiflores:

Discovered by: **ICAR-DFRI (Directorate of Floricultural Research)**, Pune

Family: **Cecidomyiidae** (gall midges)

Impact: Larvae destroy flower buds → yield loss in marigold, chrysanthemum, jasmine

Named after: The ICAR-DFRI institute (*icardi* = from ICAR-DFR)

India Floriculture:

Market size: ~**₹15,000 crore** | Major export: Cut flowers, essential oils

Key states: Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh

Other Relevant Facts:

Nagoya Protocol (2010): Governs access and benefit sharing of genetic resources + traditional knowledge; India ratified 2012

CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992): Framework for biodiversity conservation; 196 parties

PEPFAR: US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (2003); world's largest bilateral HIV programme

ZBNF: Zero Budget Natural Farming; Subhash Palekar developed it; no external inputs, uses cow dung + urine (Jeevamrutha)

CPGRAMS: Central grievance portal managed by DARPG (Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances)

Sources: The Hindu, PIB, GKToday

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