

Current Affairs

Workbook

June 2025



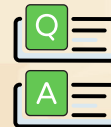
**Mains
Questions**



**Ethics
Case Studies**



**Progress
Tracking Table**



MCQs



Quick facts



**Comprehensive
Summary**



True/ False

Self-Evaluation

Progress Tracking Table

Activity Type	Total Questions	Correct Answers	Attempted	Score/Percentage
MCQ's				
True/False Statements				

Monthly Learning Summary

Top 3 Learnings/insights

-
-
-

Progress Comparison

Previous Month's Score

Current Month's Score

Areas of Improvement

Reflection Section

Strengths

Areas for Improvement

Goals for Next Month



AHMEDABAD



BENGALURU



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



GUWAHATI



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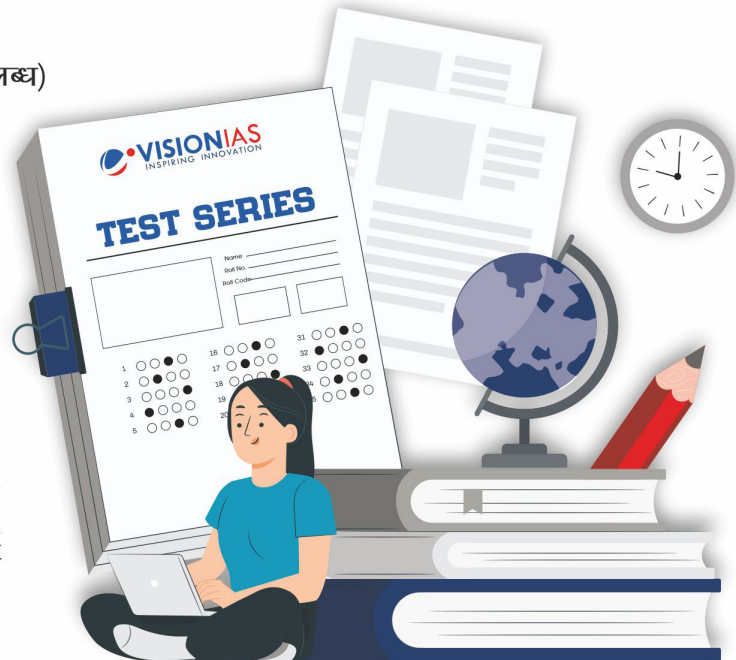
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GTB Nagar Metro (Mukherjee Nagar): 10 JULY, 8 AM | 29 JULY, 6 PM

हिन्दी माध्यम 7 अगस्त, 2 PM

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BENGALURU: 22 JULY

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*: Pre-foundation classes are designed to provide a strong foundation in core UPSC CSE subjects, utilizing NCERTs and basic textbooks. They serve as the initial step in the comprehensive preparation journey for the UPSC Civil Services Examination by providing conceptual clarity in core GS subjects such as History, Polity, Geography, Economy, and Environment. Further, Pre-Foundation Classes act as a transition platform toward the VisionIAS Regular Foundation Course Program, 2026.

From the Editor's Desk

Dear Readers,

The **June edition of the Workbook** continues to provide a structured and analytical framework to help you master current affairs with clarity and depth. By engaging with the Workbook after reviewing the Monthly Current Affairs Summary, you strengthen both your retention and analytical skills—crucial for success in competitive examinations.

This month's Workbook explores a wide spectrum of developments with clarity and focus. In **Polity and Governance**, we mark 50 years of the Emergency—a pivotal moment in India's constitutional history—offering an opportunity to reflect on democratic resilience. Contemporary issues such as the protection of personality rights and the legality of narco-analysis underscore the evolving interface between law and individual rights in the digital age.

The **International Relations** section covers India's strategic balancing in a turbulent global order—from navigating China's expanding trilateral diplomacy to engaging with the G7 and WTO reform dialogues. Each piece illuminates how India upholds its sovereignty while actively shaping global norms.

The **Economy** section captures vital transitions such as the India's shifting consumption dynamics driven by rural growth, the rise of quick commerce, and the complexities of asset monetization and FDI flows. These developments not only reflect changing market behaviors but also pose critical questions about sustainability, equity, and policy response.

Our structured approach remains consistent throughout the Workbook with dedicated segments on Environment, Security, Science & Technology, and Government Schemes—ensuring holistic preparation.

How the Workbook is Organized?

1. **Summary of the Monthly Magazine:** Crisp overview of key developments.

2. **Quick Facts Block:** Key facts and figures at your fingertips.

3. **Activities Block:**



MCQ's : Test comprehension of significant topics.



True/False Statements : Verify your understanding of key facts.



Mains practice Questions : Explore and articulate in-depth topics with clarity.



Answers and Explanation : Includes answers to MCQs and True/False questions for immediate feedback.

4. **Progress tracking table :** Monitor your progress with a dedicated section to record scores and reflect on areas for improvement.

We hope you continue to engage with the Workbook actively and make it a key component of your preparation strategy. With persistence and smart effort, the journey to success becomes achievable.

Warm regards,
Team Current Affairs,
VisionIAS



"History will judge us by the difference we make in the everyday lives of children."

– Nelson Mandela

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE



1.1. 50 years of Emergency

Why in the News?

- ➔ 2025 marked **50 years of** imposition of the **National Emergency**, declared on June 25, 1975, and lasting until March 21, 1977.

Why Emergency in 1975 was imposed?

- ➔ **Social Unrest:** Large-scale protests, strikes, and demonstrations, notably **JP Movement** led by Jayaprakash Narayan
- ➔ **Economic crises** post 1971 war.
- ➔ **Political Factors:** Allahabad High Court had invalidated Indira Gandhi's election.

Major Constitutional Amendments during Emergency:

- ➔ **38th Amendment (1975):** Barred judicial review of Emergency declaration by making **President's satisfaction to be final**.
- ➔ **39th Amendment (1975):** Changes in method of deciding election disputes of President, Vice President, Prime Minister and Speaker.
 - ➔ To be decided by such authority as may be **determined by Parliament**.
- ➔ **42nd Amendment (1976):**
 - ➔ Gave primacy to **Directive Principles over Fundamental Rights** under article 31C.
 - ➔ **Curtailement of powers of Supreme Court and High Court** by various measures, like
 - ♦ **Article 32A** inserted to deny SC power to consider constitutional validity of State laws. (**omitted by 43rd amendment act**)
 - ♦ Deny HC power to **check constitutional validity of Central laws** (Article 131A & 226A).
 - ➔ Extend Lok Sabha term from **5 to 6 yr**.

Post-Emergency Reforms

- ➔ **Shah Commission 1977:** To probe abuses like sterilisations, government employees forcibly retired etc.
- ➔ **44th Amendment Act (1978):**
 - ➔ **Changes under Article 352:**
 - ♦ Grounded Emergency on "armed rebellion" instead of "internal disturbance" to curb misuse.
 - ♦ Made Union Cabinet's written advice to President compulsory.
 - ♦ Mandated special majority Parliamentary approval within one month.
 - ➔ **Fundamental Rights:** Articles 20 and 21 remain enforceable during Emergency under Article 359.
 - ♦ Right to Property removed from Fundamental Rights; made a constitutional right under Article 300A.
 - ➔ **Article 257A removed:** Centre's power to deploy forces in states.
 - ➔ **Term of Lok Sabha:** Back to 5 years from 6 years.
 - ➔ **Restored judicial power to review** President and Vice-President elections.

Conclusion

Emergency reminds us that power can suppress rights. Vigilant democratic forces must always protect constitutional safeguards and civil liberties.

About National Emergency (Article 352)

- ➔ **Grounds:** War, external aggression, or armed rebellion.
- ➔ **Proclamation:** Declared by President on written advice of Union Cabinet.
- ➔ **Approval:** Within one month by both Houses.
- ➔ **Majority:** Special Majority required in both Houses.
- ➔ **Duration:** Six months, renewable.
- ➔ **Revocation:** By President or Lok Sabha resolution.

Effect of Proclamation of National Emergency

- ➔ On Centre-State Relations:
 - ➔ Centre can direct States on any subject.
 - ➔ Parliament can legislate on State List.
 - ➔ Revenue distribution may be altered by President.
- ➔ **On Legislature:** Lok Sabha/State Assembly term extendable by one year, limited to six months post-Emergency.
- ➔ On Fundamental Rights:
 - ➔ Article 19 suspended only during war/external aggression (Art. 358).
 - ➔ Other rights (except 20, 21) suspended by President's Order (Art. 359).

1.2. Personality Rights

Why in the news?

- ➔ Delhi high court protected personality rights of Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev from being misused via AI by websites and platforms.

About Personality Rights

- ➔ **Personality rights** refer to the right of an individual to control the unauthorized use of their personal attributes like **Name, Image, voice, Likeness and Distinctive expressions or traits**. (Include **both commercial and non-commercial** aspects)
- ➔ Personality rights are **not expressly mentioned in any statute in India**.
- ➔ Components of Personality Rights:
 - ➔ **Right to Publicity:** Protects image from commercial use without consent; partially covered by Trademark and Copyright Acts.
 - ➔ **Right to Privacy:** Prevents unauthorized public representation; upheld under Article 21 and Puttaswamy judgment.
- ➔ **Posthumous Personality Rights in India:** There is no specific statutory recognition.
 - ➔ However, **Emblems Act, 1950** prohibits commercial use of images of Mahatma Gandhi and Prime Minister.
 - ➔ **Deepa Jayakumar v. AL Vijay (2019) Judgment:** Personality right, reputation or privacy comes to end after lifetime.

Important Judicial pronouncements on Personality rights in India

- ➔ **Arun Jaitley vs Network Solutions Private Limited and Ors case, 2011 (Delhi HC):** Popularity or fame of an individual will be no different on the internet than in reality.
- ➔ **Rajinikanth v. Varsha Productions (Madras HC, 2015):** Fame remains same online and offline.

Conclusion

A comprehensive legal framework and empowerment of government agencies to actively monitor and block AI-generated impersonation is need of the hour.



Important Judicial pronouncements on Personality rights in India

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1.3. News in Shorts

1.3.1 Constitutional Validity of Narco Tests

- ➔ The **Supreme Court** **overturned the Patna High Court's order** which allowed Narco-tests on all accused and witnesses.

About Narco-analysis test

- ➔ It is an **interrogation technique** where a suspect is injected with a psychoactive drug to suppress reasoning and self-control.
- ➔ Sodium Pentothal is used, also applied as anesthesia in higher doses.

Key Highlights of the Judgement

- ➔ **Involuntary Narco Test: Violate Articles 20(3)** (right against self-incrimination) and **21** (right to personal liberty), **Illegal**.
- ➔ **Voluntary Narco-Test Cannot Be Sole Basis for Conviction:**
 - ➔ However, **new information** discovered through the test **can be admitted** under **the Indian Evidence Act, 1872**.
- ➔ **Limited Right to Voluntarily Undergo the Narco-Test:** Accused **does not have an absolute right** to undergo this.





1.3.2 Quality Council of India (QCI)

Minister of State for Commerce and Industry **inaugurated the new unified headquarters of the Quality Council of India (QCI) at the World Trade Centre in New Delhi.**

About Quality Council of India

- ➔ **Genesis:** Established as a **National body for Accreditation** in 1996.
- ➔ **Mission:** To lead **nationwide quality movement** in India.
- ➔ **Non-Profit Organization (NPO):** It is an NPO registered under the **Societies Registration Act of 1860**.
- ➔ **PPP Model:** Supported by **Government of India and industry associations** – ASSOCHAM, CII, and FICCI.
 - ➔ **DPIIT** (Ministry of Commerce) was made the **nodal agency** for **all matters connected with quality and QCI**.
- ➔ **Chairman:** Chairman of QCI is **appointed by the Prime Minister** on the recommendations of the industry.
- ➔ **Role in Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM):** Serves as the implementing agency for **Swachh Survekshan survey**.

Key objectives of QCI

-  To lead National Quality Campaign.
-  To develop **apropos capacities** at the level of Governments, Institutions and enterprises.
-  To develop, establish & operate National Accreditation programmes.
-  To build capacities to overcome sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) and technical barriers to trade (TBT) constraints etc.

1.3.3. ECINET app

Election Commission of India (ECI) used **ECINET digital platform** during bye-elections in **Kerala, Gujarat, Punjab**.

About Form 17C

- ➔ 1st part provides information related to the number of: Total number of electors assigned to the Polling Station, Total number of voters as entered in the Register for Voters (Form 17A), etc.
- ➔ 2nd part contains information like the **name of the candidate and the total votes they received**.
- ➔ Under **Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961**, **Presiding Officers** are required to **furnish Form 17C to booth-level agents**.

About ECINET app

- ➔ **ECINET** is a new **one-stop platform** for timely voter turnout reporting.
- ➔ **Key Features:** **Near Real-Time Voter Turnout Update, Data Accuracy Ensured, Faster Index Card Publication.**
 - ➔ The **Index Card** is **non-statutory post-election report** that shares detailed **constituency-level election data**.

1.3.4. Adi Karmyogi Programme

- ➔ The Ministry of Tribal Affairs launched the **Adi Karmyogi Programme**.

About the Adi Karmyogi Programme

- ➔ **Aim:** Building a **cadre of highly motivated officers** and change makers dedicated to **grassroots transformation**.
- ➔ **Objective:** To take **capacity-building** to about 20 lakh field-level stakeholders by creating a batch of trainers and master trainers at the State, district, and block levels.
- ➔ It seeks to emphasize **citizen-centric ideation and delivery**.
- ➔ **Target:** Reaching 1 lakh tribal villages and habitations.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



2.1. India and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)

Why in the News?

- Recently, India has **refused** to sign a **joint declaration** at the **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Defence Ministers' meeting** in Qingdao, China.

Why did India refused to sign a Joint Declaration?

- Double Standard for Terrorism:** The document ignored the Pahalgam attack but mentioned Balochistan, reflecting selective concern over terrorism.
- Non-Negotiable Core Principles:** India reiterated that peace and terrorism cannot coexist—a principle it upholds firmly in all multilateral engagements.

India's Strategic Opportunities within the SCO Framework

- Central Asia Outreach:** Strengthens ties with CARs, aligns with Connect Central Asia Policy.
- Energy Security:** Taps uranium from Kazakhstan.
- Connectivity Boost:** Supports International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC).
- Diplomatic Channel:** Engages China and Pakistan.

What are India's concerns regarding SCO?

- China's Dominance:** China attempts to steer SCO for its own strategic goals like BRI.
- Expansion Challenge:** New members like Belarus dilute Central Asian focus.
- Weak Implementation:** Lacks executive authority, remains mostly declarative.
- Anti-West Image:** Perceived as anti-West amid China-Russia-Iran tensions.

How India balances Strategic Autonomy with multilateral engagement in the SCO?

- National Interest First:** Opposed China's BRI.
- Principled Participation:** Active in Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS).
- Development Focus:** e.g. SCO Sub-Group on Cooperation in **Traditional Medicine and Startups and Innovation**.
- Leveraging close Relationship with Russia:** E.g. India and Russia cooperate on **core agenda items in the SCO**.

Role of SCO in Reshaping Global Multilateral Order

- Strategic Presence:** Covers 80% of Eurasia, 42% of global population.
- Economic Strength:** Contributes 25% to global GDP.
- Challenging West:** Emerging alternative to Western-led forums.
- Security Role:** Formed Afghanistan Contact Group (ACG) in 2005 to engage Afghanistan.

Conclusion

India strategically **engages with SCO for Central Asian outreach while maintaining cautious distance** from China's influence to preserve its core principles.

2.2. China-led Trilateral Nexus

Why in the News?

- ➔ **China, Pakistan, and Bangladesh** recently held their **first-ever trilateral meeting** on the sidelines of the 6th China-South Asia Cooperation Forum.

More on the News

- ➔ This marks China's **second trilateral initiative** in India's immediate neighbourhood, following a similar engagement with Pakistan and Afghanistan.
- ➔ Multiple analyses point towards the emergence of a **strategic nexus** involving China, Turkey, and Pakistan, as evidenced by their coordinated responses during the **Pahalgam crisis**.
- ➔ These engagements challenge **India's traditional influence** as **China creates an arc of strategic influence** from **Afghanistan to Bay of Bengal**.

Rising China's Influence in South Asia

- ➔ **Pakistan:** Pakistan is dependent on China **for majority of its defence import**.
- ➔ **Maldives:** **China-Maldives Friendship Bridge** and housing projects.
- ➔ **Sri Lanka:** China developed the **Hambantota Port** and leased it for 99 years.
- ➔ **Bangladesh:** China is Bangladesh's biggest **defence supplier**.
- ➔ **Nepal:** E.g., Pokhara International Airport and proposed **trans-Himalayan connectivity** projects.

Factors facilitating these Trilateral Engagements

- ➔ **Historical:** Both Pakistan and China share longstanding **border disputes** with India.
- ➔ **China's Assertive Regional Policy:** Actively expanding geopolitical footprint in **South Asia to achieve regional dominance**.
- ➔ **Strategic Balancing against India:** Countries like Bangladesh **leverage ties with China** to counter India's regional influence.
- ➔ **Infrastructure Diplomacy:** China is offering faster and **larger infrastructure funding** to **India's neighbours**.

Concerns / Implications for India from Rising China's Influence

- ➔ **Geostrategic Encirclement:** China has already established a presence at strategic ports under the **'String of Pearls' Strategy**.
- ➔ **Undermining India led Regional Platforms:** This could undermine the influence of India-backed groups such as **BIMSTEC**.
- ➔ **Diminishing Regional Influence:** Bangladesh expressed interest in involving China in the **Teesta River project**.
- ➔ **India's Connectivity Initiatives:** Promotion of BRI Projects may impact India-led alternatives such as the **BBIN initiative** and the **IMEC**.

Strategy to be adopted by India

- ➔ **Counterbalance through Strategic Partnerships:** Enhance cooperation with like-minded nations like Japan and US through **QUAD**.
- ➔ **Implementation of developmental projects:** Set up dedicated MEA cell for coordinating projects with neighbours.
- ➔ **Development Fund:** Establish **regional development fund** for connectivity infrastructure under BIMSTEC.
- ➔ **Engagement through RIC:** Revive **RIC** framework with China and Russia initiated in late 1990s.

Conclusion

- ➔ The trilateral meeting marks significant South Asian geopolitical development requiring India's **proactive, balanced foreign policy** to retain regional influence

2.3. Israel-US-Iran Conflict

Why in the news?

- ➔ Recently, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) launched **"Operation Rising Lion"**, a major strike against Iranian nuclear infrastructure and ballistic missile capability.

Key Developments of the conflict

- ➔ **Israel's strikes:** It followed a vote by the **IAEA Board of Governors** declaring Iran in breach of a 1974 agreement—the first such finding since 2006.
- ➔ **Retaliation by Iran:** It launched '**Operation True Promise 3**'.
- ➔ **Participation of United States:** It launched "**Operation Midnight Hammer**", targeting 3 Iranian nuclear facilities—**Natanz, Isfahan & Fordow**.
- ➔ **India's response:** Urged both sides to avoid escalatory steps and return to diplomacy.

About 'Barak Magen' or 'Lightning Shield'

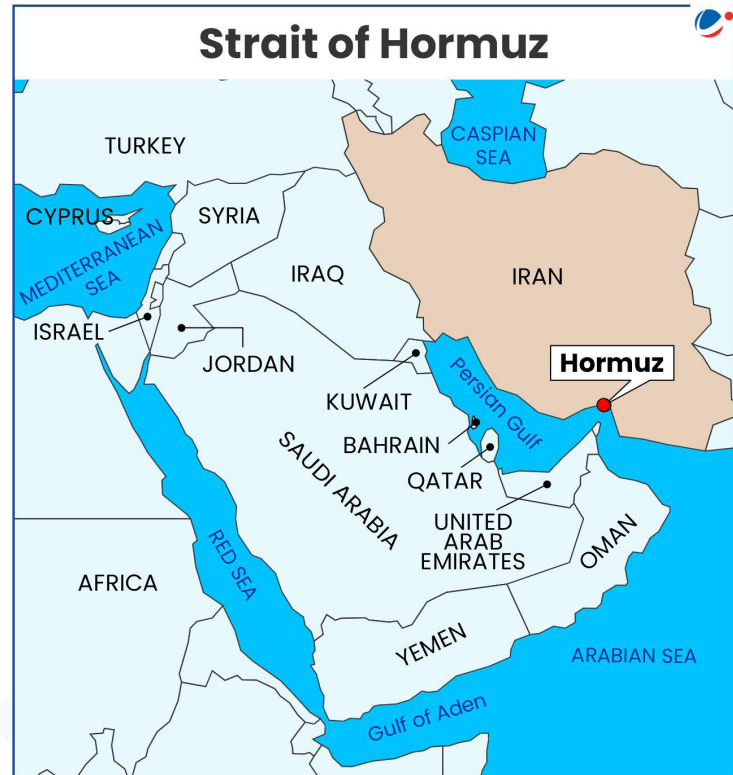
- ➔ Special version of **Barak MX missile defence system**, built to protect navy ships from various aerial threats like drones.
- ➔ Complements Israel's existing systems— **Iron Dome, David's Sling, Arrow**, plus future laser Iron Beam.

Implications of the Iran-Israel-US Conflict

- ➔ **Global Implications**
 - ➔ **Nuclear Tensions:** Iran may quit NPT.
 - ➔ **Trade Risks:** Strait of Hormuz closure threatens oil, LNG supply.
 - ➔ **Cable Disruptions:** Affects digital infrastructure.
 - ➔ **Power Vacuum:** Escalates instability in West Asia.
- ➔ **Implications on India**
 - ➔ **Trade Decline:** India's trade with Iran and Israel has significantly reduced due to sanctions and regional tensions.
 - ◆ **Iran:** From **\$14 billion (2017) to \$1.4 billion (2024)** after India halted oil imports under U.S. sanctions.
 - ◆ **Israel:** From **\$11 billion (2022) to \$3.75 billion (2024)** due to regional tensions.
 - ➔ **Geopolitical Realignment:** Iran's fall could **shift West Asia from multipolarity to US-led unipolarity**, reducing space for **non-Western powers like India**.
 - ◆ India needs to maintain close ties with **both Israel and Iran**, requiring careful diplomatic balancing.
- ➔ **Strategic Balancing:** India must navigate ties with both for energy, defence, and Eurasian connectivity.
- ➔ **Project Disruptions:** Chabahar Port, INSTC, and IMEC face setbacks.
- ➔ **Diaspora Risk:** Over 28,000 Indians in conflict zones; evacuation launched under Operation Sindhu.

Conclusion

- ➔ India's **strategic autonomy** requires maintaining ties with both Iran and Israel, offering potential **mediation opportunities** amid escalating tensions.



2.4. Group of Seven (G7)

Why in the News?

- ➔ India participated as an **Outreach Country** in **51st G7 Summit (2025)** held in **Kananaskis, Canada**.

More on the news

- ➔ On the sidelines, **India-Canada** revived bilateral relations by deciding on early return of **High Commissioners** and resuming negotiations on **Early Progress Trade Agreement (EPTA)**.
- ➔ **Key Outcomes of 51st G7 Summit (2025):**
 - ➔ **Kananaskis Wildfire Charter:** Adopted "**whole of society**" approach including **Indigenous knowledge** and sustainable forest management.

About Group of Seven (G7)

- **Genesis:** 1975 in response to **energy crisis** for economic cooperation.
- An informal bloc of **industrialized democracies:** France, Germany, Italy, UK, Japan, US, and Canada.
 - **Russia** was member 1998–2014 (called **G8**) until **Crimea annexation** led to suspension.
- **Purpose:** Annual meetings on global issues like **economic governance, international security, and energy policy**.

- **G7 Critical Minerals Action Plan:** Secure sustainable supply chains for **critical minerals**.
- **AI Initiatives:** G7 GovAI Grand Challenge and shared **G7 AI Network (GAIN)**.
- ➔ **Global Security and Conflict Response**
 - **Ukraine crisis:** G7 imposed sanctions on Russia and aided Ukraine using frozen Russian assets.
 - **China Policy:** Condemned Taiwan coercion, dropped 'One China' reference, launched PGII to counter BRI
- ➔ **Influences agendas at international institutions:** Like the **UN, IMF, and World Bank**.
 - **Tax Governance:** Supports the **OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework** to ensure fair global tax rules.
 - **Anti-Money Laundering:** The **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)** was established in **1989** to **combat money laundering**.
- ➔ **Sustainable and Digital Governance:** **Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI)** and **Hiroshima AI Process** promoting ethical AI and cybersecurity. The **G7 Climate Club** promotes **net-zero by 2050**.
- ➔ **Engagement with the Global South:** Through outreach to non-members like **India, South Africa, Brazil**.
- ➔ **Acts as a "club of democracies":** Core alliance championing '**rules-based international order**' and serving as **collective counterweight** to authoritarian countries like **China and Russia**.

Hurdles for the G7

- ➔ **Declining Economic Dominance:** G7's global GDP share fell from ~70% (1980s) to ~44% (2021) while **emerging economies** drive growth.
- ➔ **Consensus-Based Decisions:** Obstruct decisive action, e.g., 51st G7 failed strong **Ukraine statement** after **US resistance**.
- ➔ **Lack of Legal Authority:** Informal forum without **permanent secretariat** or **binding framework** limits enforceability.
- ➔ **Global South Underrepresentation:** Absence of major powers like **India, Brazil, Indonesia** and **African Union**.
- ➔ **Alternative Blocs Competition:** **BRICS Plus** offers better representation alternative.

India's Strategic Interests at the G7

- ➔ **Strategic Balancing:** Positions as bridge between **industrialized West** and **Global South**.
- ➔ **Economic Cooperation:** Strong proponent of **G7's PGII** for infrastructure investment in developing countries.
- ➔ **Democratic Credentials:** India's democracy and **4th largest economy** status make its voice influential.
- ➔ **Bilateral Platform:** Venue for talks like **Indian PM-Canadian PM** meeting to reset relations.

Conclusion

G7 countries need more inclusive agendas relevant to today's world order, **presenting India with opportunities to advocate for fairer decision-making and bridge the divide between the Global South and industrialized nations.**

2.5. World Trade Organization (WTO) Reforms

Why in the News?

- ➔ Recently, India called for reforms to the WTO during a **high-level mini-ministerial meeting** in Paris ahead of **14th Ministerial Conference in Cameroon, 2026**.



About WTO



**Secretariat
Geneva**



Genesis:

- 1995 post the **Marrakesh Agreement**.
- Successor to the **General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)**.
- 1986-94 Uruguay Round** negotiations led to **WTO's creation**.



Functions: Administering Trade Agreements, Forum for trade negotiations, settling trade disputes, reviewing national trade policies.



Members: 166 constituting **98% of World Trade**. India is a member since 1995.



Decision Making: Based on **Consensus**.

Key WTO Agreements		
Goods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Agreement: General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) ➔ About: Binding commitments on tariffs and quotas, especially for agricultural goods. ➔ Additional details/guiding principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Agreement on Agriculture ➔ Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures ➔ Antidumping Agreement ➔ TRIMs (Trade-Related Investment Measures) 	Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Agreement: General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) ➔ About: Covers all internationally traded services (e.g., banking, tourism, telecom). ➔ Additional details/guiding principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Most-Favoured-Nation (MFN) treatment ➔ Market access ➔ National treatment 	Intellectual Property <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Agreement: TRIPS (Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) ➔ About: Covers copyrights, trademarks, patents, geographical indications, etc. ➔ Additional details/guiding principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ National treatment ➔ MFN treatment

Key reforms demanded by India

- ➔ **India's 3-pronged reform agenda:**
- ➔ Remove **non-tariff barriers (NTBs)** restricting market access.
- ➔ Address caused by **non-market economies** I.
- ➔ Revive WTO **dispute settlement system**.
- ➔ **JSIs (joint statement initiatives) (or) pluri-laterals:** Some countries want JSIs to become part of the broader multilateral system, but India opposes as it may **risk fragmenting the multilateral system**.
- ➔ **Permanent Solution for Food Stockholding:** India seeks a lasting WTO solution beyond the 2013 "peace clause" that protects subsidies under public stockholding from legal challenges.
- ➔ Concerns on **Overfishing Agreement**
- ➔ WTO **Fisheries Agreement** (2022) stalled; **lacks two-thirds approval**.
- ➔ India is not **part of the agreement, raising concerns like 25-year transition period** for developing countries under **Special and Differential Treatment (SDT)**.

Other Contentious issues at WTO

- ➔ **No Objective Measures of 'Development status':** India opposes attempts to reform **SDT** while USA opposes China's developing country claims.
- ➔ **Emerging Issues:**
 - ➔ **Regulatory Shifts:** EU's **Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism** will impact Low-Middle-Income countries disproportionately.
 - ➔ **Geopolitical Shifts:** USA-China tariff war.
 - ➔ **Newer Concepts:** Data privacy, cross-border data flows, digital services taxation, climate change.

Way Forward

- ➔ Ensuring **developing countries** have a say in decision-making processes.
- ➔ Strengthen monitoring and notification systems for **NTBs** to improve transparency.
- ➔ Develop clear rules to prevent fragmentation caused by **plurilateral agreements**.
- ➔ Explore alternative interim **dispute resolution models**.
- ➔ Address trade distortions from **state-owned enterprises** and industrial subsidies.
- ➔ Adopt guiding principles like **"Common but Differentiated Responsibilities"** to prevent unjust application of trade obligations on developing countries.

2.6. Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

Why in the News?

- ➔ ECOWAS marked its **50th anniversary this year**.

About ECOWAS

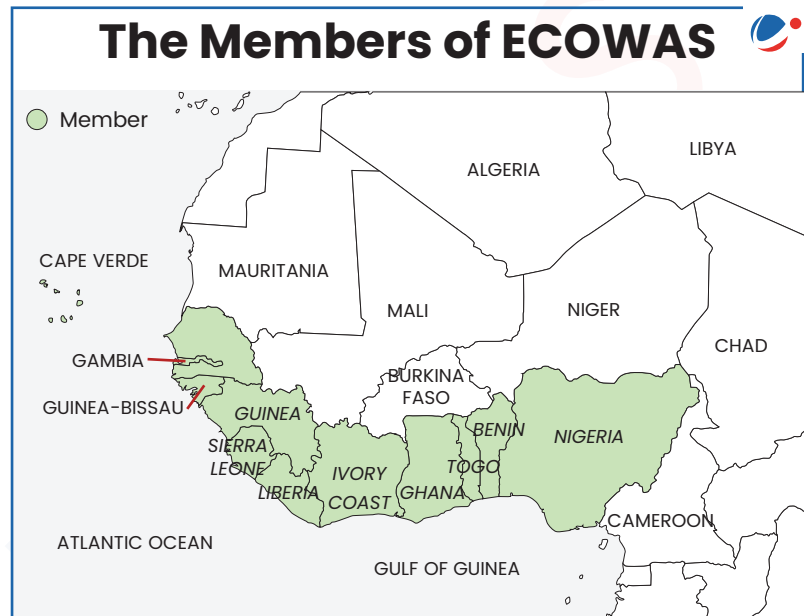
- ➔ **Established:** Established on **28 May 1975** by **15 West African countries** through the **Treaty of Lagos**.
- ➔ **Headquarter:** **Abuja, Nigeria**.
- ➔ **Regional Bloc:** ECOWAS comprises **12 West African countries** (June 2025). Its member countries include **Benin, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo**.
- ➔ **Aim:** To promote cooperation and integration for an **economic union in West Africa**. ECOWAS established its **free trade area in 1990** and adopted a **common external tariff in January 2015**.

India-ECOWAS Relations

- ➔ **Diplomatic Relations:** India became an **Observer** to ECOWAS in **2004**. ECOWAS supports India's bid for **permanent UN Security Council** membership.
- ➔ **South-South Cooperation:** India supports regional development of western Africa through **MoU between ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency and India's International Solar Alliance (ISA)**.
- ➔ **Economic Cooperation:** In **2006**, India gave the grouping a **line of credit (LoC)** worth **USD 250 million** to supplement **Focus Africa Programme** launched from **2002-03**.

Conclusion

As ECOWAS enters its **sixth decade**, it faces a **historic crossroads** where **internal fragmentation, political instability, and citizen disconnect** threaten its future despite its commendable legacy of **integration, peacekeeping, and human development**.



2.7. News in Shorts

2.7.1. UN Security Council (UNSC)

5 countries were elected to serve as non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

- ➔ These countries are **Bahrain, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Latvia, and Liberia**.

About UNSC

- ➔ **Genesis:** Established in **1945** through the **UN Charter** as one of the **6 principal organs** of the UN.
- ➔ **Purpose:** Maintaining **international peace and security**.
- ➔ **Members:** **5 permanent members (P5)** and **10 non-permanent members**.

UNSC Reform Proposal (2024)

- ➔ **Proposed by:** **G4 Nations (India, Brazil, Germany, Japan)**.
- ➔ **Need:** **Misuse of veto power, poor regional representation, and failure to reflect current global realities**.
- ➔ **Key provisions:** **11 permanent** and **14-15 non-permanent** members with **equitable regional representation** through **6 new permanent seats** for

United Nations Security Council

Permanent members, veto rights (5)

■ China, France, Russia, UK, USA

Non-permanent members, two-year terms (10)

■ Africa (3)

■ Asia (2)

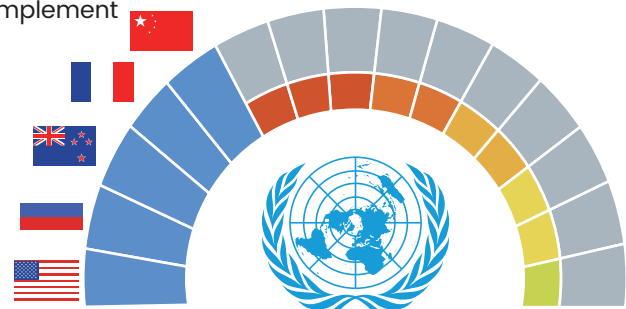
■ Latin America (2)

■ Western Europe and others (2)

■ Eastern Europe (1)

Each Member has one vote.

It is the only United Nations organ that has the power to make decisions that member states are obligated to implement



Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America & Caribbean, and Western Europe. No veto for new permanent members initially, to be reviewed after 15 years.

Related news

- ➔ **Pakistan** has been elected as **Chair of the UNSC's Taliban Sanctions Committee** and **Vice-Chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee** for 2025.

Taliban Sanctions Committee (TSC)

- ➔ **Genesis:** Created under **UNSC Resolution 1988 (2011)**.
- ➔ **Key Function:** **Monitor and enforce sanctions** against individuals and entities **linked to the Taliban** threatening **Afghanistan's peace and security**.

Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC)

- ➔ **Genesis:** Established after **9/11 attacks** through **UNSC Resolution 1373 (2001)**, **binding on all UN member states**.
- ➔ **Members:** All **15 Security Council members**.
- ➔ **Key Functions:** Monitor countries' **counter-terrorism efforts** by ensuring they **criminalize terror financing, freeze terrorist funds, and share intelligence**.

2.7.2. UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)









India has been elected to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for the term 2026–2028.

- ➔ **Membership** in ECOSOC is region-based and divided among five geographic groups: **Africa, Asia-Pacific, Eastern European, Latin American & Caribbean, and Western European and other States**.
- ➔ **About UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**
- ➔ **Headquarter:** New York (USA).
- ➔ **Genesis:** Established in **1945** as one of the **six main organs** of the United Nations.
- ➔ **Members:** **54** (elected by the UN General Assembly for a **3-year term**).

Key Role:

- ➔ **Advance sustainable development** in economic, social and environmental dimensions.
- ➔ **Coordinates** work of UN bodies and specialized agencies.
- ➔ Issues **policy recommendations** to the UN system and member states.

8 Functional Commissions of UN ECOSOC

 Statistical Commission	 Population and Development	 Social Development
 Status of Women	 Narcotic Drugs	 Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice
 Science and Technology for Development	 UN Forum on Forests	

2.7.3. Us Pulls Funding from Gavi, The Vaccine Alliance

The US has accused Gavi, along with the World Health Organisation (WHO), of silencing dissenting views and legitimate questions about vaccine safety.

- ➔ The US has long been one of **biggest supporters** of Gavi.
- ➔ In recent years, **the United States has withdrawn** from key global institutions such as the **WHO, Paris Climate Agreement, UN Human Rights Council, and UNRWA**.

About Gavi (2000)

-  **Nature:** A **public-private partnership**.
-  **Core Partners:** World Health Organization, UNICEF, the World Bank, and the Gates Foundation.
-  **Mission:** To save lives and protect people's health by increasing equitable and sustainable use of vaccines.
-  **Achievement:** It vaccinated over 1 billion children across the poorest countries
-  **Global Role:** Member of the WHO-led Vaccine Safety Net (VSN) project.
-  **Secretariat:** Geneva, Switzerland.

Impact of US Withdrawing from Global Alliances

- ➔ **Weakening of Multilateralism/Rule-Based Order:** E.g. Israel withdraws participation from UN Human Rights Council.
- ➔ **Undermine Climate Actions:** **2024** was recorded as the **hottest year** and the USA stands as the world's **second-largest greenhouse gas emitter** behind China.
- ➔ **Shortage of Funds for Health:** US exit could leave institutions with **fund crunch**. E.g., US-funded about **15% of WHO's total funding** in 2024.
- ➔ **Other:** It creates a **leadership vacuum** that can be filled up by **China** (it may reduce India's influence in global organisations' decision-making).

2.7.4. International Organisation for Mediation (IOMed)

China formally established the IOMed as a global alternative to traditional institutions such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the Permanent Court of Arbitration.

About IOMed

- ➔ **Purpose:** Dedicated to resolving **international disputes** through **mediation**.
- ➔ **Members:** Over **30 countries** joined as founding members including **Indonesia, Pakistan, and Belarus**.

- ➔ Most founding members are from **Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean**, highlighting its **non-Western orientation**.

- ➔ **Scope:** Disputes between **states**, between **state and nationals** of another country, **International commercial** disagreements.

2.7.5. India-Kyrgyzstan Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT)

The **BIT**, signed in **June 2019**, came into **force from 5th June 2025**.

- ➔ It **replaces** the 2000 agreement, ensuring **continuity** in investment protection.
- ➔ The **BIT balances** investor rights with **sovereign regulatory powers** and aims to foster a **transparent investment climate**.

Key Features of the BIT

- ➔ **Asset Definition:** Enterprise-based, with clear inclusion/exclusion and investment traits like capital, risk, profit.
- ➔ **Policy Space:** Excludes areas like taxation, local government, procurement.
- ➔ **No MFN Clause:** Eliminates the **Most Favored Nation** clause to prevent selective adoption of favorable treaty terms.
- ➔ **General & Security Exceptions:** Safeguards for environment, health, safety.
- ➔ **Dispute Resolution:** Mandates local remedies before international arbitration.

About Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT)



Definition:

Also called International Investment Agreements (IIAs), they assure foreign investors protection from adverse actions while upholding a state's regulatory sovereignty.



Dispute Resolution:

Allow investors or home countries to sue the host country for investment-related disputes.



Policy Update:

India approved new Model BIT Text in 2015, which replaced Indian Model BIT, 1993.



Since 2015 India signed BITs with:

Uzbekistan (2024), UAE (2024), Brazil (2020), Belarus (2018).

2.7.6. International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation (IALA)

India participated in **2nd Session of IALA Council as Vice President** in Nice, France and will host the **3rd IALA General Assembly in December 2025** and **21st IALA Conference in 2027** in **Mumbai, Maharashtra**.

About IALA

- ➔ **Genesis:** Established in **1957** as an **NGO** as the **International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA)**.
 - ➔ In **2024**, IALA became an **Intergovernmental Organization (IGO)** to strengthen its global role in **maritime safety**.
- ➔ **Purpose:** To foster the **safe, economic and efficient movement of vessels** through improvement and harmonisation of **aids to navigation** worldwide.
- ➔ **Mandate:**
 - ➔ Harmonise **global maritime navigation systems**.
 - ➔ Promote **maritime safety initiatives**.
 - ➔ Collaborate with member states and international organizations to address emerging challenges in **maritime safety** and **environmental protection**.

2.7.7. Zangezur Corridor

Türkiye urged Armenia and Azerbaijan to open the Zangezur Corridor amid their ongoing conflict over **Nagorno-Karabakh** since 1917.

- ➔ It is a region that is **internationally part of Azerbaijan** but inhabited by **mainly ethnic Armenians**.
- ➔ **About Zangezur Corridor**
- ➔ **Location:** It is a **proposed 43-kilometer transport route** through **Armenia's Syunik Province**.
- ➔ **Objective:** Connecting **Azerbaijan's Baku Port in Caspian Sea** to the **Nakhchivan Autonomous Region** and further to **Turkey**.
- ➔ **India's concerns:** It can undermine India's investments in **Chabahar Port** and **International North South Corridor (INSTC)** by offering a **competing pathway**, reducing India's **regional leverage**.

Türkiye- Azerbaijan route through Zangezur Corridor



2.7.8. E-Passport

Ministry of External Affairs rolled out e-Passport and Passport Seva Programme 2.0.

About e-Passport

- ➔ An ePassport is a combined paper and electronic passport with a Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) Chip embedded that contains personal particulars and biometric information of the passport holder.

- ➔ The underlying technology supporting security is the Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) solution.
- ➔ It safeguards the passport from forgery and fraudulent activities while confirming genuineness at border controls.



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ECONOMICS

3.1. Rural India: The New Engine of India's Consumer Market

Why in the News?

- Amidst robust rural market growth, the Union Finance Minister urged FinTech firms to view rural India not merely as a social responsibility, but as an untapped opportunity to create new markets.

Rural India: The New Engine of India's Consumer Market

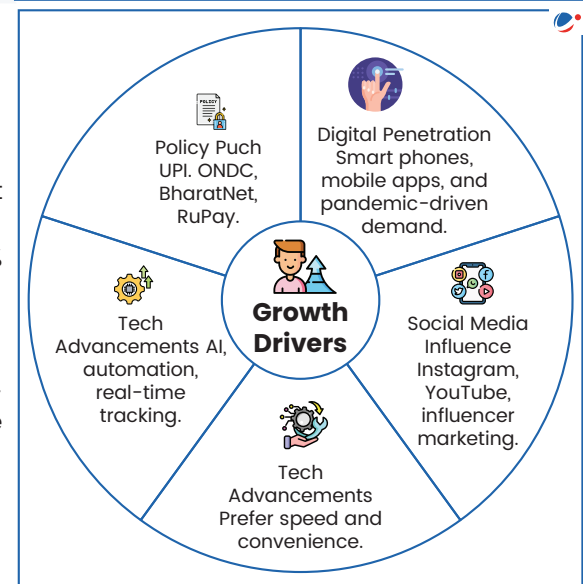
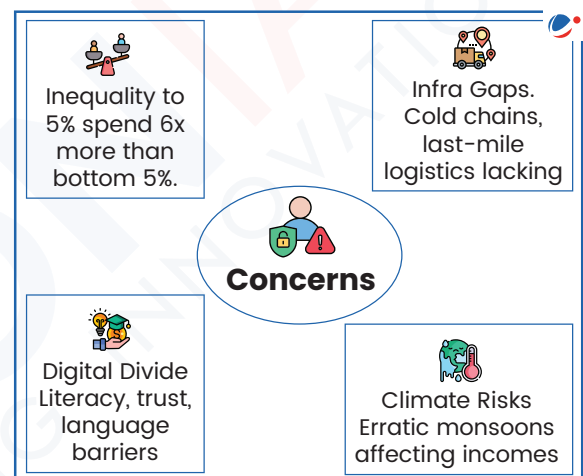
- Rising Demand:** Rural consumption outpaces urban, with FMCG growth (e.g., Dabur) faster in villages. Rural MPCE rose 9.2% in 2023–24, surpassing urban's 8.3% (HCES 2023–24).
- Narrowing Gap:** Urban–rural MPCE gap fell to 69.7% from 71.2%.
- Urbanized Spending:** Non-food items, education, communication, and healthcare now dominate rural spending.

Growth Drivers

- Disposable Incomes:** Non-farm work, MGNREGA, remittances.
- Poverty Reduction:** Rural poverty fell below 5% (from 25.7% in 2011–12).
- Government Initiatives:** DBT, PM-KISAN boosted liquidity.
- Infra Push:** Roads (PMGSY), digital growth (BharatNet); rural internet subscriptions up 200%.
- Financial Inclusion:** UPI, PMJDY—67% rural/semi-urban accounts, 55% by women.

Conclusion

Government should reduce inequality, boost skilling, and develop multi-modal infrastructure, while the private sector must localize outreach, promote micro-entrepreneurship like HUL's Project Shakti, and use vernacular tech.



3.2. Quick Commerce in India

Why in the news?

- A Kearney report highlights that India's quick commerce sector is booming but is also reshaping consumer behavior.

What is Quick Commerce?

- Rapid delivery of goods/services, usually within an hour.
- Offers 24/7 access, reduces middlemen, and improves supply chain efficiency via hyper-local sourcing.

Status of Quick Commerce

- ➔ **Growth:** Expected to grow 75–100% annually.
- ➔ **Market Size:** Projected to reach \$5 billion by 2025 and \$9.94 billion by 2029.
- ➔ **Key Players:** Zepto, Blinkit, Swiggy Instamart.

Concerns

- ➔ **Instant Gratification:** Promotes impulsive buying via behavioral targeting.
- ➔ **Gig Worker Safety:** 10-minute delivery raises ethical issues.
- ➔ **Environmental Impact:** More vehicles = higher emissions.
- ➔ **Food Safety:** Poor handling of perishables poses health risks.
- ➔ **Retail Disruption:** Kirana stores, malls face reduced footfall.

Striking a Balance

- ➔ Ensure delivery partner welfare and accident insurance.
- ➔ Strengthen hygiene, e.g., FSSAI food safety norms.
- ➔ Integrate kirana stores for better reach.
- ➔ Regulate for fair competition, data and labour protection.
- ➔ Push green logistics: EVs, drones, mobile warehouses.

Conclusion

Quick commerce has boosted convenience but promoted unsustainable consumption and compromised gig worker welfare. We need policies protecting gig workers and consumer education to reduce impulsive spending.

3.3. Aviation Safety

Why in the News?

The **Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB)** released its preliminary report on the recent fatal plane crash in Ahmedabad.

More on News

- ➔ The report detailed the timing of the MAYDAY call—used in life-threatening emergencies—on emergency frequencies 121.5 MHz and 243 MHz.
- ➔ Black Boxes were recovered and analyzed by the AAIB Lab.
 - ➔ **Black Box** includes the Flight Data Recorder (e.g., speed, altitude, engine performance) and Cockpit Voice Recorder.
 - ➔ Bright orange and built from durable materials like steel/titanium for resilience and visibility.

Institutional Frameworks for Aviation Security in India

- ➔ **DGCA:** Regulates civil aviation safety, airworthiness, and coordinates with ICAO.
- ➔ **AERA:** Regulates tariffs and service standards at major airports.
- ➔ **BCAS:** Sets aviation security norms under ICAO's Annex 17 on preventing unlawful interference.
- ➔ **AAIB:** Investigates aircraft accidents/incidents involving aircraft over 2250 kg AUW or turbojets; has unrestricted evidence access under 2017 rules.
 - ➔ DGCA investigates serious incidents involving smaller aircraft (≤ 2250 kg).

Issues and recommendations of aviation security by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture

Domain	Challenges	Recommendations
Capital outlay	DGCA gets ₹30 crore (~50% of aviation capital budget), limiting security and investigation resources.	Ensure balanced fund allocation to address critical gaps.
Manpower Shortage	Vacancies in DGCA, BCAS and AAI: 53.8%, 34.7% and 17% respectively	Expedite hiring and adopt long-term workforce planning.

UDAN	32% fund cut despite expansion needs.	Review funding to match regional infrastructure demands.
Oversight	Reliance on general budgets; lacks sustainable funding.	Create Integrated Safety Mechanism for coordinated oversight.
Navigation	Smog-induced disruptions.	Install of Instrument Landing System (ILS) at all airports
Cabin safety	Poor materials and outdated technology.	Form Aviation Interior Quality Commission for standard enforcement.

Conclusion

India has aligned its regulations with ICAO safety standards and earned audit appreciation. The Delhi Declaration (2024) demonstrates India's commitment to Open Skies policy. However, recent aviation incidents require thorough investigation to ensure sector safety and prevent recurrence.

3.4. Asset Monetization

Why in the News?

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has announced its asset monetization strategy to unlock value and boost public-private participation in developing road infrastructure.

More on the News

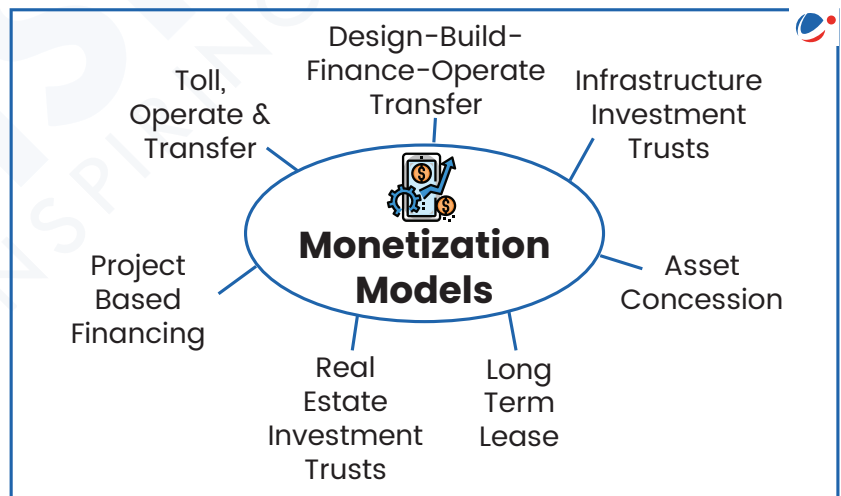
- ➔ The strategy leverages Toll-Operate-Transfer (ToT), Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs), and securitisation models.
- ➔ Over ₹1.4 lakh crore has been raised across 6,100 km of National Highways under the National Monetization Pipeline (NMP).

What is Asset Monetization?

- ➔ It involves unlocking the economic value of underutilized public assets to generate revenue without necessarily disinvesting them.

Need for Asset Monetization

- ➔ **Bridging Investment Gaps:** Addresses funding constraints through non-tax revenue.
- ➔ **Enhancing Efficiency:** Brings private sector expertise for better operations.
- ➔ **Unlocking Brownfield Assets:** Targets de-risked assets with stable returns.
- ➔ **Boosting Global Competitiveness:** Attracts FDI and strengthens India's global integration.
- ➔ **Key Institutions:** Alternative Mechanism, Core Group of Secretaries, Inter-Ministerial Group, DIPAM, and NITI Aayog.



Major Initiatives

- ➔ National Monetization Pipeline
- ➔ National Land Monetization Corporation (NLMC)
- ➔ Asset Monetisation dashboard

Asset Monetization in India: Impediments versus Strategic Interventions

Domain	Impediments in Asset Monetization	Strategic Interventions Required
Transparency & Governance	Vulnerable to favoritism; lack of advance disclosure.	Public Disclosure of Future Monetization Pipeline; transparent bidding.

Sectoral Issues	Remains concentrated; urban infra, railways neglected.	Broaden & Bundle Monetization (smaller assets across un-invested sectors).
Valuation Discovery & Competitive Bidding	Risk of undervaluation; limited participation due to capital intensive nature.	Adopt De-risked Models (e.g., TOT, InvITs).
State-Level Readiness	Negligible state participation; lack of financial incentives.	Unlock potential in state assets; use interest-free loans to states.
Consumer & Public Interest	Over exploitation by private players, price hikes.	Adopt "monetize rights, not ownership"; strict contractual obligations.
Institutional Fragmentation	Multiple ministries involved; poor coordination; lack of centralised planning.	Form an Infrastructure Ministry.
Regulatory Uncertainty	Lack of clarity (E.g Telecom)	Develop sector-specific guidelines; independent evaluation.
Fiscal Utilization & Public Trust	Misuse of disinvestment proceeds for fiscal deficit.	Funds for PSU's Restructuring; explore leasing/rental models.
Monitoring & Performance Tracking	Weak post-monetization oversight	Define clear Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Conclusion

Asset Monetization Strategy is a transformative approach that unlocks value from existing assets and reinvests in new projects, creating robust infrastructure to support India's long-term economic growth and sustainable development.

3.5. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)






Why in the News?

- ➔ According to the RBI Bulletin (June 2025), India's net FDI inflows dropped by 96% in FY25 compared to FY24, despite a rise in gross FDI inflows.

About Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

- ➔ **Definition:** Investment by a foreign entity in an unlisted Indian company or 10%+ equity in a listed company.
- ➔ **Regulation:** Governed by Consolidated FDI Policy (2020) and FEMA (Non-Debt Instruments) Rules, 2019.
- ➔ **Gross vs. Net FDI:**
 - ➔ Gross FDI: Total foreign investments into India.
 - ➔ Net FDI: Inward FDI minus repatriation + Indian outward FDI.
- ➔ **Entry Routes:**
 - ➔ Automatic Route: No prior approval required. (e.g., Agriculture, Telecom)
 - ➔ Government Route: Requires prior government approval.
- ➔ **Prohibited Sectors:** Lottery, Gambling, Chit funds, Atomic Energy, Railway operations, etc.

Reasons for fall in Net FDI

-  **Rising outward investment:** USD 12.5 billion in FY25
-  Liberalised ODI Guidelines (2022)
-  Increased repatriation signals a maturing market
-  **Global risks:** Trade tensions, weak demand, global FDI down 11% in 2024 (UNCTAD)
-  Harvest phase of older FDI and export contractions

Significance of Growing FDI

- ➔ **Capital Formation:** Enables tech transfer, strategic growth. Greenfield investments projected at USD 110 billion (UNCTAD WIR 2025).
- ➔ **Forex Stability:** Reserves cover 11+ months of imports, 96% of external debt (RBI, May 2025).
- ➔ **Sustainable Finance:** India leads in carbon credit issuance (Verra Registry).
- ➔ **Innovation & Employment:** Encourages competition and global best practices.

Initiatives to Boost FDI

- ➔ Sectoral reforms (e.g., Insurance FDI cap raised to 100%).
- ➔ Jan Vishwas Act (2023) eased compliance.
- ➔ New investment treaties and TEPA with EFTA.
- ➔ BRAP & LEADS rankings foster state-level competition.
- ➔ PDCs and flagship schemes (PLI, Make in India, Gati Shakti).

Way Forward

- ➔ Policy stability and judicial reforms.
- ➔ Digital economy development.
- ➔ Investment incentives (e.g., tax breaks).
- ➔ Strengthen global cooperation on fair investment systems.

3.6. Financing for Sustainable Development

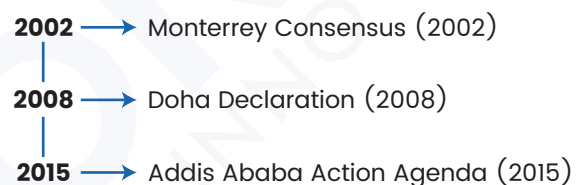
Why in the News?

- ➔ The 4th International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4) recently adopted the final outcome document, Compromiso de Sevilla (Sevilla Commitment), to address the SDG financing gap in developing countries.

More on News

- ➔ The Sevilla Commitment, adopted by consensus (excluding the U.S.), presents a roadmap to bridge the \$4 trillion annual SDG financing gap.
- ➔ It builds upon previous frameworks like the Monterrey Consensus, Doha Declaration, and Addis Ababa Action Agenda.
- ➔ India proposed a seven-point strategy to boost private investment, including strengthening multilateral banks, reforming credit ratings, developing domestic markets, and scaling blended finance.

Evolution of Financing for Sustainable Development



Need for Financing Sustainable Development

- ➔ **Financing Gap:** Annual SDG financing shortfall now stands at \$4 trillion.
- ➔ **Climate Investment:** Energy investment needs to grow 40% by 2030. (OECD, 2025)
- ➔ **Wealth Inequality:** Top 1% own more wealth than 95% combined. (Oxfam, 2024)
- ➔ **Tax Inequity:** Billionaires pay only 0.3% in real taxes. (Oxfam, 2025)
- ➔ **Debt Burden:** 40% of extreme poor live in debt-trapped nations. (FSDR 2023)

Impediments

- ➔ Shrinking fiscal space; 46 nations spend more on interest than on health/education.
- ➔ Unequal SDR allocation: LDCs get only 2.5%.
- ➔ Rising geo-economic fragmentation and illicit financial flows.
- ➔ Gender disparity in employment and wages.

Steps Taken Under Sevilla Commitment

- ➔ **Debt Solutions:**
 - ➔ Debt-for-Development Swaps, Pause Clause Alliance, and Sevilla Forum on Debt.
- ➔ **Catalysing Investment:**
 - ➔ Blended Finance (SCALED), effective taxation of HNWIs, and Global Solidarity Levies.
- ➔ **Architecture Reform:**
 - ➔ Local Currency Lending Platforms, and Pre-arranged Disaster Financing coalition led by the UK.

Conclusion

Aligning finance with SDGs requires creating conducive environments for private investment, strengthening public development banks, and reforming multilateral systems through fiscal incentives, long-term funding, and updated WTO rules and investment treaties.

3.6.1. Sustainable Development Report (2025)

Why in the News?

- India has, for the first time, entered the top 100 in the SDG Index, ranking 99th out of 167 countries in the Sustainable Development Report (2025).

More on the News

- India improved from 120th (2021) to 99th (2025) with a score of 67.
- Finland tops the index, followed by Sweden and Denmark.
- Regional peers: Bhutan (74), Nepal (85), Maldives (53), Sri Lanka (93), Bangladesh (114), Pakistan (140).
- A new indicator under SDG 2 on child dietary diversity was added.
- No SDG is on track for full achievement by 2030.

About SDG Index

- Released by the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UNSDSN) since 2016.
- Measures progress toward 17 SDGs on a 0–100 scale.

Key Indicators of India's Performance (As per 2025 SDR)

SDG1	Poverty headcount ratio at \$3.65/day is 5.5%
SDG2	Prevalence of undernourishment- 13.7%
SDG3	Maternal mortality ratio (Per 100,000 live births) is 80.5
SDG4	Net primary enrollment rate - 99.9%
SDG5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ratio of female-to-male labor force participation rate - 43% Seats held by women in parliament - 14%
SDG6	Population using at least basic drinking water services - 93%
SDG7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population with access to electricity - 99% Population with access to clean fuels and technology for cooking - 74%
SDG9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural population with access to all-season roads - 99% Population using the internet - 56%
SDG10	Gini coefficient in India is 34.8.

3.7. Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)

Why in the News?

- The Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) scheme has completed ten years since its launch.

About AMRUT

- Ministry:** Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
- Type:** Centrally Sponsored Scheme
- Coverage:** Initially launched in 500 cities for improving water supply, sewerage, stormwater drainage, green spaces, and non-motorised urban transport.
- AMRUT 2.0 (2021):** Focuses on water and sewerage services, aiming to provide tap water to all statutory towns.

Key Components of AMRUT 2.0

- Pey Jal Survekshan, Behaviour Change Communication, Technology Sub-Mission
- Emphasis on PPP (in cities with over 1 million population), community participation (especially women's SHGs), and promoting the circular economy of water.

➔ Monitored by Apex Committee (national) and SHPSC (state level).

Achievements

- ➔ 2.03 crore tap and 1.5 crore sewer connections
- ➔ 99 lakh LED streetlights installed
- ➔ 6,800+ acres of green space and 3,000 parks developed
- ➔ **Limitations:** Weak health outcomes, implementation delays, environmental issues, limited coverage, and scheme overlaps.

Conclusion

Marking a decade of strengthening urban water and sanitation infrastructure, AMRUT should now adopt a people-centric approach with improved governance through ULB capacity building. Expanding to smaller towns while integrating nature-based solutions will ensure sustainable urban development.

CSAT


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3.8. News in Shorts

3.8.1. Digital Payment Intelligence Platform (DPIP)

DPIP will be developed as a Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) under RBI's guidance to enhance fraud risk management in banking.

About DPIP

- ➔ **Aims** to facilitate real-time intelligence sharing and coordination among banks using advanced technologies.
- ➔ RBIH will build its prototype in consultation with 5–10 public and private banks.
- ➔ A committee led by **Shri A.P. Hota** will examine DPIP's setup.
- ➔ **Need:** Banking frauds rose to ₹36,014 crore in FY25 (from ₹12,230 crore in FY24).

Other RBI Initiatives

- ➔ Mandatory multi-factor authentication
- ➔ Zero liability for customers
- ➔ bank.in and fin.in to verify official banking websites.

3.8.2. Priority Sector Lending (PSL) Norms for Small Finance Banks (SFBs)

The RBI, under Section 22(1) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, issued new rules revising Priority Sector Lending (PSL) norms for Small Finance Banks (SFBs).

Key Change in PSL Requirements

- ➔ **Earlier:** SFBs had to lend 75% of ANBC (40% mandatory to PSL sectors, 35% flexible).
- ➔ **New Rule** (from FY 2025–26): Total PSL reduced to 60% of ANBC (40% mandatory to PSL, 20% flexible for secured non-PSL loans).

About PSL

- ➔ Introduced in the 1970s to channel credit to key sectors like agriculture, MSMEs, education, housing, etc.
- ➔ Applies to commercial banks, SFBs, RRBs, LABs, and UCBs.

About SFBs

- ➔ Launched in Budget 2014–15 to promote financial inclusion.
- ➔ Require ₹200 crore minimum net worth (₹100 crore for UCBs transitioning).

3.8.3. Sagarmala Finance Corporation Limited (SMFCL)

SMFCL has become **India's first NBFC** in the maritime sector, registered with the RBI.

About SMFCL

- ➔ Formerly **Sagarmala Development Company Ltd.**, it is a **Mini Ratna**, Category-I CPSE under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- ➔ Now an NBFC, it will **provide customised financial products** to stakeholders like port authorities and shipping firms.
- ➔ It will also support shipbuilding, cruise tourism, renewable energy, and maritime education.

Other Maritime Initiatives



DCoE: Innovation via AI, IoT, Blockchain



SGAR SETU: Integrated EXIM services



Drishti: Supports Maritime India Vision



Gateway to Green: Port as green hydrogen hubs



SOR: Standardised tariffs

3.8.4. Indigenous Polar Research Vessel (PRV)

India is set to build its first indigenous Polar Research Vehicle (PRV), with GRSE signing an MoU with Norway's Kongsberg Oslo.

About PRV

- ➔ A **specialised ship** for **polar region research**, equipped with advanced tools to **explore ocean depths and marine ecosystems**.

Significance for India

- ➔ Will support NCOPR's research missions in Antarctica (**Maitri, Bharati**) and the Arctic (**Himadri**).
- ➔ Strengthens India's geo-political and geo-economic presence in polar regions.
- ➔ Aligns with SAGAR, MAHASAGAR, and Sagarmala 2.0 under Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 to boost indigenous shipbuilding and maritime capabilities.
- ➔ Key for climate research, oceanography, and logistics.

3.8.5. Report On Value of Output from Agriculture and Allied Sectors (2011–12 To 2023–24)

- ➔ The National Statistics Office (NSO) released a report detailing India's agricultural performance over the past decade.

Key Highlights

- ➔ **GVA** in agriculture rose ~225% (current prices); GVO up 54.6% (constant prices) from 2011–12 to 2023–24.
- ➔ **Crop sector** contributed 54.1% to total GVO in 2023–24; paddy and wheat formed 85% of cereal GVO.
- ➔ **Floriculture** GVO nearly doubled to ₹28,100 crore
- ➔ **Fishing & aquaculture** share rose to 7%.

- ➔ Madhya Pradesh leads in **Condiments & Spices** GVO.

Initiatives

- ➔ Agriculture Infrastructure Fund, Digital Agriculture Mission, PM Matsya Sampada Yojana, MIDH, PMFBY, RKVY, etc.

Importance

- ➔ Contributes ~16% to GDP; supports 46.1% of population; faces productivity, income, and climate challenges.

3.8.6. Modified Interest Subvention Scheme (MISS)

- ➔ The Union Cabinet approved the continuation of the Interest Subvention (IS) component under the Modified Interest Subvention Scheme (MISS) for 2025–26.

About MISS

- ➔ **Type:** Central Sector Scheme
- ➔ **Ministry:** Agriculture & Farmers Welfare
- ➔ **Provides short-term KCC loans** up to ₹3 lakh at 7% interest; 1.5% subvention to banks.
- ➔ **Prompt Repayment Incentive (PRI)** of 3% lowers interest to 4% for timely repayment.
- ➔ **Loans for animal husbandry/fisheries** eligible up to ₹2 lakh.

Significance

- ➔ Supports ~5.9 crore farmers (Feb 2025), ensures credit access, prevents distress selling, and funds rural infrastructure.

About KCC

- ➔ Launched in 1998; expanded in 2019 to allied sectors.
- ➔ Supports cultivation, post-harvest, marketing, and consumption needs.
- ➔ Issued by various public/private/rural banks; valid for 5 years.
- ➔ Credit limits based on cropping patterns; tracked via Kisan Rin Portal.

3.8.7. International Crops Research Institute for The Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)

ICRISAT, in partnership with RIS, launched the **ICRISAT Centre of Excellence for South-South Cooperation (ISSCA)** to boost agricultural innovation and knowledge exchange among Global South nations.

- ➔ ICRISAT also signed an MoU with **DAKSHIN**, India's initiative for development partnerships.
- ➔ RIS is a New Delhi-based autonomous policy research institute.

- ➔ **ISSCA:** Premier platform aligned with India's DAKSHIN initiative to strengthen South-South cooperation in agriculture.

About ICRISAT

- ➔ HQ: Hyderabad
- ➔ Established: 1970s under CGIAR
- ➔ Achievements: Africa Food Prize (2021), world's first pigeon pea hybrid.

3.8.8. National Turmeric Board

Headquarters of National Turmeric Board was inaugurated in Nizamabad, Telangana.

About the National Turmeric Board

- ➔ **Ministry:** Commerce & Industry
- ➔ **Aim:** To lead and coordinate turmeric sector development with the Spices Board and other agencies.
- ➔ **Composition:** Chairperson (Central Govt.), members from key ministries, state reps (on rotation), research institutions, turmeric farmers/exporters.
- ➔ **Roles:** Promote R&D, exports, value addition, awareness, yield, and market expansion.

About Turmeric

- ➔ Known as the "Golden Spice"; grown in tropical climates with well-drained soils.
- ➔ Antioxidant and anti-inflammatory.
- ➔ **India:** Top producer and exporter (70% of global output).
- ➔ **Key states:** Telangana, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh.
- ➔ **GI-tagged varieties:** Erode, Sangli, Waigaon, Lakadong.

3.8.9. Nano Fertilizers

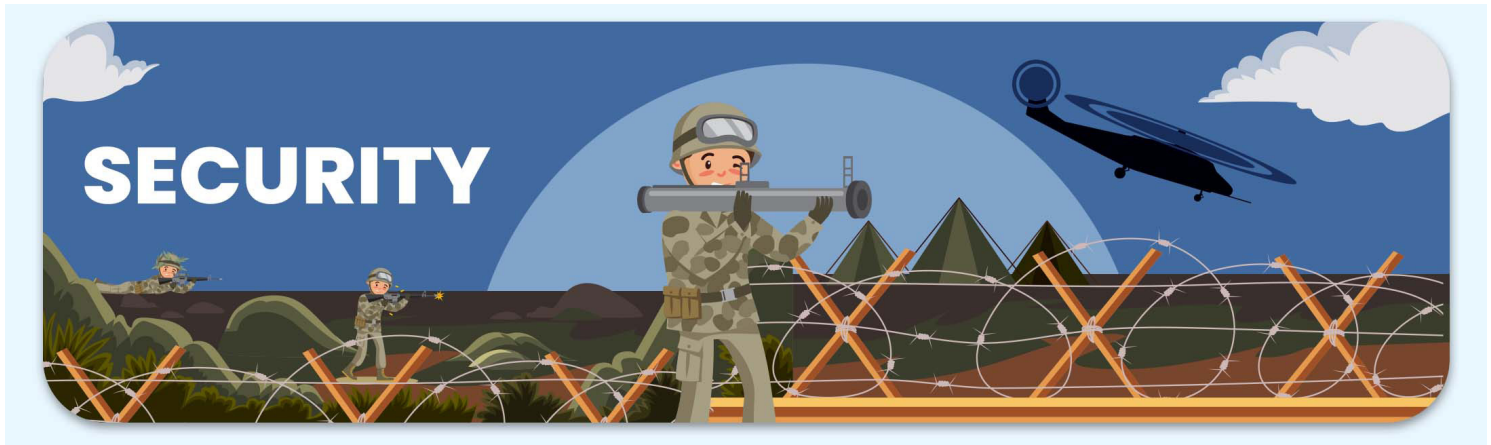
Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative Limited (**IFFCO**) to set up its first overseas nano fertiliser plant in Brazil.

- ➔ IFFCO had launched world's first '**Nano Liquid Urea**' fertiliser in 2021 & then Nano-DAP in 2023.

About Nano Fertilizers: Nutrients that are **encapsulated or coated within nanomaterial** (measuring 100 nanometres or less). Enables **controlled release** and its subsequent **slow diffusion into the soil**.

Benefits

- ➔ **Promotes sustainable farming:** Reduces soil and water contamination.
- ➔ **Cost Effectiveness:** Improves nutrient absorption, reduce nutrient wastage and lower application frequency provide, etc.



4.1. Fifth-Generation Fighter Jet AMCA

Why in the News?

- Defence Minister has approved an **execution model** for indigenous **5th-generation fighter jet** named **Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA)**.

AMCA Programme Overview

- **Background:** Approved by Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) in 2024.
- **Purpose:** Indigenous development of 5th generation fighter jet AMCA.
- **Timeline:** Prototype by 2028–29; induction by 2034–35.
- **Variants:** Mk1 with GE-F414 engines; Mk2 with indigenous engines.
- **Lead Agency:** ADA under DRDO.
- **Industry Tie-up:**
 - ➔ Implemented through industry collaboration.
 - ➔ HAL has been key producer of combat aircraft.
 - ➔ Public and private firms can bid independently or as consortia.
 - ➔ Only Indian-compliant companies are eligible.

About the 5th Generation Fighter Jet

- **Fighter jet generations emerged in the 1990s** to classify major technological advancements.
- The 5th Generation jets are the most advanced, featuring **twin engines, stealth capabilities, supercruise, advanced avionics, and integrated computer systems for 360° battlefield awareness**.
- They are costly to develop and maintain.
 - ➔ Examples: F-22, F-35 (US); Su-57 (Russia); J-20 (China).
- Several nations such as **US, China, Russia, the UK, Japan, Italy, France, Germany, and Spain** are developing **6th Generation fighters with AI, hypersonic, and unmanned features**.

Strategic Importance of 5th Generation Fighter Jet AMCA

- **Supports IAF modernisation** by replacing aging jets and boosting squadron strength.
- **Counters regional threats** like China's J-20 and Pakistan's J-10C.
- **Promotes defence self-reliance** under Atmanirbhar Bharat and enhances technological sovereignty.

Conclusion

A **multi-pronged strategy** is essential including **land acquisition norms**, investing in **defence-specific industrial infrastructure**, supporting private sector capability by **leveraging HAL's experience**, framework of investment and IPR laws to facilitate technology transfers.

4.2. News in Shorts

4.2.1. Silver Notice

The **INTERPOL** has issued the **first silver notice on India's request**. It was issued to track assets of former French Embassy officer Shubham Shokeen wanted in connection with a visa fraud.

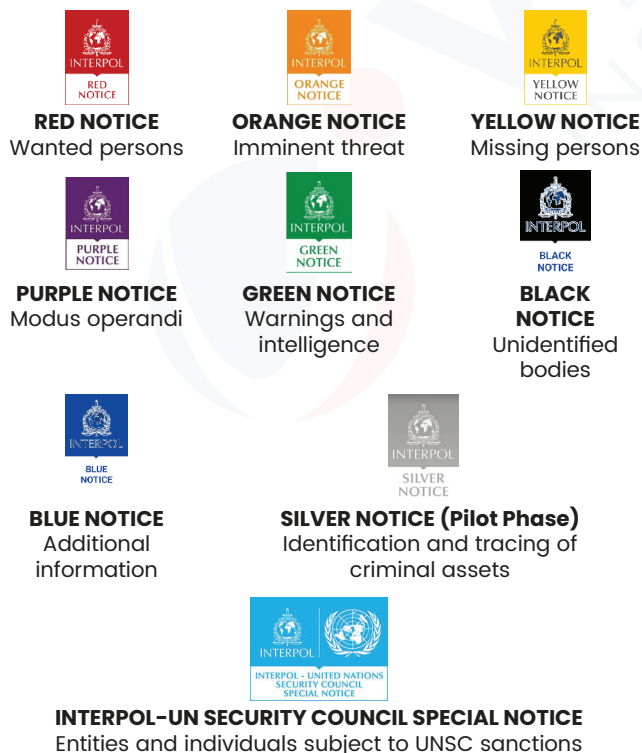
About Silver notice

- Newest addition to INTERPOL's colour-coded Notices for international police cooperation.
- **Purpose:** Helps trace and gather information on fugitives' assets, including those abroad.
- **Global Collaboration:** India among 51 nations in pilot phase (till Nov 2025).
- **First Use:** Issued by Italy in January.
- **Limit:** Each country can request up to 9 notices during pilot.

About INTERPOL

- **Headquarters:** Lyon, France.
- **Genesis:** Established as **International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC)** during 2nd International Police Congress in Vienna in **1923** and established as **INTERPOL** in **1956**.
- **Members:** 196 countries (India a founding members).
- **National Central Bureau (NCBs):** Established by member countries as a **point of access for INTERPOL affairs**.
 - ➔ **CBI is India's NCB** to the INTERPOL, and it has also developed **Bharatpol portal for better coordination**.
- **Governing Bodies:** The General Assembly and Executive Committee.

Interpol Notices



4.2.2. Successful Trial Rudrastra Conducted At Pokhran, Rajasthan

Hybrid Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) **Rudrastra** demonstrated **vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) capabilities, extended flight range, real-time surveillance, and accurate target engagement over a range of 50 kilometres**.

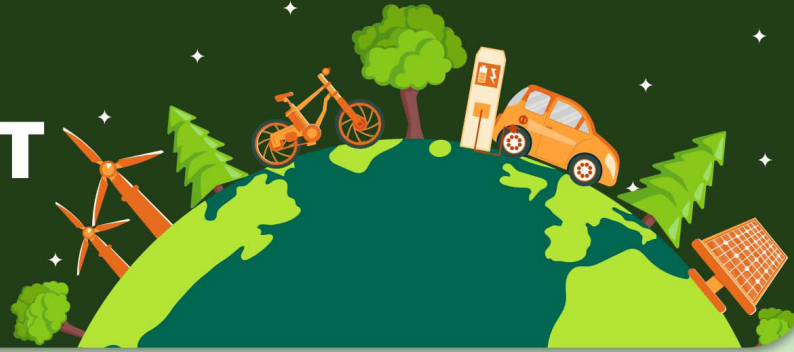
About Rudrastra

- It is a **Hybrid Vertical Take-Off and Landing (VTOL) UAV** manufactured by **Solar Defence and Aerospace Limited**.
- **Features:**
 - ➔ **Total range** (including loitering over the target) is **170 km**, with an estimated **endurance of 1.5 hours**.
 - ➔ Equipped with **precision-guided anti-personnel warheads** with mid-altitude release capability.
 - ➔ Can relay back **live video** and **return** to the launch position in **automated mode**.

4.2.3. Exercises In News

Exercise Khaan Quest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Indian Army contingent reached Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia for the 22nd Multinational Military Exercise. ➤ Genesis: Bilateral initiative between the United States and Mongolia in 2003. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ First multilateral exercise KHAAN QUEST: 2006.
PASSEX	PASSEX, joint naval exercise between Navies of India and UK , is being held in northern Arabian Sea.

ENVIRONMENT



5.1. Agroforestry

Why in the News?

- ➔ The Government has issued **Model Rules 2025 for the felling of trees on agricultural land** in a bid to promote **agroforestry**.

More about the News

- ➔ The **Model Rules include**:
 - ➔ The procedures for the **registration of land** for agroforestry.
 - ➔ The **felling of trees** under agroforestry.
 - ➔ The **certification/transit of timber** produced from agroforestry.

About Agroforestry in India

- ➔ According to National Agroforestry Policy 2014, "Agroforestry is defined as a **land use system which integrates trees and shrubs** on farmlands and rural landscapes to enhance productivity, profitability, diversity and ecosystem sustainability."
- ➔ It **aims to encourage tree planting on farmland** in a way that **complements crops and livestock**.
- ➔ India's agroforestry plantations occupy **approximately 8% of India's geographical land area**.

Significance of Agroforestry (EAC-PM Working Paper on AGROFORESTRY)

- ➔ **Agricultural Growth**: It can help achieve the **4% sustained growth in agriculture**.
- ➔ **Diverse Impact**: Meets 50% fuelwood, 60% paper pulp, and 9–11% fodder needs.
- ➔ **Food Security**: It **increases agricultural yield** (by an **average of 51 percent**) and checks **crop failure**.
- ➔ **Sustainable Development**:
 - ➔ **Carbon sequestration**: 13.7–27.2 tonnes CO₂/ha/year.
 - ➔ **Soil Health**: It improves **soil's organic carbon content (SOC) concentration** and reduces **soil salinity**.
 - ➔ **Climate Smart Agriculture**: It can withstand **extreme weather events**.
 - ➔ **Environmental**: It reduces **pressure on natural forests** and provides better **protection of ecological systems**.
 - ➔ **Trees Outside Forest**: Agroforestry can significantly contribute to increase in Trees Outside Forest.

Challenges to develop Agroforestry

- ➔ **Gaps in the policy**: **Lack of information** on selected trees due to absence of **Agroforestry tree manual** for farmers.
- ➔ **Restrictive Regulations**: **Cumbersome process** in obtaining permits.

Agroforestry Systems in India



Agroforestry Systems in India

Agroforestry Systems in India



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Agroforestry Systems in India

- ➔ **Underutilization of India's National Transit Pass System (NTPS):** 82% applications received only from 3 states/UTs.
- ➔ **Availability of High Variety seeds:** Shortage of superior planting material.
- ➔ **Bottleneck in Previous Policies:** Over emphasis on few species like Poplar, Eucalyptus which were not suitable to India's climate.

Conclusion

- ➔ There is a need to **simplify laws**, better use **NTPS**, and introduce **Next Generation Systems** to balance **profit, production and environment**.

5.2. International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure 2025

Why in the News?

- ➔ Recently, the **African Union** joined India's **Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure** at the **7th International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (ICDRI)** in France.






More on News

- ➔ **ICDRI 2025** has launched a **call to action for coastal resilience** in **SIDS (Small Island Developing States)**.
- ➔ The conference is the first to be held in **Europe** and is being **co-hosted by the CDRI and the Government of France**.
(Theme: **shaping a Resilient Future for Coastal Regions**)

Vulnerability of Coastal Regions

- ➔ **Risk to Human life and Property:** Over 60% of the global population and major cities lie in coastal zones; ~250 million Indians live within 50 km of the coast.
- ➔ **Climate change:** Projected to increase **intensity and frequency of hazards** like **sea level rise, floods, and storms**.
- ➔ **Economic losses:** **Cyclone Fani** caused **~US\$1.2 billion power infrastructure damages** in Odisha (2019).
- ➔ **Social Vulnerability:** Coastal hazards are expected to **worsen existing inequities** for socially vulnerable populations
- ➔ **Threat to Ecosystems:** **Half of the world's mangroves** could face **severe risks by 2100** due to increased cyclone frequency.
- ➔ **Severe coastal hazards** include:
 - ➔ **Tsunamis:** The **2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami** claimed over **230,000 lives** across **14 countries**.
 - ➔ **Cyclones:** **Cyclone Remal** struck India and Bangladesh in 2024.
 - ➔ **Storm Surges:** **2-2.5 m storm surge** inundated **Kutch and Morbi districts** in 2023.
 - ➔ **Coastal Erosion:** **33.6% of India's coastline** is threatened by erosion.

Indian Prime Minister Outlines 5 key global priorities to strengthen Disaster Resilience

-  Integrating Disaster Resilience in Education
-  Formulating a Global Digital Repository
-  Promoting Innovative Financing
-  Reaffirming India's recognition of SIDS as Large Ocean Countries
-  Strengthening Early Warning Systems

About Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)

- ➔ **Launched:** At **United Nations Climate Action Summit in 2019** by India.
- ➔ **About:** A **global partnership** of national governments, UN agencies, multilateral development banks and private sector.
- ➔ **Objective:** To promote **resilience of infrastructure systems** to climate and disaster risks ensuring **sustainable development**.
- ➔ **Members:** **56 members** with **secretariat at New Delhi**.
- ➔ **Initiatives:**
 - ➔ **Infrastructure for Resilient Island States (IRIS):** To promote **resilient infrastructure in SIDS**.
 - ➔ **Infrastructure Resilience Accelerator Fund:** Established with **UNDP and UNDRR** support.

Indian Initiatives for Mitigating Coastal Vulnerabilities

- ➔ **Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification (2019):** Aims to **conserve coastal stretches** and ensure **livelihood security** to fisher communities.

- ➔ **Integrated Coastal Zone Management Project (ICZMP)**: Implemented in **Odisha and West Bengal** to protect coastal environments.
- ➔ **Coastal Vulnerability Index (CVI)**: Developed by **INCOIS** to assess **vulnerability of coastal regions**.
- ➔ **Multi-Hazard Vulnerability Maps**: **INCOIS** developed maps to identify **areas vulnerable to coastal hazards**.
- ➔ **National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)**: Includes **National Water Mission** supporting coastal resilience.

Conclusion

Coastal regions face rising threats from **climate hazards**, and India through **CDRI** is leading **global efforts** to build **resilient infrastructure** and safeguard **coastal communities**.

5.2.1. Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Financing

Why in the News?

Recently, the **African Union** joined **India's Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)** during the **7th International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (ICDRI)** held in **France**.






More on the News

- ➔ Recently India showcased the **World's Largest Disaster Risk Reduction Financing System** at the **8th session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GP2025)**.
- ➔ **GPDRR** was established in **2006** to assess progress on the **Sendai Framework for DRR**.

What is Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)?

- ➔ It refers to steps taken to **prevent new and reduce existing disaster risk** and manage **risk retention**, thereby strengthening **resilience and sustainable development**.

Existing Financing Mechanism of DRR

 United Nations and Multilateral Funds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E.g. Green Climate Fund (GCF) supports DRR 	 Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E.g. World Bank's Disaster Risk Financing and Insurance (DRFI) Program 	 National-Level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Including DRR into national and local budgets. Climate Finance (e.g. National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)), etc. 	 Bilateral Aid and Partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E.g., USAID supports various DRR programs 	 Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private Sector and Blended Finance (e.g., Corporate social responsibility)
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Why there is a need for financing Disaster Risk Reduction? (GAR 2025)

- ➔ **Limited aid**: Just **2% of development aid** goes to DRR.
- ➔ **Mounting Economic Burden**: **Financial losses from disasters** have **doubled in the past two decades**.
- ➔ **Higher Vulnerability of Developing Countries**: Only **49% of Least developed Countries (LDCs)** had **multi-hazard early warning systems**.
- ➔ **Breaking 3 negative spirals**:
 - ➔ **Decreasing income spiral**: By **2050**, global incomes could **decline by 19%** due to climate-related hazards.
 - ➔ **Unsustainable risk transfer spiral**: India has **very low insurance penetration below 1%**.
 - ➔ **Respond-repeat spiral**: Every **\$1 invested in DRR saves \$15** in future disaster recovery costs.

What are the key Challenges in mobilizing adequate DRR Financing?

- ➔ **Absence of dedicated international financial mechanism** to support DRR financing systems.
- ➔ Low integration with financial decision-making
- ➔ Considered as politically risky

India's Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Financing System

- ➔ **DRR Finance Mechanism:** India follows **pre-determined, rule-based allocations** from national to district levels, supported by **Disaster Management Act of 2005**.
- ➔ **Current Allocations:** Under the **15th Finance Commission**, allocation exceeds **INR 2.32 trillion (~USD 28 billion)**.
- ➔ **Four key principles:**
 - ➔ **Dedicated financial windows** for preparedness, mitigation, relief, and recovery.
 - ➔ Prioritization of **vulnerable communities**.
 - ➔ **Accessibility** across all government levels.
 - ➔ **Accountability, transparency, and measurable** outcomes.

Way Forward

- ➔ **Overhaul regulatory environment:** Create **standards and taxonomies** for disaster resilient investments.
- ➔ **Tracking Finances:** Track **financing flows in risk prevention** and fiscal data.
- ➔ **Adopting Innovative Financial Approaches:** **Blended finance, Green bonds, Catastrophe bonds**, etc.
- ➔ **Promoting layered financing:** Different financing mechanisms for **low-cost, high frequency events** vs **severe disasters**.

Conclusion

DRR financing is a **strategic investment** requiring a shift from **reactive spending** to **proactive risk management** with **resilience** at the core of policy decisions.

5.3. Maritime Disasters

India has urged **International Maritime Organization (IMO)** for Comprehensive Investigation and **Global review of recent Maritime Incidents**.

More on the News

- ➔ Due to rise in **vessel sinking and fires** off the Indian coast, India has requested **IMO** to enhance **container safety and cargo disclosure regulations** at **IMO's Maritime Safety Committee (MSC)**.
- ➔ It drew attention towards improving **global standards** around **packaging, declaration, and monitoring** of **lithium-ion batteries** and other **dangerous goods** under **International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code**.

Maritime Disasters

- ➔ Include **shipwrecks, collisions, fires, explosions, and oil spills**.
- ➔ **Recent Incidents:**
 - ➔ **MSC ELSA 3** sinking near **Kochi**: Release of **plastic pellets (nurdles)** contaminating coasts and food chains.
 - ➔ **MV Wan Hai 503** fire off **Kerala**: Involved **hazardous cargo** like **calcium carbide**, raising environmental concerns.
- ➔ **Consequences:**
 - ➔ **Environment:** **Marine pollution, biodiversity loss, and plastic nurdles**.
 - ➔ **Health:** **Toxic exposure** causing long-term effects.
 - ➔ **Economic loss:** **Shoreline devaluation, livelihood loss, and costly cleanups**.

Challenges in handling Maritime Incidents/Disasters

- ➔ **Inadequate Transparency in Cargo Declaration:** Shippers **fail to properly disclose** or **misdeclare** goods nature.
- ➔ **Improper Handling of Hazardous Materials:** **Mishandling** increases **fire and environmental risks**.
- ➔ **Complex ship ownership structures:** **Dilute responsibility** and **weaken accountability**.
- ➔ **Delayed Global Response:** No **urgent global mechanism** to investigate incidents and **revise safety protocols**.
- ➔ **Maritime insurance claims:** Often involve disputes over **coverage, liability, and cost apportionment** due to the complexity of policies.

Role of the IMO in Maritime Safety and Environment Protection

- ➔ **IMDG Convention:** Regulates **hazardous goods handling**.
- ➔ **SOLAS, 1974:** Sets **minimum ship safety standards**.
- ➔ **OPRC and OPRC-HNS:** Calls for **contingency plans** for oil spills.

- ➔ **Ballast Water Convention:** Prevents **spread of invasive species**.
- ➔ **AFS Convention:** Controls **harmful anti-fouling systems**.
- ➔ **Hong Kong Convention:** Ensures **safe ship recycling**.

Legal Mechanism related to Maritime Disaster in India

- ➔ **Merchant Shipping Act, 1958:** For **maritime safety, ship registration, pollution prevention**.
- ➔ **Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986:** Enforce **environmental safeguards** against **marine pollution**.
- ➔ **National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan (NOS-DCP):** Administered by **Indian Coast Guard** for **oil and chemical spills response**.
- ➔ **Admiralty (Jurisdiction and Settlement of Maritime Claims) Act, 2017:** Defines **jurisdiction** and provides a framework for settling **maritime claims** from **accidents or collisions**.

Way Forward

- ➔ **Prevention Strategies:**
 - ➔ Enforce **SOLAS** and **MARPOL** regulations.
 - ➔ **Risk Mapping** to protect **sensitive zones**.
 - ➔ Use **technology** like **real-time monitoring** and **blockchain**.
- ➔ **IMO Reforms:** Ensure **ownership disclosure** and **flag state responsibility**.
- ➔ **Early Detection:** Deploy **coastal radars, AIS, and drones**.
- ➔ **Polluter Pays Principle:** Impose **liability** on ship owners.
- ➔ Promote **arbitration** and **out-of-court settlements**.
- ➔ Conduct **training** for **port authorities** and **fishermen**.

5.4. Crowd Disaster Management

Why in the News?

Stampede outside Chinnaswamy stadium where people gathered to celebrate Royal Challengers Bangalore's (RCB) IPL victory resulted in several **fatalities and injuries**.

About Stampede

Stampede (a type of crowd disaster) or crushing is **the surge of individuals in a crowd**, in response to a **perceived danger or loss of physical space**. [United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)]

Crowd Management Failures and Triggers

- ➔ **Crowd Control Failures:**
 - ➔ **Overcrowding:** E.g., Chinnaswamy stadium, 2025 – 2.5 lakh crowd gathered as against the 34,600 capacity.
 - ➔ **Lack of Stakeholder Coordination:** E.g., RCB's social media announced **free entry passes** at stadium gates without proper coordination with Police.
- ➔ **Crowd Behaviour Triggers:**
 - ➔ **Panic and structural issues:** E.g., Elphinstone Road Station, Mumbai (2017), panic triggered by rumour of **bridge collapse** on an overcrowded, slippery footbridge during heavy rain.
 - ➔ **Fire/Electricity related:** E.g., Dabwali Fire Tragedy, Haryana (1995), stampede triggered due to **fire in a tented venue** and narrow exit.
 - ➔ **Tussle to catch glimpse of celebrity:** E.g., stampede at the "Pushpa 2" premiere in Hyderabad (2024).

National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Guidelines on Planning for Crowd management

Preparedness

- ➔ **Risk Assessment and Planning:** Conducting **Failure Mode and Effect Analysis (FMEA)** – rating every possible hazard on dimensions of **Severity, Frequency of Occurrence, and Difficulty of detection**.
- ➔ **Crowd Density Norms:** Specify **permissible crowd per square metre** and evacuation triggers (e.g., barricade breach). **Model Example:** New York mandates **trained crowd control managers** for events with 1,000+ attendees.
- ➔ **Infrastructure Development:** Stadiums, ghats, temples must be re-engineered with **multiple wide entry/exit points; Multilingual signage** and public address systems.

- ➔ **Facilities and Emergency Medical Services:** E.g., Maha Kumbh 2025 had **articulating water towers (AWT)**, water ambulance, **multi-disaster response vehicle**.

Response

- ➔ **Information System:** Mobile updates, loudspeakers, signage, **digital boards** for crowd guidance and informing public about delays, diversions, and hazards instantly.
- ➔ **Safety and Security measures:** **Watch towers** at vantage locations with **wireless communication network**, **CCTV monitoring**.
- ➔ **How Technology Can Prevent Stampedes in India?**
- ➔ **RFID & IoT for Crowd Tracking:** Can track visitor movements, ensuring no area exceeds **safe capacity**. E.g., **Kumbh Mela & Vaishno Devi pilgrimages** have tested RFID tagging.
- ➔ **Surveillance & Real-Time Crowd Monitoring:** **AI-driven CCTV cameras and drones** can analyze **crowd density**, detect potential bottlenecks and guide emergency responses. E.g., **Hajj pilgrimage** uses AI-based crowd monitoring, **Drones with thermal imaging** monitor large gatherings from above.
- ➔ **AI models:** Major events can be logged for identifying **crowd patterns** and **evacuation performance**. **Predictive analytics** can forecast overcrowding and alert authorities before crisis occurs.

Conclusion

Effective crowd management requires **multidisciplinary planning**, **inter-agency coordination**, and **modern technology integration**, making strict adherence to **NDMA guidelines** essential for India's increasing public gatherings.

5.5. Bharat Forecast System

Why in the News?

- ➔ Ministry of Earth Sciences unveils **Bharat Forecast System (BFS)**, one of the world's first **indigenously developed high-resolution weather forecast systems**.

About Bharat Forecast System

- ➔ **Developed by:** **Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM)**, Pune, an autonomous institute of the Ministry of Earth Sciences.
- ➔ **Role:** It **enhances India's weather prediction resolution from 12 km to 6 km**, enabling every village in India to access more **precise and location-specific forecasts**.
- ➔ **Data Sources:** Integrates real-time inputs from **40 Doppler Weather Radars**, improving accuracy of **localised forecasts and nowcasts**.
 - ➔ **Doppler Radar** uses the **doppler effect** (Change in frequency of wave emitted by a source moving relative to the observer) to gather **velocity data** from particles being measured.

Significance of BFS

- ➔ **Improved accuracy and speed:** Deliver **64% better accuracy** in **high-risk zones** and produces forecasts within **4–6 hours**, especially for extreme events like **heavy rainfall** and **cyclones**.
 - ➔ Earlier models took **12 to 14 hours**.
- ➔ **Global Leadership:** Positions India ahead of the **US, UK, and EU** by achieving **6 km resolution** compared to **9–14 km** in global models.
- ➔ **Support for Disaster Management & Agriculture:** Enables **short-range** and **nowcasts** at **village** and **block level**. Assists **farmers, coastal communities**, and **disaster management agencies** in **crop planning** and **early warning**.
- ➔ **Economic Benefits:** Reduces **climate-related losses** in sectors like **agriculture, infrastructure**, and **water management**.
 - ➔ Powered by **High-Performance Computing (HPC)** systems – **Arka** (IITM Pune) and **Arunika** (NCMRWF Delhi).
- ➔ **Regional Forecast:** Improves forecasting of **tropical disturbances**, including **monsoons, cyclones**, and **extreme rainfall events**.

Conclusion

The **Bharat Forecast System (BFS)** reflects India's growing **self-reliance** in **scientific infrastructure**. As **climate risks** intensify, such advancements highlight the role of **science** in ensuring **resilience** and **inclusive development**.

5.6. News in Shorts

5.6.1. Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel On Chemicals, Waste And Pollution Established

Its creation follows a **United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) resolution in 2022** for establishing an **intergovernmental body**.

- ➔ Convened by **UN Environment Programme (UNEP)**, which will **host the panel**.
- ➔ Provides nations with **independent, policy-relevant scientific advice** on **chemicals, waste and pollution prevention**.
- ➔ **Completes a global scientific trifecta** alongside **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)** and **Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)**.

Need for the Panel

- ➔ **To reduce the triple planetary crisis: Climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste.**
 - ➔ **Chemicals used daily** have **unintended negative impacts**.
 - ➔ **Municipal solid waste** predicted to grow from **2.1 billion tonnes (2023) to 3.8 billion tonnes by 2050**.
 - ➔ **Deaths from pollution** have risen by **66% over two decades**.

5.6.2. ILO Convention on Biological Hazards

International Labour Organization's (ILO) member states have adopted the first ever **international convention on biological hazards at work**.

About the Convention (ILO Convention 192)

- ➔ Calls on Member States to **formulate national policies** including **prevention and protection against biological hazards** and **preparedness and response measures**.
- ➔ **India's Concerns: Blanket application across all sectors** may **burden MSMEs and informal enterprises**.
 - ➔ **Definitions are too broad**, leading to **over-regulation**.

About Biological Hazards (Biohazards)

- ➔ **Biohazards are of organic origin** including **pathogenic microorganisms, toxins and bioactive substances**. **Healthcare, agriculture, laboratory workers** at greatest risk.
- ➔ **Driving factors: atmospheric conditions, antimicrobial overuse**.
- ➔ **Measures: ILO Conventions, India's 2020 Code**.

Other Key Highlights of the Conference

- ➔ **First platform economy discussion** addressing **fundamental rights** and **fair remuneration digital platforms** like Uber, Amazon.
- ➔ **Resolution to reduce informality** and support **formal work transition**.
- ➔ **Maritime Convention amendments** address **violence and shore leave rights**. **India ratified in 2015**.

5.6.3. State And Trends Of Carbon Pricing 2025

State and Trends of Carbon Pricing 2025 Report is released by the World Bank Group.

- ➔ As per the report, number of operational **Carbon Pricing (CP)** instruments has grown, from **5 (2005) to 80 presently**, with **India, Brazil, and Türkiye** actively developing them.

Key Highlights of the Report

- ➔ **Coverage: CP** covers around **28% of global Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions**, with **43 carbon taxes** and **37 Emission Trading Systems (ETs)**.
- ➔ **Revenue Generation: Globally, ETs and carbon taxes** continued to generate over **USD 100 billion (2024)** for public budgets.
- ➔ **Sector Wise Coverage: Power** followed by **industry sector** have the highest coverage.
 - ➔ **Agriculture and Waste** remains largely uncovered.
- ➔ **Carbon Credit Supply Vs Demand: Supply** continued to outstrip demand, with almost **1 billion tons** of unretired credits in 2024, globally.

Key Provisions on CP

- ➔ **Global**
 - ➔ **Article 6 of Paris Agreement:** Provides basis for **facilitating international recognition** of cooperative carbon pricing approaches.
 - ➔ **COP29** adopted final rules for **Article 6.2** and **Article 6.4**.
 - ➔ **CBAMs:** Imposes **carbon price** on **imported goods**.
- ➔ **India**
 - ➔ **Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (2023): Compliance Mechanism** for **obligated entities**, **Offset mechanism** for **non-obligated entities**.

Carbon Pricing and its Instruments



Emissions Trading Systems: Government sets a cap on GHG emissions or emission intensity for covered entities.



Carbon Taxes: Government levies a fee on covered entities for their GHG emissions.



Carbon Crediting Mechanisms: Tradable credits are generated through voluntary activities that reduce emissions.

5.6.4. State of The Climate In Asia 2024

World Meteorological Organization releases State of the Climate in Asia 2024 Report

- ➔ WMO is a **specialized UN agency**.

Key Findings

- ➔ **2024 was Asia's warmest year**, temperatures **1.04°C** above average.
- ➔ **Asia warming twice as fast** as global average.
- ➔ **Glacial loss** in **Central Himalayas**.
- ➔ **Record sea temperatures**, decadal warming rate double global average.

5.6.5. National Mission for a Green India

Revised mission document of the **National Mission for a Green India (GIM)** was unveiled.

- ➔ **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** unveiled the document on **World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought** (June 17).

About Green India Mission

- ➔ **Genesis:** Launched in 2011. One of **eight missions** under **National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)**.
- ➔ **Objectives:** Increase **forest and tree cover**, improve **ecosystem services**, create **carbon sink** of **2.5-3.0 billion tonnes CO2** by 2030.
- ➔ **Three Sub-Missions:** Improve **forest quality**, increase **forest cover**, enhance **forest-dependent communities' incomes**.
- ➔ **Timeline:** **10 years (2021-2030)**.
- ➔ Implementation through **Joint Forest Management Committees**.

Key Mission Strategies (linked to India's NDC Commitments)



Micro-Ecosystem Approach:

Focus on vulnerable zones like Aravallis, Western Ghats, NW arid regions, mangroves, and IHR.



Private Sector:

Leverage CSR for restoration and village support.



Carbon Markets:

Sell carbon credits from forestry/agroforestry via voluntary markets.



Green India Force:

Trained youth cadre for implementation and maintenance.

5.6.6. Global Drought Outlook, 2025 Released

The report has been released by the **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)**.

Key findings

- ➔ **Increase in severity:** **40%** of world's land faces increasingly **frequent and severe droughts**. Examples include **Europe (2022)**, **California (2021)**, **Horn of Africa**.

- ➔ **Economic impact:** **3%-7.5%** annual increase in drought costs, **Crop yields decline by 22%**.
- ➔ **Ecological:** **37%** of global land experienced **soil moisture decline** since 1980, **62%** of **aquifers** in decline.
- ➔ **Other:** Droughts cause **34%** of **disaster-related deaths**, exacerbate **poverty** and **displacement**.

5.6.7. Global Ocean Darkening Threatens Underwater Ecosystems

A study by UK University researchers found that **21% of the global ocean had become darker** between 2003 and 2022, especially in **Arctic, Antarctic, and Gulf Stream regions**.

What is the Darkening of the Ocean?

- ➔ **Reduction in light penetration** into global oceans, shrinking the **photic zone**.
 - ➔ **Photic zone** is the **sunlit layer (200 meters depth)** where **90% of marine life** thrives.
- ➔ Current darkening could be due to **ecological shifts** driven by **phytoplankton and zooplankton blooms**.

Reasons behind darkening of the Ocean

- ➔ **Coastal Oceans:** **Nutrient, organic material and sediment loading** caused by **agricultural runoff and increased rainfall**.
- ➔ **Open Oceans:** **Warming of surface oceans** and climate-driven changes in **ocean circulation patterns**.

Impact of the Ocean Darkening

- ➔ **Marine ecology:** Limits **light-dependent processes** like **growth, photosynthesis**, limiting **ocean productivity**.
- ➔ **Fisheries industry:** **Fish stocks decline** due to **habitat compression**.
- ➔ **Climate regulation:** Hampers **carbon absorption** and **oxygen production**.

5.6.8. Blue Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) Challenge

Brazil and France launched the **Blue NDC Challenge**.

- ➔ Eight countries – **Australia, Fiji, Kenya, Mexico, Palau, and Seychelles** – have joined the initiative.

About Blue NDC Challenge

- ➔ Calls on countries to place **ocean at the heart of their NDCs** ahead of **COP30**.
- ➔ **Supported by:** **Ocean Conservancy, Ocean & Climate Platform, and World Resources Institute**.

Role played by Ocean in addressing the climate crisis

- ➔ **Carbon Dioxide Absorption:** Ocean absorbs **30%** of global CO2 emissions.
 - ➔ **Coastal habitats** sequester carbon **four times higher** than terrestrial forests.
- ➔ **Heat Regulation:** Captures **90%** of **excess heat** from greenhouse gas emissions.
- ➔ **Renewable Energy:** **Offshore wind** can meet **one-third** of global electricity needs.

Initiatives to Protect Ocean Ecosystems



Marine Protected Areas (MPAs):

Regions designated for conservation, restricting activities to protect marine life.



UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030):

Aims to stimulate ocean science to reverse ocean decline and promote sustainable development.



Indian Initiative:

MISHTI (Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes), Deep Ocean Mission etc.

5.6.9. Third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3)

The third **United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3)** concluded with the adoption of the **Nice Ocean Action Plan**.

- ➔ **UNOC3** was held in **Nice, France**, co-hosted by **France and Costa Rica**.

Key Highlights of Action Plan

- ➔ **Global roadmap** to support **SDG 14** – conserving and sustainably using **oceans, seas, and marine resources**. **SDG 14** is the **least funded** SDG.
- ➔ Reaffirms commitment to develop **international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution**.
- ➔ Called for **coordinated global action** to **reduce climate and acidification impacts** on oceans.

5.6.10. New Ramsar Sites in Rajasthan

India added two more wetlands into **Ramsar list of Wetlands of International Importance**.

- ➔ **Khichan and Menar wetlands** in **Rajasthan** were declared **Ramsar Sites** on **World Environment Day 2025**, raising India's total count to **91**.
- ➔ **World Environment Day** is celebrated **annually on 5th June (Since 1973)** by **UN Environment Programme**. The **2025 theme** is **Beat Plastic Pollution**.
- ➔ With these additions, **Rajasthan now has four Ramsar sites**, including **Sambhar Salt Lake** and **Keoladeo Ghana National Park**.

About New Ramsar Sites

- ➔ **Khichan Wetland**: Located in **Northern Thar Desert, Phalodi District**. Comprises **Ratri nadi and Vijaysagar talab** with riparian habitat. Hosts **migratory demoiselle cranes**.
- ➔ **Menar Wetland Complex**: Located in **Menar and Kheroda village, Udaipur District**. **Freshwater monsoon wetland** formed by **three ponds**. Notable species include **critically endangered white-rumped vulture** and **long-billed vulture**. **Over 70 plant species** found, including **mango trees** hosting **Indian flying fox colonies**.

Ramsar Convention on Wetlands



Genesis:

Adopted in **Ramsar, Iran (1971)**; effective from **1975**.



About:

An intergovernmental treaty for wetland conservation and sustainable use.



Criteria:

A wetland must meet at least one of nine set criteria for international importance.



Secretariat:

Gland, Switzerland (based at **IUCN Headquarters**)



India:

Joined on **Feb 1, 1982**; holds the highest number of Ramsar sites in **Asia (91 Ramsar sites)**.

5.6.11. Greater Flamingo Sanctuary

Tamil Nadu notified **Greater Flamingo Sanctuary at Dhanushkodi** to preserve a critical stopover point along the **Central Asian Flyway** for thousands of **migratory wetland birds**.

About Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*):

- ➔ **IUCN Status**: **Least Concern**
- ➔ **Distribution**: **Africa, western Asia (India), and southern Europe**.
- ➔ **Habitat**: Breeds in **shallow wetlands** that are **saline or alkaline**.
- ➔ **Features**: Great **dispersal capacity** but highly **philopatric** (returns to particular sites).
- ➔ **Kachchh Desert Wildlife Sanctuary in Gujarat** supports **South Asia's only breeding ground** of Greater Flamingos, known as **"Flamingo City"**.

5.6.12. IBAT Alliance

IBAT Alliance doubled its investment in biodiversity data from **2023 to 2024**.

- ➔ Increased investment will support **World Database on Protected Areas, IUCN Red List and World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas**.

About IBAT Alliance

- ➔ **Headquarter**: **The UK**. (**Founded in 2008**)
- ➔ **Coalition of four** conservation organisations: **Birdlife International, Conservation International, IUCN, UNEP-WCMC**.
- ➔ **Mission**: Provide **data, tools and guidance** to help organisations act on **biodiversity-related risks**.

5.6.13. International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)








The **1st assembly of the IBCA** convened in **New Delhi**, endorsed **Union Minister Shri Bhupender Yadav** as the **President of IBCA**.

- ➔ The **Assembly** serves as **apex decision-making body** and is convened **annually/biannually**.

About IBCA

- ➔ **Multi-country, multi-agency coalition** of **95 big cat range countries** for **big cat conservation**.
 - ➔ **Big Cats** include **Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar & Puma**.
- ➔ **Genesis: Launched in April 2023** (occasion of **50 years of India's Project Tiger**).
- ➔ **Main Goal: Foster collaboration** by establishing platform for **sharing best practices** in big cat conservation.
- ➔ **Founding Members (16):** Including **Armenia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Kenya, Nepal**.
- ➔ **India** is the **host country** and **Secretariat** for IBCA.

Conservation Status of Big Cat Species

Big Cat Species	IUCN Status	CITES Status	Wildlife Protection Act
 Tiger <i>Panthera tigris</i>	Endangered	Appendix I	Schedule 1
 Lion <i>Panthera leo</i>	Vulnerable	Appendix I	Schedule 1
 Leopard <i>Panthera pardus</i>	Vulnerable	Appendix I	Schedule 1
 Snow Leopard <i>Panthera uncia</i>	Vulnerable	Appendix I	Schedule 1
 Cheetah <i>Acinonyx jubatus</i>	Vulnerable	Appendix I	Schedule 1
 Jaguar <i>Panthera onca</i>	Near Threatened	Appendix I	Not Found in India
 Puma <i>Puma concolor</i>	Least Concern	Appendix I	Not Found in India

5.6.14. Revised Guidelines on National Bioenergy Programme

The **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)** has updated guidelines on **'Waste to Energy'** and **'Biomass'** components of the **National Bioenergy Programme**.

- ➔ **Bioenergy: Renewable energy** generated from **biomass fuel** from **organic material** like harvest residues, crops and organic waste.

What is the National Bioenergy Programme?

- ➔ **Launched: 2022.**
- ➔ **Implementation: Two phases** with **Rs. 1715 Crore budget**; Phase-1 (2021-22 to 2025-26).
- ➔ **Objective:** Utilize **surplus biomass** for **power generation** while providing **additional income** for rural households.
- ➔ **Central Financial Assistance (CFA):** Provided to project developers. **Special categories** get **20% more CFA**.

Three components:

- ➔ **Waste to Energy:** Support projects for **generating Biogas, BioCNG, Power, or Syngas**.
- ➔ **Biomass Programme:** Support **Biomass Briquette/Pellet manufacturing** and **non-bagasse cogeneration** projects.
- ➔ **Biogas Programme:** Support **biogas plants** for **clean cooking fuel** and **improved sanitation**. **Biogas** is **95% methane and CO₂**.

Key Features of Revised Guidelines

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Waste to Energy Programme ➔ Simplified Processes: Easier approvals for MSMEs. ➔ Improved CFA Disbursal: Two-Stage Release - 50% CFA after State Pollution Control Board consent, remaining after 80% capacity achievement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Biomass Programme ➔ Simplified Processes: No clearance documents needed for briquette/pellet plants. ➔ Tech Integration: Enabling IoT-based monitoring solutions. ➔ Stubble Burning Support: Pellet producers in NCR can choose MNRE or CPCB scheme. |
|--|--|

5.6.15. Energy Transition Index (ETI), 2025

World Economic Forum (WEF) recently released **Energy Transition Index (ETI), 2025**.

Key Findings

- ➔ **Sweden ranked first** followed by **Finland, Denmark and Norway**.
- ➔ **India's rank dropped** from **rank 63 in 2024 to rank 71 in 2025**.

About ETI

- ➔ Ranks countries on **progress towards energy transition** from **fossil fuels to clean energy**.
- ➔ **Two main aspects: System Performance** (energy security, equity & sustainability) and **Transition Readiness** (regulation, infrastructure, investment).
- ➔ **Index uses 43 indicators** and **scores countries on 0 to 100 scale**.

5.6.16. Thirstwave

Researchers **coined the term Thirstwaves** for **extended periods of atmospheric thirst**.

About Thirstwave

- ➔ **At least three consecutive days** when **evaporative demand** exceeds historical **90th percentile**.
 - ➔ **Evaporative demand** measures **atmospheric thirst** driven by **temperature, wind, humidity, sunshine**.
- ➔ Studying it helps **farmers manage water resources** and **improve crop yields**.

5.6.17. Salkhan Fossil Park Added to UNESCO Tentative List for World Heritage Sites

It is officially known as **Sonbhadra Fossils Park** and is located in **Sonbhadra District of Uttar Pradesh**.

- ➔ It qualifies as **geo-heritage site** under **IUCN's 2020 guidelines for "Evolution of Life"** and matches **UNESCO's 2021 framework**.

About Salkhan Fossil Park

- ➔ Located in **Kaimur Range** (part of Vindhya range), adjacent to **Kaimur Wildlife Sanctuary**.
- ➔ One of the **oldest and most well-preserved sites** in the world (**fossils dating 1.4 billion years**).
 - ➔ **Site's fossil assemblage features Stromatolites** created by **Cyanobacteria communities**.
 - ➔ These **fossilized microbial structures** record the **Great Oxidation Event**.

Significance of Salkhan Fossil Park

- ➔ **Understanding early environment:** Features **varied stromatolite forms** indicating changes in **ancient water depth and sedimentation**.
- ➔ **Filling the Precambrian Gap:** Addresses gap in **World Heritage fossil record** by showcasing **Precambrian era** covering **85% of Earth's history**.

UNESCO World Heritage Sites

- ➔ A World Heritage Site is a location recognised by UNESCO for its **"outstanding universal value"**.
 - ➔ It is guided by the **Convention Concerning Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage** (called **World Heritage Convention**).
- ➔ **Three categories:** Cultural heritage, Natural heritage, and Mixed heritage.
- ➔ **States Parties:** 196 states have ratified the Convention.

5.6.18. Recent Volcanic Eruptions Mount Etna

Volcano	Features
Mount Etna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Location: Sicily Island, Italy ➔ Highest Mediterranean island mountain ➔ Most active stratovolcano in the world ➔ Europe's largest active volcano. ➔ A UNESCO World Heritage Site.
Mount Lewotobi Laki-laki	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Location: Flores Island, Indonesia. ➔ Part of the Pacific Ring of Fire
Kilauea volcano	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Location: Southeastern part of the island of Hawaii, U.S. ➔ Shield Volcano



ABHYAAS


MAINS 2025

ALL INDIA MAINS

(GS + ESSAY + OPTIONAL)

MOCK TEST (OFFLINE)

PAPER	GS - I & II	GS - III & IV	ESSAY	OPTIONAL - I & II
DATE	26 JULY	27 JULY	2 AUG	3 AUGUST



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OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

ANTHROPOLOGY GEOGRAPHY HINDI HISTORY MATHS PHILOSOPHY PHYSICS POLITICAL SCIENCE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION SOCIOLOGY

AHMEDABAD | BENGALURU | BHOPAL | BHUBANESWAR | CHANDIGARH | CHENNAI | CHHATARPUR (MP) | DEHRADUN | DELHI - KAROL BAGH | DELHI - MUKHERJEE NAGAR | GHAZIABAD
 GORAKHPUR | GURUGRAM | GUWAHATI | HYDERABAD | INDORE | JABALPUR | JAIPUR | JAMMU | JODHPUR | KANPUR | KOLKATA | KOTA | LUCKNOW | MUMBAI | NAGPUR | NOIDA
 ORAI | PATNA | PRAYAGRAJ | PUNE | RAIPUR | RANCHI | ROHTAK | SHIMLA | THIRUVANANTHAPURAM | VARANASI | VIJAYAWADA | VISAKHAPATNAM

SOCIAL ISSUES



6.1. Cultural Appropriation

Why in the News?

Italian luxury brand Prada was accused of cultural appropriation for selling flat leather sandals resembling India's traditional Geographical Indication (GI)-tagged Kolhapuri chappals.

What is Cultural Appropriation?

- ➔ It is when a **dominant group** adopts elements from a marginalized culture in a disrespectful or exploitative way.
- ➔ It involves profiting financially or socially from another culture without consent.
- ➔ **Other examples:**
 - ➔ **U.S brand Starbucks** "Golden Latte" mirrors traditional Indian turmeric milk (Haldi Doodh).
 - ➔ **Italian brand Gucci** selling floral embroidery kaftans resembling Indian kurtas.

About Kolhapuri Chappals

- ➔ **Origin:** dates back to 12th Century King Bijjal and PM Basavanna of Bidar.
- ➔ **Handcrafted** in Maharashtra and Karnataka using bag-tanned vegetable leather.
- ➔ Known for braided straps, cutwork, durability.
- ➔ **GI-tagged** in 2019.

Reasons behind Cultural Appropriation

- ➔ **Lack of IP protection.**
- ➔ **GI rights are territorial and limited internationally**, making legal action difficult abroad (e.g., Kolhapuri chappals in Italy).
- ➔ **Digital Marketplace Loopholes** like resale and reproductions remain unchecked.
- ➔ **Lack of enforcement and awareness:** Over 10,000 families make Kolhapuri chappals, but only 95 are registered under the GI framework.

Ethical dimensions involved in Cultural Appropriation

- ➔ **Violates Kantian Ethics** by using cultures as **means to an end** (profit), not respecting communities.
- ➔ **Utilitarianism:** Short-term corporate gains cause long-term harm to cultural dignity and artisan livelihoods.
- ➔ Erodes artisan livelihoods, denying freedom and economic opportunities per Amartya Sen's Capability Approach.

How has globalization impacted India's cultural heritage?

Positive Impact

- ➔ **Cultural Exchange:** Indian instruments like sitar and tabla feature in Western music.
- ➔ **Global Recognition:** Yoga, Ayurveda, Bollywood, and classical music are globally popular.

Negative Impact

- ➔ **Homogenisation:** Global platforms influence youth, sidelining local arts.
- ➔ **Cultural Erosion:** Traditional attire is replaced by Western clothing.

Conclusion

Controversy highlights the need for stronger global IP protections and ethical practices to preserve marginalized communities' cultural heritage and artisan livelihoods.

6.2. Tier-2 Influencers redefining Cultural Capital in Digital India

Why in the News?

Rise of Tier-2 and Tier-3 **digital influencers** from smaller towns is reshaping digital influence and cultural capital in India.

What is Cultural Capital?

- ➔ Non-economic assets like education, language, and cultural knowledge enabling social mobility (Pierre Bourdieu).
- ➔ Traditionally metro-centric, with dominance of English, elite institutions, and urban aesthetics.

Rise of Tier-2 Influencers

- ➔ Creators from cities like Patna, Surat, and Guwahati with regional identity and large online followings.
- ➔ Social media democratized content creation and access.

How They Redefine Cultural Capital

- ➔ **Decentralization of Taste:** Regional aesthetics now rival urban ones.
- ➔ **Vernacular Power:** Over 50% of urban users prefer regional languages; ShareChat has 180M+ users.
- ➔ **Folk Revival:** Folk music and traditions gain digital presence (e.g., Village Cooking Channel).
- ➔ **Authenticity as Aspiration:** Relatable influencers redefine success.
- ➔ **Subaltern Voices:** Platforms empower Dalit, tribal, and OBC creators (e.g., Khabar Lahariya).

Implications

- ➔ **Cultural Inclusion:** Validates non-mainstream local cultures and practices.
- ➔ **Economic Upliftment:** Empowers Tier 2–3 creators through monetization platforms like Moj and ShareChat.
- ➔ **Digital Political Influence:** Local influencers shape public opinion and electoral narratives.
- ➔ **Urban-Rural Integration:** Promotes unity while celebrating regional identities, breaking rural stereotypes.

Conclusion

Tier-2 influencers herald a more inclusive and democratic cultural discourse, valuing **authenticity over elitism** and **diversity over uniformity**.

Challenges

-  **Digital Divide**
-  **Stereotyping and Tokenism**
-  **Algorithmic Bias**
-  **Commodification of Culture**

6.3. Improvement in QS World University Rankings

Why in the News?

India has seen significant improvement of Indian institutions in QS World University Rankings 2026.

About QS World University Rankings

- ➔ **Published by:** London-based **Quacquarelli Symonds**.
- ➔ **Based on five Lenses:** Research and Discovery, Employability and Outcomes, Global Engagement, Learning Experience, Sustainability.
- ➔ Ten indicators used, **new addition International Student Diversity**.

Key findings

- ➔ India ranks 4th globally with 54 universities (up from 11 in 2015).
- ➔ 8 new Indian entries, highest for any country.
- ➔ 6 institutions ranked in global top 250.
- ➔ Representation from both public and private institutions.
- ➔ 12 IITs featured, **IIT Delhi highest** at 123rd.

Reasons for improvement

- ➔ **Better academic reputation**, 8 Indian universities in global top 100 for citations/faculty.
- ➔ Good performance of Engineering and technology
- ➔ **Infrastructure** boost via **PM-USHA**.
- ➔ **Enhanced employability** through PM Internship Scheme, NATS 2.0.
- ➔ Strong sustainability and knowledge exchange impact.
- ➔ **Reform** under NEP 2020 promoting quality and inclusivity.

Challenges in higher education

- ➔ **Low Accreditation:** Only 39% universities accredited due to high costs.
- ➔ **Low GER:** GER at 28.4% (2021–22), far from NEP 2035 target of 50%.
- ➔ **Insufficient Research Funding:** R&D spending around 0.7% of GDP, affecting innovation.
- ➔ **Skills Gap:** Disconnect between academia and industry; limited soft skills training.
- ➔ **Outdated Curriculum:** Lacks updates in AI and emerging technologies.
- ➔ **Fragmented Regulatory:** Multiple bodies hinder MERU implementation.

Way forward

- ➔ **Strengthen Industry-academia** ties (e.g. TASK)
- ➔ Promote **Need-based education** (e.g., AP Skill Census 2025).
- ➔ Invest in interdisciplinary degrees.
- ➔ **Consolidate regulators** (NEP's single body).
- ➔ **Empower faculty**
- ➔ **Enhanced funding**

6.4. Manosphere

Why in the News?

- ➔ UN Women has raised concerns over the growing threat of the “manosphere,” a network of online communities undermining gender equality.

What is Manosphere?

- ➔ **Definition:** Encompasses online communities promoting narrow, aggressive definitions of masculinity and anti-feminist narratives.
 - ➔ Equates male worth with dominance, wealth, and control over women.
- ➔ **Purpose:** Spread hate, misogyny, and gender bias via digital platforms.

Negative impacts

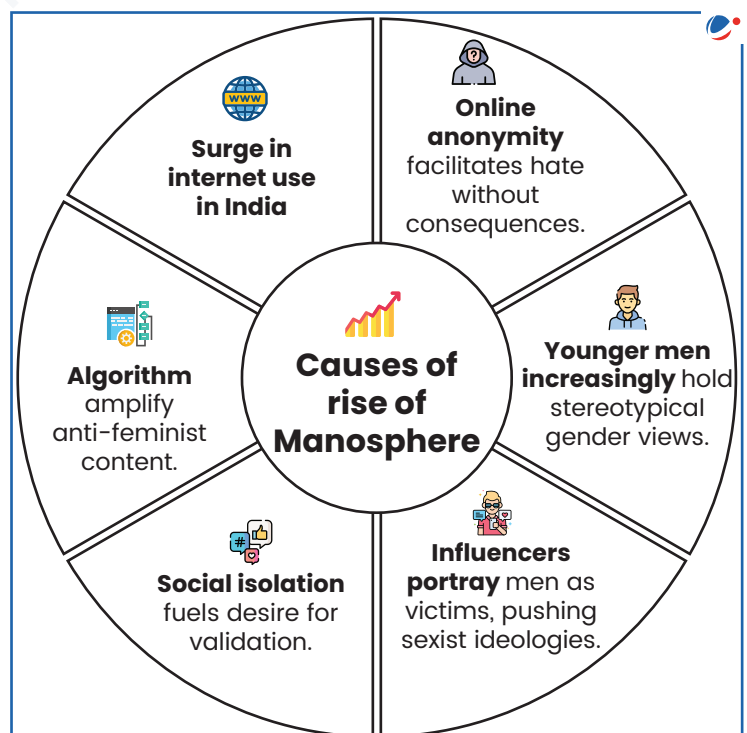
- ➔ Increased misogyny and normalizes violence (e.g., Gamergate).
- ➔ Reduces men's confidence, mental health, and well-being.
- ➔ Reversing progress in gender equality.
- ➔ High rates of online violence against women (16–58%).

Existing mechanisms

- ➔ **World**
 - ➔ Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)
 - ➔ 'Making All Spaces Safe' Initiative (UNFPA)
 - ➔ EU's Digital Services Act
- ➔ **India**
 - ➔ Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986
 - ➔ IT Rules, 2021
 - ➔ Digital Shakti by NCW
 - ➔ Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008
 - ➔ Section 75, 78, 79, of the BNS

Way Forward

- ➔ Legal measures: Such as Online Safety Act of UK.
- ➔ Promoting media literacy and digital resilience.
- ➔ Support survivors, youth-focused programming.
- ➔ Uplift anti-manosphere creators like HeForShe.



6.5. Women in Armed Force

Why in the news?

- ➔ The **first batch of 17 female cadets** graduated from the **National Defence Academy (NDA)**.

Significance of Women in Armed Forces

- ➔ **Constitutional Equality:** Upholds **Article 14, 15 and 16**, ensures inclusivity in defence.
- ➔ **Operational Strength:** Enhances team diversity and decision-making.
- ➔ **Social Impact:** Break gender stereotypes; women lead in combat and support roles (e.g., Op Sindoor).
- ➔ **Humanitarian Role:** Crucial in civic missions, especially in culturally sensitive areas.

Steps to boost participation

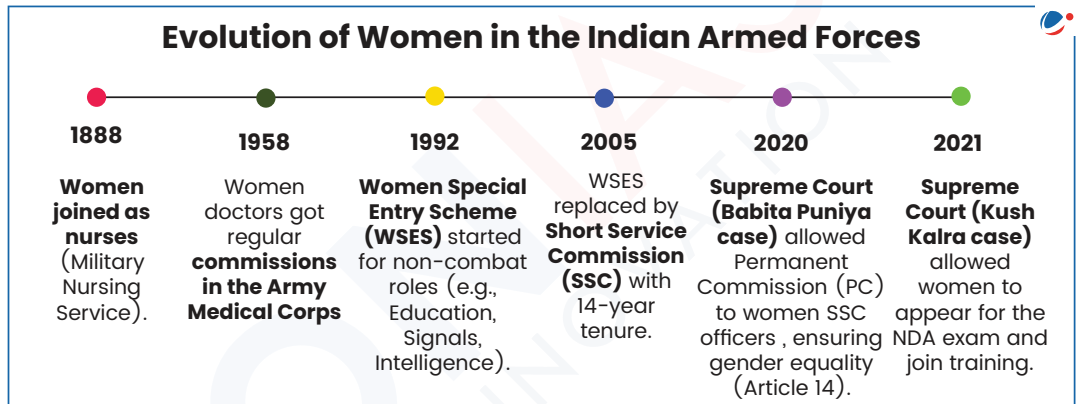
- ➔ **Policy:** **Permanent Commission** in 11 services; Women Agniveers with equal standards.
- ➔ **Structural:** Women pilots (Army Aviation Corps), posted on warships.
- ➔ **Outreach:** IAF'S 'DISHA' Cell promotes awareness.

Challenges

- ➔ Gender bias & societal attitudes
- ➔ Infrastructure deficits
- ➔ Physical demands & training gaps
- ➔ Work-life imbalance

Conclusion

As warfare evolves to prioritize technology, intelligence, and adaptability over physical strength, increasing women's participation in India's armed forces requires comprehensive reforms across multiple dimensions.



6.6. Global Tobacco Epidemic 2025

Why in the News?

WHO released tenth report on the **Global Tobacco Epidemic 2025**.

Key findings of report

- ➔ **WHO MPOWER:** Since 2007, 155 countries adopted, benefitted over 6.1 billion people, includes six components—Monitor, Protect, Warn, offer help, enforce bans, Raise taxes.
- ➔ **Progress:** Graphic warnings most implemented; India leads in curbing tobacco promotion, including digital platforms.
- ➔ **Challenges:** Tobacco taxation least adopted; affordability rising in India since 2014.
- ➔ **Impact:** 7M+ tobacco-related deaths annually.

About the Tobacco

- ➔ **Species:** Over 60 species, *N. tabacum* and *N. rustica* widely cultivated; native to **South America**.
- ➔ **Climate:** Needs 90–120 frost-free days; 20–30°C ideal; dry harvest preferred.
- ➔ **Soil/Rainfall:** Well-drained sandy loam; 500–1200 mm rainfall.
- ➔ **Production:** India ranks 2nd globally in production and exports (unmanufactured).
 - ➔ Gujarat leads with 45% share, followed by AP.
- ➔ Tobacco Board (Guntur) supports farmers and promotes exports.

Various steps taken to tackle the tobacco epidemic

➔ Global Initiatives:

- ➔ **WHO FCTC:** Ratified by 180+ countries; India joined in 2005.
- ➔ **3 by 35 Initiative (WHO):** Aims to raise prices of tobacco, alcohol, sugary drinks by 50% by 2035.

➔ India Initiatives:

- ➔ **COTPA, 2003:** Bans public smoking, sale to minors.
- ➔ **Packaging Rules, 2022:** Mandate graphic health warnings
- ➔ **NTCP:** Reduces tobacco use and supply.
- ➔ **E- Cigarettes ban 2019.**

Conclusion

- ➔ Implementing robust monitoring systems, **increasing tobacco taxation and prices**, strong legislations with strong enforcement, efforts to raise awareness and addressing tobacco industry interference can be effective in **tackling the tobacco epidemic**.

6.7. Global Gender Gap 2025

Why in the News?

- ➔ **Global Gender Gap Report 2025** released.

About Global Gender Gap Index

- ➔ By **World Economic Forum**
- ➔ Measures gender parity across four dimensions: **Economic, Education, Health, and Political**.
- ➔ Parity score of 1 indicates full parity and 0 denotes complete inequality.

India's Overall Performance (2025)

- ➔ **Economic Participation and Opportunity:** Performance improved; economic participation rose 0.9% to 40.7%.
- ➔ **Educational Attainment:** India scored 97.1%, showing gains in female literacy and higher education.
- ➔ **Health and Survival:** Higher parity due to improved sex ratio and life expectancy, despite overall decline in life expectancy.
- ➔ **Political Empowerment:** Parity dropped by 0.6 points. Female MPs declined from 14.7% to 13.8%; women ministers from 6.5% to 5.6%.

Key Findings

- ➔ **India: Ranked 131st out of 148 countries** (down from 129 in 2024), though score improved to 0.644.
- ➔ **South Asia:** Bangladesh ranked 24, Nepal 125, Sri Lanka 130, Bhutan 119; all ahead of India.
- ➔ **Global:** Iceland topped for 16th year. Gender gap over 30%; full parity may take 123 years.

Challenges for India

➔ Social:

- ➔ Female literacy (65.46%) lags males (82.14%).
- ➔ Child marriage at 23.3%; rising female suicides; 13 lakh+ missing women (2019–21).
- ➔ Patriarchy, caste, digital divide—only 33% women use internet (NFHS-5).

➔ Economic: Women's unpaid care work is 3.1% of GDP; 97% work in unorganized sectors.

➔ Health: 57% women anaemic, MMR at 97, poor reproductive health.

- ➔ **Prevalence of Anemia:** Nearly 57% of Indian women in the 15 to 49 age group are anaemic as reported by National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-5 which reduces their ability to learn, work, or carry pregnancies safely.
- ➔ **Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR):** It is 97 in 2018–20 less than 70 as recommended by WHO by 2030.
- ➔ **Reproductive Health:** Around 50 million women in India suffer from reproductive health problems.

➔ Political: Declining participation.

Government Initiatives

- ➔ Nari Shakti Vandan Adhinyam
- ➔ POSHAN Abhiyaan
- ➔ Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme

- ➔ Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana
- ➔ One Stop Centre (OSC)
- ➔ Universalization of Women Helpline

Conclusion

Expanding women's participation in the workforce, strengthening leadership pipelines, improving skills-to-work transitions, enhancing policy implementation, and ensuring inclusive outcomes in global trade is needed to ensure improvement in Gender parity.

6.8. News in Shorts

6.8.1. WHO Report On Social Connection

WHO Report: 'From Loneliness to Social Connection'

- ➔ Released by WHO Commission on Social Connection; highlights health and societal impacts of loneliness and isolation.

Definitions

- ➔ **Social Connection:** Involves relationships with family, friends, peers, and coworkers.
- ➔ **Social Disconnection:** Includes **loneliness** (gap between desired and actual connection) and **social isolation** (few or infrequent relationships).

Key Findings

- ➔ 1 in 6 globally feels lonely; youth (13–29) most affected.
- ➔ 1 in 3 older adults and 1 in 4 teens are socially isolated.
- ➔ Loneliness causes 871,000 deaths; harms mental health, learning, and productivity.

Drivers of Social Isolation and Loneliness



Life Transitions



Weak Community Infrastructure



Living Alone



Low Income / Education



Marginalization



Poor Health



Unhealthy Use of Digital Technologies

6.8.2. Performance Grade Index (PGI) 2.0

About PGI

- ➔ **Genesis:** 2017, revamped as PGI 2.0 in 2021.
- ➔ **Released by:** Ministry of Education
- ➔ **Data sources:** UDISE+, NAS, PM-POSHAN, PRABAND and Vidyanjali.
- ➔ Assesses States/UTs on 1000 points across 73 indicators in 6 domains.

Key Findings of the Report

- ➔ **No state/UT** achieved the **top four grades**
- ➔ **Chandigarh ranked highest (Prachesta-1); Meghalaya lowest (Akanshi-3).**
- ➔ 24 improved; 12 saw decline.
- ➔ Inter-state disparity declined.

6.8.3. State of World Population Report 2025

About the Report

- ➔ UNFPA's SWP 2025 report titled **"The Real Fertility Crisis"** emphasizes reproductive agency as the true global fertility challenge.
- ➔ Highlights unmet fertility aspirations like unintended or underachieved pregnancies.
- ➔ Urges policies prioritizing rights-based choices over population control, enabling people to form families they truly desire.

6.8.4. Global Education Monitoring 2024 Report

- ➔ Report mandated by UNESCO's 'Education 2030 Incheon Declaration' monitors SDG 4 and related SDGs.

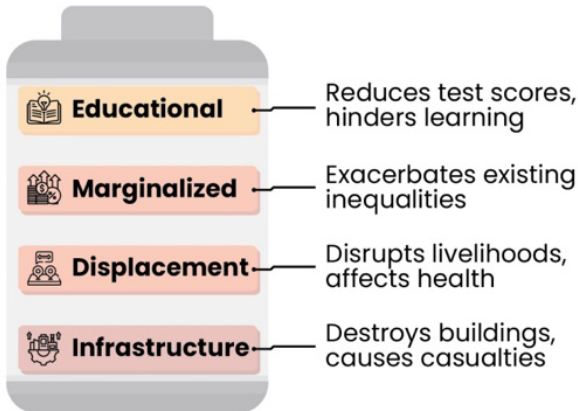
Key findings

- ➔ 75% of extreme weather events closed schools, affecting 5 million.
- ➔ India study: early rainfall shocks harmed language, math, and skills.

- ➔ Fast progress in primary out-of-school rates; slow in lower secondary and gender gaps.
- ➔ Education's climate role underrepresented; SDG 4 in only 2 of 72 climate initiatives.

Recommendations: Integrate climate education, train educators, build resilient infrastructure, include education in climate finance, and engage diverse stakeholders.

Impact of Climate Change on Education



6.8.5. Gender Budgeting Knowledge Hub Portal

Portal Launch: The Union Ministry of Women and Child Development launched the Gender Budgeting Knowledge Hub Portal at the National Consultation on Gender Budgeting.

About the Portal:

- ➔ A centralized repository of tools like policy briefs, best practices, and gender-disaggregated data.
- ➔ For use by central/state ministries and stakeholders.
- ➔ Includes proposal submission for gender budgeting training.

About Gender Budgeting:

- ➔ Integrates gender equality into planning and budgeting.
- ➔ Analyses budgets for gender impact, prioritization, and allocations.
- ➔ **Need in India:** Ensures gender-sensitive policies, responsive governance, participatory budgeting, and legal framework strengthening.

Gender Budgeting Timeline

- **2005-06:** Gender Budgeting Adopted by Government of India (Gol)
- **2008-09:** Child Budgeting Adopted by Gol
- **2024-25:** Revision of Gender Budget Statement (GBS) Format

VISION IAS DAKSHA MAINS MENTORING PROGRAM 2026

DAKSHA MAINS MENTORING PROGRAM 2026

(A Strategic Revision, Practice, and Enrichment Mentoring Program for Mains Examination 2026)



DATE

1 August

DURATION

5 Months

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROGRAMME



Highly experienced and qualified team of mentors



Emphasis on score maximization and performance improvement



Scheduled group sessions for strategy discussions, live practice, and peer interaction



Personalized one-to-one sessions with mentors



Well-structured revision and practice plan for GS Mains, Essay & Ethics



Subject-wise strategy documents based on thorough research



Access to Daksha Mains Practice Tests



Continuous performance assessment, monitoring and smart interventions



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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



7.1. Axiom-4 Mission

Why in the News?

- ➔ The **Axiom-4 Mission** successfully returned on July 15, 2025.

About Axiom-4 (Ax-4) Mission

- ➔ **4th private astronaut mission**, to the **ISS** by **Axiom Space** in collaboration with **NASA** and **SpaceX**.
- ➔ **14-day mission** launched aboard a **SpaceX Dragon Spacecraft** via **Falcon 9 launch** from NASA's Kennedy Space Centre.
 - ➔ **Falcon 9** reusable launch vehicle and **Dragon spacecraft** is reusable crew module for carrying astronauts into space.
- ➔ **Astronauts:** Shubhanshu Shukla (India), Peggy Whitson (USA), Sławosz Uznański (Poland), and Tibor Kapu (Hungary).
 - ➔ Shubhshu is the first Indian on ISS and second Indian in space after Rakesh Sharma (1984.)
- ➔ **Aim:** To "realize the return" to human spaceflight for **India, Poland, and Hungary**.
- ➔ **ISRO led studies** include, Crop growth in space, Cyanobacteria for life support, Space Microalgae as food/ fuel, Myogenesis and muscle loss, Tardigrades resilience and Cognitive impact of screen use; STEM outreach.

Significance for India

- ➔ Supports Gaganyaan Mission (Shukla is one of four selected astronauts)
- ➔ Boosts global partnerships and space diplomacy
- ➔ Stimulates India's private space sector
- ➔ Inspires youth in STEM fields

Challenges

- ➔ **Technological:** Life support, radiation shielding, re-entry protection, and launch safety
- ➔ **Logistical:** High costs and rigorous astronaut training requirements

About International Space Station (ISS)

- ➔ A **habitable satellite** in Low Earth Orbit (370–460 km), **orbiting Earth every 90 minutes** at ~28,000 km/h.
- ➔ **Partners:** NASA (USA), Roscosmos (Russia), ESA (Europe), JAXA (Japan), and CSA (Canada).
- ➔ **Largest space laboratory**, covering 90% of inhabited Earth.
- ➔ First launched in 1998, operational till at least 2030.

About Gaganyaan Programme

- ➔ India's **first human spaceflight mission**, approved in 2018.
- ➔ **Aim:** Demonstration of **human spaceflight** capability by launching a crew.
- ➔ **Components:** LVM-3 launch vehicle, Orbital Module (Crew + Service Module).
- ➔ Extended to include **Bharatiya Antariksh Station**.

About Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS)

- ➔ **Planned Indian space station** (400–450 km altitude) with five modules.
- ➔ Base module launch in 2028; full station operational by 2035.

Conclusion

Accelerates technological learning ahead of its proposed Gaganyaan mission and also build **critical human capital and infrastructure** for future long-duration spaceflight.

7.2. News in Shorts

7.2.1. Science And Technology (S&T) Clusters Initiatives

S&T Clusters Annual Report 2024–2025” highlighted various initiatives including Kalaanubhav.in.

About the S&T Clusters initiative

- ➔ **Genesis: 2020** based on the recommendations **PM-STIAC**.
- ➔ **Aims:** To bring together stakeholders to deliver demand-driven solutions through innovative ideas.
- ➔ **Working Model:**
 - ➔ Operates: **Consortium-based approach**.
 - ➔ Focuses: **Science and tech-based regional problem-solving**.
- ➔ **Nodal Implementing Agency:** Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) works under the Cabinet Secretary

7.2.2. Critical And Emerging Technologies Index

Index launched to assess how 25 countries perform across five technology sectors: AI, biotechnology, semiconductors, space, and quantum.

- ➔ **Published by** the Harvard Kennedy School.
- ➔ **Identifies six criteria:** geopolitical significance, systemic leverage, GDP contribution, etc.

Key Findings

- ➔ India lags behind U.S., China, and Europe, across most technology sectors.
- ➔ **India trails in critical tech, particularly semiconductor tech.**

7.2.3. Quantum Entanglement-Based Communication Achieved

DRDO & IIT Delhi achieved quantum entanglement based free space communication.

- ➔ Free-space quantum secure communication demonstrated **via a free-space optical link**.
- ➔ **ISRO** demonstrated in **2021**.




About the experiment

- ➔ Part of ‘**Design and development of photonic technologies for free space Quantum Key Distribution (QKD)**’ of DRDO.
- ➔ Exhibited very low Quantum Bit Error Rate (QBER) of less than 7%.

- ➔ **QBER** is **error** between information sent and received and an indicator of **probability of eavesdropping**.

- ➔ **Purpose:** **Real-time applications** in **quantum cybersecurity, long-distance QKD**, and the **future quantum internet**.

Benefits of Entanglement-Based QKD

-  **Functionality:** Ensures secure key sharing even with compromised devices.
-  **Eavesdropping Detection:** Interception disturbs quantum states, revealing intrusion.
-  **Free-space QKD:** Works without costly fibre optics—suitable for tough terrain and dense cities.

What is QKD?

- ➔ **Communication Technology:** Based on **quantum mechanics**, that is, **quantum entanglement and cryptography**.

- ➔ Quantum mechanics explains how **extremely small objects simultaneously** characteristics of both particles and waves have (a disturbance or variation that transfers energy).

♦ Physicists call this the “**wave-particle duality**.”

- ➔ **Key Principles:**

- ➔ **Quantum entanglement:** Particles of same origin, which were once connected, **always stay connected**, even when **separated by vast distances**.
- ➔ **Quantum cryptography:** encryption to secure and transmit data in a way that **cannot be hacked**.

7.2.4. Fiber Optic Drones

Recently used in the **Russia-Ukraine conflict** due to their **resistance to electronic warfare (EW)**.

About Fiber Optic Drones

- ➔ These drones are tethered to the operator using **long fiber optic cables (up to 20 km)** instead of radio links.
 - ➔ Made up of **collection of glass tubes** spun as thin as hairs.
 - ➔ They can support **faster speeds, longer distances, and simultaneous communications**.
 - ➔ Unlike wired cable, fiber **only supports a single communication on a single frequency** at one time.

- ➔ No radio link: They cannot be jammed or intercepted by EW systems.

Other Uses of Fibre Optic Drones



Live Broadcasting: HD, low-latency video for media events



Industrial Inspections: Data collection in complex sites like **power plants**



Environmental Monitoring: Reliable operation in remote or tough terrains



Reliable Data Transfer: Transmit high-resolution, real-time video, even in dense urban or forested areas

7.2.5. DHRUVA (Digital Hub for Reference and Unique Virtual Address)

DoP has released comprehensive document for **DHRUVA**, a national-level **Digital Address Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)**.

About DHRUVA

- ➔ Developed by DoP to provide **unique digital address for every home in India** using a **geo-coded framework**.
- ➔ **Aim:** Establish **address management** as foundational infrastructure for governance, service delivery, and user experience.
- ➔ **Enables Address-as-a-Service (AaaS).**
- ➔ 2 Layers:
 - ➔ **DIGIPIN: 10- digit alpha-numeric code** based on 4x4 m geospatial grids.
 - ➔ **Digital Address Layer: Consent-based system**, user-friendly address labels.
- ➔ **Key Features:** Privacy; Openness; Scalability; Transparency, Innovation, etc.

7.2.6. Tianwen-2 Probe

Launched by China to return samples from an asteroid near Mars.

- ➔ **Tianwen-1 probe (2021)** landed on mars' surface.
- ➔ **Tianwen-3**, scheduled for (launch) around 2028, aims to collect and bring samples back to Earth from Mars while **Tianwen-4** aims to explore **Jupiter** around 2030.

About Tianwen-2 probe

- ➔ **Launch Vehicle:** Long March 3-B rocket.
- ➔ **Aim:** Collect samples from the **asteroid 2016HO3** and explore the **main-belt comet 311P**, which lies even further from the Earth than Mars.

7.2.7. India's First Gene-Edited Sheep Produced

India's first gene-edited sheep developed by Kashmir University and ICAR using **CRISPR-Cas9 technology**.

About CRISPR-Cas9

- ➔ Works on **cut-and-paste mechanism** for **DNA Strands**.
- ➔ **Nobel Prize for Chemistry (2020).**

About the research


- ➔ Edited **Myostatin gene** in a lamb, boosting muscle growth by **30%.**
- ➔ **No foreign DNA** added, unlike **transgenic methods**, making it safer and more acceptable.
- ➔ Builds on earlier gene-edited buffalo embryo by NDRI.

Ethical Concerns

- ➔ Editing traits may lead to **the creation of designer babies**, potentially creating a divide.
- ➔ Risks: **Eugenics, Off-target effects, mosaicism** and **animal welfare.**

UNESCO's **International Bioethics Committee** monitors global implications.

What is Gene Editing



Gene Editing

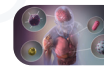
Precise modification of an organism's DNA

Purpose: Add | Remove | Alter genes

Enable targeted changes in genetic makeup

Tools Used: CRISPR-Cas9, TALENS, Zinc Finger Nucleases

A. Somatic Cell Editing (Non-Heritable)

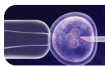


Targets Body cells (eg., skin, liver)

Affects: Only the treated person **Changes** don't pass to offspring

Used for: Treating cancers Genetic disorders like sickle cell anemia

B. Germline Cell Editing (Heritable)



Affects: Every cell of the resulting individual

Changes are inherited by future generations

Used for: Preventing inherited diseases (experimental stage)

	Somatic Editing	Germline Editing
Cell Type	Body (non-reproductive) cells	Reproductive cells or embryo
Heritability	Not heritable	Heritable
Scope of impact	Localized (specific organs)	Whole organism & descendants
Ethical Concerns	Fewer	High
Clinical Use	Active in trials	Mostly restricted/experimental

7.2.8. HIV Prevention Drug Approved

US FDA approves new HIV prevention drug Lenacapavir

- ➔ Approval supports **WHO prequalification**, accelerating national regulatory approvals.
- ➔ WHO's Prequalification of Medicines Programme ensures **quality, safety and efficacy** of medicines for procurement agencies.

About Lenacapavir

- ➔ An antiretroviral drug used **as Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)** for HIV prevention in at-risk, HIV-negative individuals.
- ➔ WHO currently recommends **oral PrEP, dapivirine vaginal ring**, and **injectable cabotegravir (CAB-LA)**.

About HIV

- ➔ HIV **attacks the immune system** by destroying CD4 cells.
- ➔ **Transmitted** via blood, semen, vaginal fluids, breast milk, or mother-to-child.
- ➔ **Treated** with antiretroviral therapy (ART); untreated HIV can progress to AIDS.
- ➔ Over **2.5 million people in India with HIV**.

India's Initiatives



National AIDS Control Programme Phase-V (2021-26) aims for 80% reduction in new infections.



HIV and AIDS (Prevention and Control) Act 2017 prohibits discrimination against HIV-positive individuals.



Committed to ending HIV/AIDS as a **public health threat** by 2030.



Youth-focused initiatives like **Red Ribbon Clubs** in educational institutions.

7.2.9. Weight Loss Drug

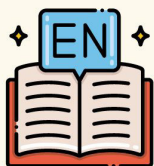
Danish pharma company Novo Nordisk **launched its weight loss drug Wegovy in India**.

- ➔ Drug **semaglutide**, marketed under brand name Wegovy, will be available in the form of injections to be administered once a week.
 - ➔ Semaglutide, works as an appetite suppressant by imitating a hormone called **glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1)**.
 - ◆ GLP-1 is an intestinal hormone released after eating, and usually makes people feel fuller.
- ➔ Other weight loss drugs: **Mounjaro** (made of tirzepatide).

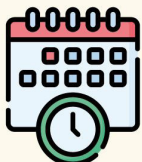
All India GS Mains PYQs plus

Test Series 2025

(Decode Past to Master the Present)

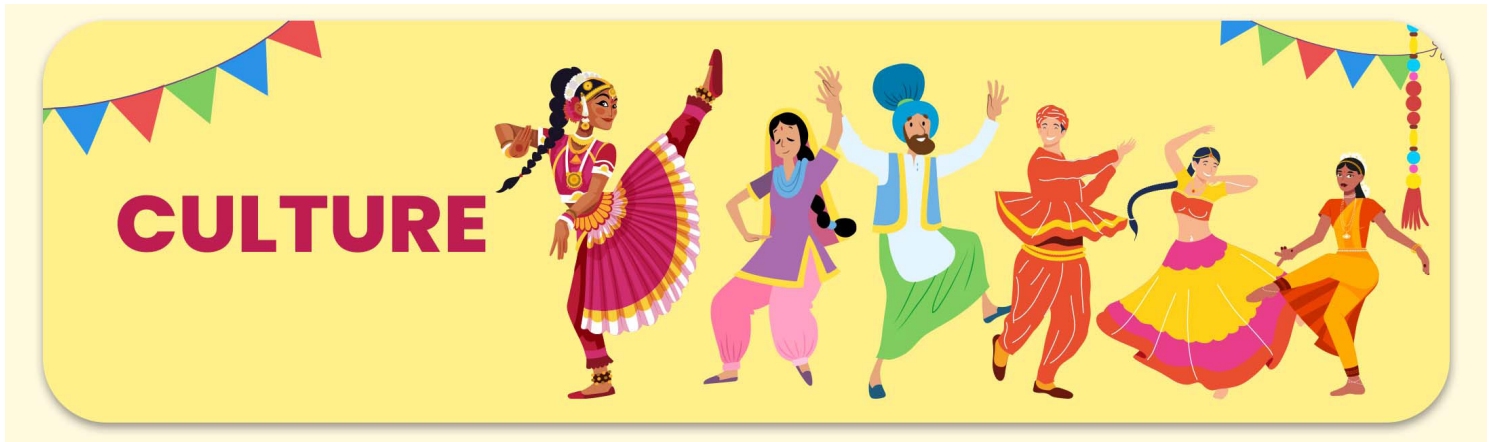


**Medium
English**



**Start
27th July**





8.1. INS Kaundinya and Tankai method

Why in the News?

- The Indian Navy formally inducted and named the **Ancient Stitched ship** as INSV Kaundinya, built using the Tankai method.

About INS Kaundinya

- It is based on a 5th century CE ship depicted in the **paintings of Ajanta Caves**.
- Project initiated through tripartite agreement between **Ministry of Culture, Indian Navy, and M/s Hodi Innovations**.

About the Tankai Method

- It is a **2000-year-old** technique of shipbuilding known as the **stitched shipbuilding method**.
- It involves stitching **wooden planks together rather than using nails**, offering flexibility and durability.

India's Glorious Maritime Heritage

Trade and commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Harappan seals in Mesopotamia and Lothal docks indicate ancient maritime trade. ➤ Rig Veda mentions overseas trade. ➤ Cholas, Cheras, Pandyas had well established trade links with the Roman Empire. ➤ Vijayanagar and the Bahmani kingdom imported horses via port of Goa from Iran, Iraq.
Cultural diffusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ashoka's son, Mahendra, and daughter, Sanghamitra, had sailed from Tamralipti in West Bengal to Ceylon to spread Buddhism. ➤ Spread of Indian religions, architecture and languages. E.g., Borobudur temple in Java, Angkor wat temple in Cambodia.
Naval prowess and maritime Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Magadh navy is considered the world's first recorded naval force and Chanakya's Arthashastra mentions the department of naval warfare. ➤ Rajendra Chola-I led naval campaigns to Sri Lanka and Srivijaya. ➤ Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj built coastal forts like Vijaydurg and Sindhudurg
Maritime diplomacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Meghavarman, ruler of Sri Lanka, sent a missionary to Samudragupta for permission to build a Buddhist temple at Gaya. ➤ Sailendra dynasty sent embassies to Pala court and sought permission to build monastery at Nalanda.

Government Initiatives for Reclaiming Maritime Heritage

- **National Maritime Heritage Complex at Lothal**: To showcase the historic maritime legacy of the country.
- **Project Mausam**: To explore historical and cultural connections among Indian Ocean nations.
- **National Perspective plan Sagarmala program**: To revive and restore eminence in the global maritime sector.

Other famous paintings of Ajanta

- Paintings of various **Bodhisattvas**: **Vajrapani** (symbol of Buddha's power), **Manjusri** (Symbol of Buddha's wisdom) and **Padampani** (Symbol of Buddha's compassion).
- Painting of the reception given to a Persian embassy by **Chalukyan King Pulakeshin II**.
- Painting of **Shibi Jataka** (king Shibi offers flesh to save a pigeon), **Matriposhaka Jataka** (an ungrateful person saved by an elephant discloses its location).

8.2. News in Shorts







8.2.1. Emblems and Names (Prevention of Improper Use) Act, 1950

Supreme Court dismissed plea with respect to honoring legacy of a freedom fighter under **Emblems and Names (Prevention of Improper Use) Act, 1950**.

About Emblems Act:

- Aim: Prevents misuse of certain emblems** and names for professional and commercial purposes or for trade mark, or patents without Central Government permission.
- Defines Emblems:** Emblem Includes any **emblem, seal, flag, insignia, coat-of-arms or pictorial representation**.
- Scope:** Applies across India and to Indian citizens abroad.

Protected Items under Emblem Act

Item	Description
 International Organizations	UN, WHO, FIFA, Olympic Committee
 Religious Organizations	Ramakrishna Mission, Sai Baba Trust
 Government Institutions	Buildings included
 National Symbols	Medals included
 Government Emblems	Names, seals, insignia, coat-of-arms
 Protected Names / Pictures	Shivaji Maharaj, Gandhiji, Nehru, Indira Gandhi or PM of India cannot be used commercially

8.2.2. Kumbakonam Vetrilai and Thovalai Maanikka Maalai

Kumbakonam vetrilai and Thovalai maanikka maalai from **Tamil Nadu** were granted a Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

About Kumbakonam Vetrilai

- It is a **betel (pan) leaf**.
- It is grown in Thanjavur's fertile **Cauvery River basin**.
- It is known for its high **antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties**, due to the presence of chavicol.

About Thovalai maanikka maalai

- It is a special type of garland that is made only in Thovalai.
- The flowers are folded and arranged in patterns to create appearance of gems (especially rubies) in a geometrically manner.

About the GI tag

- It is a sign used on products that have a specific **geographical origin** and **possess qualities or a reputation due to origin**.
- Administered by the **Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act of 1999**.
- Part of **intellectual property rights** under **Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement**.
- Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade**, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, awards GIs.
- The registration of a GI tag shall be for **ten years (can be renewed)**.
- Uttar Pradesh** holds the highest number of GI tags.

8.2.3. Word Test Championship

South Africa recently won the World Test Championship against titleholder Australia.

About World Test Championship (WTC)

- Genesis:** In **2019**; **Teams playing WTC:** The Top nine test teams of the world.
- Format:** Each team plays three home and three away series.
 - Each match in a **bilateral test series** contributes points towards the WTC standings over a two-year cycle.
 - Each series consists of a minimum of two (2) Tests, and a maximum of five (5) Tests.
 - The top two teams (as per **points percentage system and not on matches won**) compete in finals.

ETHICS



9.1. Values of Mahatma Gandhi and Sree Narayan Guru

Introduction

- India marked 100 years of the historic 1925 conversation between Sree Narayana Guru and Mahatma Gandhi at **Sivagiri Mutt, Kerala**. The dialogue focused on Vaikom Satyagraha, untouchability, non-violence, and upliftment of the downtrodden.

About Sree Narayana Naryan Guru (1856–1928)

- Born in **Chembazhanthi, Kerala**.
- Founded **SNDP** (1903) for marginalized uplift.
- Promoted Advaita Vedanta.
- Consecrated Shiva Linga at Aruvippuram.

Views of Sree Narayana Guru and Mahatma Gandhi on Various Aspects

Aspect	Sree Narayana Guru	Mahatma Gandhi
Social Reform	Opposed caste as artificial, promoting " One Caste, One Religion, One God " and urged gradual, educative caste erasure.	Gandhiji opposed untouchability but supported Varnashrama, viewing varnas as natural occupational classifications of society.
Religious Views	He believed all religions could lead to spiritual liberation.	He viewed all religions as moral paths to truth and condemned politics divorced from ethical, spiritual values.
Temple Entry & Social Equality	Opened temples to all castes	Supported temple entry movements and the rights of Dalits.
Education	He saw education as key to progress, fighting social evils, and empowering women equally.	He promoted Nai Talim , blending manual work with academics, stressing vocational skills and mother tongue education.

9.2. Integral Humanism (Ekatm Manavvad)

Introduction

In the 1960s, Deendayal Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism emphasized dignity, harmony, and solidarity for India's holistic development.

About Integral Humanism Philosophy (Ekatma Manav Darshan)

- Proposed** by Deendayal Upadhyaya in the 1960s, it seeks a dignified life for all by balancing individual and societal needs.
- It integrates spiritual, social, and economic aspects of life, centered around **Purusharthas i.e. Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha**.


- ➔ It **opposes Western ideologies** like capitalist individualism and Marxist socialism, aiming for an indigenous development model.
- ➔ **Key principles:**
 - ➔ Primacy of whole, no part
 - ➔ Supremacy of Dharma
 - ➔ Autonomy of society

Core tenets in contemporary times

- ➔ **Cultural nationalism** blending tradition with modernity.
- ➔ **Social harmony** and caste eradication.
- ➔ **Antyodaya:** Upliftment of the poorest.
 - ➔ His vision of '**education for all**' and '**har hath ko kam, har khet ko pani**' was seen culminating in his idea of Economic Democracy.
- ➔ Ethical, transparent governance (Dharma Rajya).
- ➔ **Decentralization**, self-reliant village economy.

About Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay (1916–1968)

- ➔ Indian philosopher, economist, political activist from Mathura
- ➔ **Books:** Samrat Chandragupt, Jagatguru Shankaracharya
- ➔ Edited Panchajanya and Swadesh
- ➔ Shared Gandhian ideas like Sarvodaya, Gram Swaraj, and opposed untouchability and social injustice.



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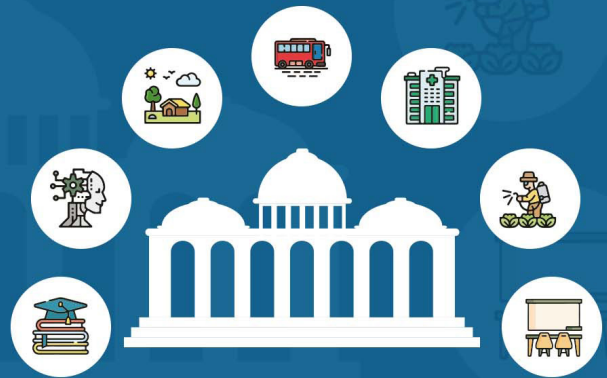
DELHI : 30 JULY, 8 AM | 7 AUGUST, 11 AM | 14 AUGUST, 8 AM | 19 AUGUST, 8 AM | 22 AUGUST, 11 PM | 22 AUGUST, 11 AM | 26 AUGUST, 8 AM | 30 AUGUST, 8 AM

GTB Nagar Metro (Mukherjee Nagar): 10 JULY, 8 AM | 29 JULY, 6 PM

हिन्दी माध्यम 7 अगस्त, 2 PM

AHMEDABAD: 12 JULY	BENGALURU: 22 JULY	BHOPAL: 27 JUNE	CHANDIGARH: 18 JUNE
HYDERABAD: 30 JULY	JAIPUR: 5 AUG	JODHPUR: 10 AUG	LUCKNOW: 22 JULY
			PUNE: 14 JULY

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

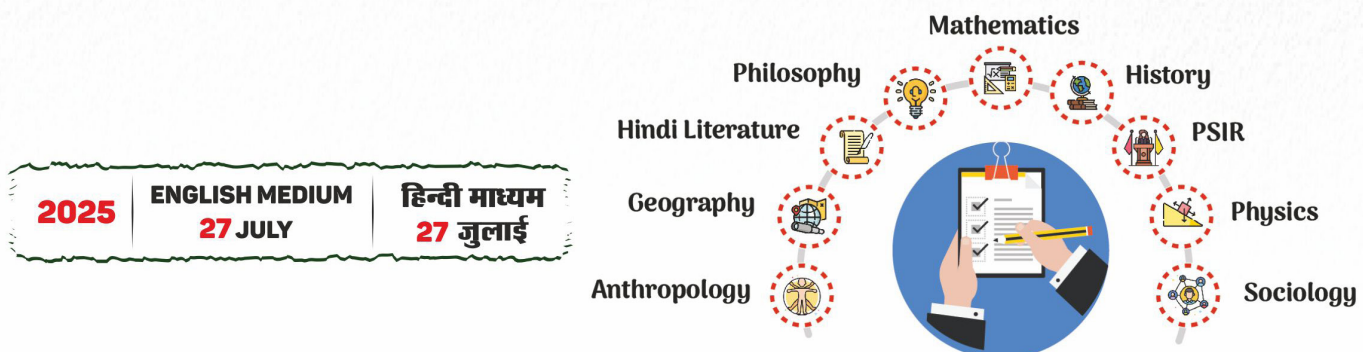


10.1. Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Electric Passenger Cars in India

Why in the News?

- ➔ Ministry of Heavy Industries notified the Guidelines for Scheme.
- ➔ **Features:**
- ➔ **Ministry & Implementation:** Run by Ministry of Heavy Industries; executed by a Project Management Agency (PMA).
- ➔ **Tenure:** 5 years or as notified.
- ➔ **Eligible Investments:** Only new plant, machinery, charging infra, and equipment qualify; no refurbished assets.
- ➔ **Eligibility Criteria:**
 - ➔ ₹10,000 crore global auto revenue
 - ➔ ₹3,000 crore global fixed assets
 - ➔ ₹4,150 crore investment in India within 3 years
 - ➔ 25% DVA in 3 years; 50% DVA in 5 years
 - ➔ Bank guarantee mandatory
- ➔ **Performance Norms:** EVs must meet PLI Auto scheme benchmarks.
- ➔ **Key Benefits:**
 - ➔ Import up to 8,000 e-4W CBUs/year at 15% duty.
 - ➔ Concession valid for 5 years.

OPTIONAL TEST SERIES



QUICK FACTS



Topics	Key facts/Data
50 Years of Emergency	Major Constitutional Amendments during Emergency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ 38th Amendment (1975): Barred judicial review of Emergency declaration ➔ 39th Amendment (1975): It introduced changes in the method of deciding election disputes ➔ 42nd Amendment (1976): Gave primacy to Directive Principles over Fundamental Rights under article 31C; Curtailment of powers of Supreme Court and High Court ➔ Extended Lok Sabha term from 5 to 6 years.
Personality Rights	Important Judicial pronouncements on Personality rights in India <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Arun Jaitley vs Network Solutions Private Limited and Ors case, 2011 (Delhi HC): Popularity or fame of an individual will be no different on the internet than in reality. ➔ Rajinikanth v. Varsha Productions (Madras HC, 2015): Madras HC ruled that using a celebrity's name, image, or style without consent violates personality rights.
Adi Karmyogi Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ The Ministry of Tribal Affairs launched the Adi Karmyogi Programme. ➔ It seeks to emphasize citizen-centric ideation and delivery.
Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)	About SCO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Genesis: Emerged from "Shanghai Five" mechanism (1996) and officially established in 2001 by Russia, China, Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. ➔ Key Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Strengthen mutual trust and friendship between Member States. ➔ Ensure peace, security and stability in the region. ➔ Promote democratic, fair international political and economic order.
World Trade Organization	About WTO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Genesis: ➔ 1995 post the Marrakesh Agreement. ➔ Successor to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). ➔ 1986-94 Uruguay Round negotiations led to WTO's creation. ➔ Functions: Administering Trade Agreements, Forum for trade negotiations, settling trade disputes, reviewing national trade policies.
Group of Seven (G7)	About Group of Seven (G7) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Genesis: 1975 in response to energy crisis for economic cooperation. ➔ An informal bloc of industrialized democracies: France, Germany, Italy, UK, Japan, US, and Canada. ➔ Russia was member 1998-2014 (called G8) until Crimea annexation led to suspension. ➔ Purpose: Annual meetings on global issues like economic governance, international security, and energy policy.

Zangezur Corridor	About Zangezur Corridor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Location: It is a proposed 43-kilometer transport route through Armenia's Syunik Province. ➔ Objective: Connecting Azerbaijan's Baku Port in Caspian Sea to the Nakhchivan Autonomous Region and further to Turkey. ➔ India's concerns: It can undermine India's investments in Chabahar Port and International North South Corridor (INSTC) by offering a competing pathway, reducing India's regional leverage.
Quick Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ India's quick commerce sector is expected to grow 75-100% year-on-year. ➔ "Dark Store" refers to a retail outlet or warehouse solely used for processing online orders and not accessible to the public.
Aviation Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ India is the third-largest aviation market globally in terms of passenger traffic (>350 million). ➔ 15% of pilots in India are women, compared to a global average of 5%. ➔ The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is the regulatory body for civil aviation safety. ➔ The Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) investigates accidents involving aircraft with an All-up Weight (AUW) of more than 2250 kg or Turbojet aircraft.
Asset Monetization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Asset monetization is the process of creating new revenue sources by unlocking the economic value of underutilised public assets. ➔ National Land Monetization Corporation (NLMC) is a 100% government-owned company for monetizing non-core assets of CPSEs.
Financing for Sustainable Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ The Sevilla Commitment focuses on catalysing investment for sustainable development, addressing the debt crisis, and reforming the international financial architecture. ➔ New financing mechanisms include Debt-for-Development Swap Programme and Debt "Pause Clause" Alliance.
Sustainable Development Report (2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ For the first time, India has entered the top 100 in the SDG Index, ranking 99th out of 167 countries in the Sustainable Development Report (2025). ➔ India's score is 67 out of 100. ➔ The SDG Index is released as part of the annual Sustainable Development Report by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UNSDSN) since 2016. ➔ None of the 17 Global Goals are on track to be fully achieved by 2030.
Digital Payment Intelligence Platform (DPIP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ DPIP will be developed as a Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) under the supervision of the RBI. ➔ It aims to bolster fraud risk management through real intelligence sharing and coordination among banks.
Sagarmala Finance Corporation Limited (SMFCL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ SMFCL is India's first Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) in the maritime sector. ➔ Formerly known as Sagarmala Development Company Limited.
Fifth-Generation Fighter Jet AMCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ US, China, Russia, the UK, Japan, Italy, France, Germany, and Spain have announced development of 6th Gen. ➔ Will have Artificial Intelligence (AI) integration, hypersonic capabilities, unmanned capabilities, etc.
Silver Notice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Silver Notice is the newest addition to the INTERPOL's colour-coded Notices. ➔ INTERPOL's colour-coded notices are international requests for cooperation or alerts
Darkening of the Ocean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ It is Reduction in light penetration into global oceans, shrinking the photic zone. ➔ Photic zone is the sunlit layer (200 meters depth) where 90% of marine life thrives.
ILO Convention 192	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ It urges member states to create national policies on prevention, protection, preparedness, and response to biological hazards.

International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ It is multi-country, multi-agency coalition of 95 big cat range countries for big cat conservation. ➔ Big Cats include Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar & Puma. ➔ Genesis: Launched in April 2023 (occasion of 50 years of India's Project Tiger). ➔ Founding Members (16): Including Armenia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Kenya, Nepal. ➔ India is the host country and Secretariat for IBCA.
Energy Transition Index (ETI), 2025.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ World Economic Forum (WEF) recently released Energy Transition Index (ETI), 2025. Key Findings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Sweden ranked first followed by Finland, Denmark and Norway. ➔ India's rank dropped from rank 63 in 2024 to rank 71 in 2025.
Thirstwave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ At least three consecutive days when evaporative demand exceeds historical 90th percentile. ➔ Evaporative demand measures atmospheric thirst driven by temperature, wind, humidity, sunshine.
Cultural Appropriation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ The act of a dominant culture adopting elements from a marginalized culture disrespectfully or exploitatively. Example: Prada selling sandals resembling GI-tagged Kolhapuri chappals.
Tier-2 Influencers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Content creators from smaller cities (e.g., Jaipur, Patna) who are reshaping India's "cultural capital" (non-economic assets like language and cultural knowledge that enable social mobility, a concept by Pierre Bourdieu).
QS World University Rankings 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ India now has 54 universities in the rankings (up from 11 in 2015), making it the fourth most-represented country. Top Performer: IIT Delhi is the highest-ranked Indian institution at 123rd.
Manosphere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ A network of online communities promoting aggressive masculinity and anti-feminist ideologies
Axiom-4 (Ax-4) Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ The fourth private astronaut mission to the International Space Station (ISS), involving collaboration between Axiom Space, NASA, and SpaceX
DHRUVA (Digital Hub for Reference and Unique Virtual Address)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ An initiative by the Department of Posts to create a unique digital address for every home in India using a 10-digit alpha-numeric code called DIGIPIN
Gene-Edited Sheep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Researchers from Kashmir University and ICAR have produced India's first gene-edited sheep by editing the myostatin gene to boost muscle growth, using CRISPR-Cas9 technology
Weight Loss Drug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ The weight-loss drug Wegovy (semaglutide), which works by mimicking the GLP-1 hormone to suppress appetite, has been launched in India
INS Kaundinya and Tankai Method	<p>About INS Kaundinya</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ It is based on a 5th century CE ship depicted in the paintings of Ajanta Caves. ➔ Project initiated through tripartite agreement between Ministry of Culture, Indian Navy, and M/s Hodi Innovations. <p>About the Tankai Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ It is a 2000-year-old technique of shipbuilding known as the stitched shipbuilding method.

Kumbakonam Vetrilai and Thovalai Maanikka Maalai
About Kumbakonam Vetrilai

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- It is grown in Thanjavur's fertile **Cauvery River basin**.
- It is known for its high **antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties**, due to the presence of chavicol.

About Thovalai maanikka maalai

- It is a special type of garland that is made only in Thovalai.
- The flowers are carefully folded and arranged in precise patterns to create the appearance of gems (especially rubies) in a geometrically manner.

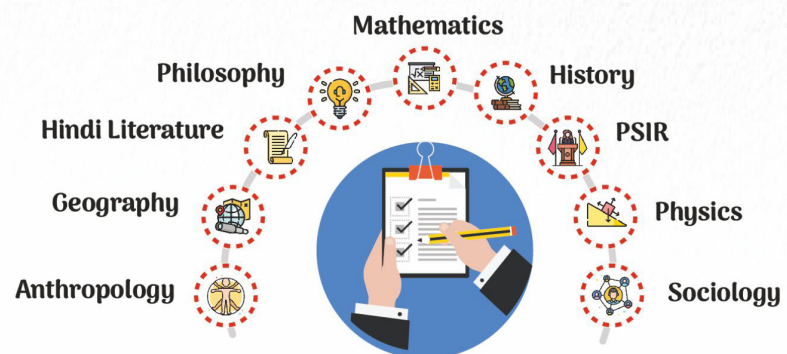
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ACTIVITIES



12.1. MCQS

1. With reference to Narco-analysis test in India, consider the following statements:

1. Involuntary Narco-tests violate both Article 20(3) and Article 21 of the Constitution.
2. Voluntary Narco-tests can be the sole basis for conviction in a criminal trial.
3. The Supreme Court has held that even voluntarily undergone Narco-tests have limited evidentiary value.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1 and 3 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

2. Consider the following statements regarding the Quality Council of India (QCI)

1. It is a statutory body under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
2. It was established on the recommendations of ASSOCHAM, CII, and FICCI.
3. The Chairman of QCI is appointed by the Prime Minister.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

3. With reference to the ECINET app, consider the following statements

1. It provides real-time data on voter turnout during elections.
2. It replaces Form 17C under the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961.
3. It helps in publishing the Index Card, which contains detailed post-election data.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) Only One
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

4. Consider the following statements:

1. India became a full member of SCO in 2017.
2. All decisions in SCO are taken by consensus, and any single objection blocks adoption.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

5. Consider the following statements

1. India is a permanent member of the G7.
2. India participated in the 2025 G7 Summit hosted by Canada.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

6. Which of the following is NOT a function of WTO?

- (a) Administer trade agreements
- (b) Impose economic sanctions
- (c) Settle trade disputes
- (d) Build trade capacity

7. Consider the following statements:

1. India supports the BRI under the SCO framework.
2. The Zangezur Corridor threatens to bypass India's investment in the Chabahar Port.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

8. Which of the following statements about Rural India's consumption patterns is/are correct?

1. The average estimated Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure (MPCE) in rural India rose at a higher rate than urban areas in 2023-24.

2. The urban-rural gap in MPCE has been increasing over the last two years.
3. Non-food items are increasingly dominating average monthly expenses in rural areas.

Select the correct code:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1 and 3 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

9. Consider the following statements regarding Quick Commerce in India:

1. Quick commerce typically guarantees delivery within 3-4 days.
2. "Dark Stores" are retail outlets accessible to the public for quick pickups.
3. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of quick commerce.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

10. With reference to Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in India, consider the following statements:

- (a) Net FDI inflows in India have consistently increased over the past two financial years.
- (b) The automatic route for FDI in India does not require prior approval from the RBI or the Central Government.
- (c) Lottery business is one of the sectors where 100% FDI is allowed through the automatic route.
- (d) Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (e) 1 only
- (f) 2 only
- (g) 1 and 3 only
- (h) 2 and 3 only

11. Which of the following institutional frameworks for aviation security in India is responsible for laying down Aviation Security Standards as per Annexure 17 to the Chicago Convention?

- (a) Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)
- (b) Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India (AERA)
- (c) Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS)
- (d) Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB)

12. Which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. The Silver Notice is used to trace and gather information on fugitives' assets.
2. The Red Notice is a request to locate and provisionally arrest an individual pending extradition.
3. INTERPOL notices are binding international warrants enforceable by member countries.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only

- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

13. Consider the following statements regarding the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution

1. It is hosted by the World Health Organization (WHO)
2. It is part of a scientific trio that includes IPCC and IPBES

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

14. Consider the following statements regarding the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)

1. The headquarters of CDRI is located in Geneva, Switzerland.
2. CDRI was launched by India at the UN Climate Action Summit in 2019.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

15. Ocean darkening impacts which layer of the ocean most directly?

- (a) Aphotic zone
- (b) Benthic zone
- (c) Photic zone
- (d) Neritic zone

16. What is a Thirstwave?

- (a) A period of three or more days of excessive rainfall leading to crop flooding
- (b) A term used to describe extreme humidity in coastal regions
- (c) A period of at least three consecutive days when daily evaporative demand exceeds its historical 90th percentile
- (d) A weather pattern where dry winds blow continuously for more than a week

17. According to the WHO's report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic 2025, which MPOWER measure has been the least adopted globally?

- (a) Warning people about the dangers of tobacco.
- (b) Enforcing bans on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship.
- (c) Raising taxes on tobacco.
- (d) Offering help to quit tobacco use.

18. Consider the following statements regarding the QS

World University Rankings 2026:

1. India is the most represented country in the rankings, surpassing the US and UK.
2. IIT Delhi is the highest-ranked Indian institution.
3. The rankings are published by the World Economic Forum.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
 (b) 2 only
 (c) 1 and 3 only
 (d) 1, 2 and 3

19. Which of the following statements about the Axiom-4 Mission is correct?

- (a) It was launched by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
 (b) The mission included astronauts from India, Russia, Poland, and Hungary.
 (c) The mission was launched aboard a SpaceX

Dragon Spacecraft using a Falcon 9 launch vehicle.


- (d) The primary objective was to deploy a new module for the International Space Station.

20. With reference to the Emblems and Names (Prevention of Improper Use) Act, 1950, consider the following statements:

1. The Act prohibits the use of certain emblems and names for commercial purposes without the prior approval of the Central Government.
2. The Act applies only within the territory of India and not to Indian citizens residing abroad.
3. It includes seals, flags, and pictorial representations under the definition of "emblems".

Which of the statements given above is/are **correct**?

- (a) Only One
 (b) Only two
 (c) Only three
 (d) None



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12.2. True/False Statements

1. Rights under Article 19 are automatically suspended if National Emergency is imposed due to war or external aggression. (T/F)
2. Adi Karmyogi Programme aim is to build a cadre of highly motivated officers and change makers dedicated to grassroots transformation. (T/F)
3. Personality rights are not expressly mentioned in any statute in India. (T/F)
4. India is a founding member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). (T/F)
5. The WTO's Dispute Settlement Body is currently non-functional. (T/F)
6. The Zangezur Corridor would connect India directly to Central Asia. (T/F)
7. The primary objective of Asset Monetization is always the disinvestment of public assets. (T/F)
8. In the Sustainable Development Report (2025), none of the 17 Global Goals are on track to be fully achieved by 2030. (T/F)
9. The new Priority Sector Lending (PSL) norms for Small Finance Banks (SFBs) have increased the mandatory allocation to PSL sectors to 75% of ANBC. (T/F)
10. Exercise Khaan Quest is a multilateral exercise. (T/F)
11. PASSEX is a joint naval exercise between Navies of India and UK. (T/F)
12. World Economic Forum (WEF) releases Energy Transition Index (ETI). (T/F)
13. The recently declared Ramsar sites, Khichan and Menar are from Uttar Pradesh. (T/F)
14. About Green India Mission is one of the eight missions under the National Action Plan on Climate Change. (T/F)
15. Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanisms (CBAMs) imposes Carbon price at the border on emissions from imported goods. (T/F)
16. According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2025, India's rank improved from the previous year. (T/F)
17. The "manosphere" is an online community network that advocates for gender equality and supports feminist principles. (T/F)
18. The first-ever batch of female cadets recently graduated from the Indian Military Academy (IMA). (T/F)
19. Tankai Method is a 2000-year-old technique of shipbuilding known as the stitched shipbuilding method. (T/F)
20. Kumbakonam vetrilai and Thovalai maanikka maalai from Tamil Nadu were granted a Geographical Indication (GI) tag. (T/F)

12.3. Mains Practice Questions

1. In the context of emerging technologies such as AI-generated deepfakes and voice cloning, examine the scope and limitations of personality rights in India. (150 words, 10 marks)
2. Critically analyze India's approach to balancing its strategic autonomy and multilateral obligations within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). (150 words, 10 marks)
3. Examine the implications of the Israel-US-Iran conflict on India's foreign policy and economic interests. (150 words, 10 marks)
4. India has emerged as the third-largest aviation market globally, yet several institutional, infrastructural and regulatory challenges persist in ensuring aviation safety. Discuss. (150 words, 10 marks)
5. Despite rising gross FDI inflows, India witnessed a steep fall in net FDI in FY25. Examine the reasons behind this trend and suggest measures to boost net FDI inflows. (150 words, 10 marks)
6. "Coastal zones are economic lifelines yet ecological risk zones." Analyze the vulnerabilities of India's coastal regions to climate change. How is India addressing these risks through national and global initiatives? (150 words, 10 marks)
7. Technology-led crowd management is essential for preventing disasters in a rapidly urbanizing India." Evaluate India's current approach to crowd disaster management in the context of recent incidents and NDMA guidelines. (150 words, 10 marks)
8. While the entry of women into combat roles in the armed forces is a significant step towards gender equality, deep-seated structural and societal challenges persist. Discuss these challenges and suggest measures for creating a more inclusive and effective defense force. (150 words, 10 marks)
9. Despite being the second-largest producer of tobacco, India has shown global leadership in tobacco control. Examine the challenges and policy responses to tackle the tobacco epidemic in India. (150 words, 10 marks)
10. "Ajanta paintings are not only masterpieces of ancient Indian art but also valuable sources of historical, religious, and cultural narratives." Discuss with examples. (150 words, 10 marks)
11. "National Emergency provisions under Article 352 strengthen the Union at the cost of federalism and fundamental rights." Examine this statement in light of the constitutional provisions and their implications. (250 words, 15 marks)

12. WTO reforms have been long overdue. Evaluate India's position and reform priorities in the context of the global trading system. (250 words, 15 marks)
13. "The rise of rural consumer market in India is a testament to inclusive growth, yet it is not without its challenges. Discuss the factors contributing to this growth and critically analyze the concerns associated with it. Suggest measures to ensure the sustainability of this rural consumer-led growth." (250 words, 15 marks)
14. "Asset Monetization is increasingly being viewed as a crucial tool for bridging India's infrastructure investment gaps. In light of this, explain the concept of asset monetization and evaluate its need in the Indian context. What are the key impediments to its successful implementation and suggest strategic interventions to overcome them?" (250 words, 15 marks)
15. "The development of fifth-generation fighter aircraft like AMCA reflects India's pursuit of technological sovereignty and strategic autonomy." In this context, discuss the features and significance of AMCA and highlight the challenges in its implementation. (250 words, 15 marks)
16. Agroforestry is not just a farming practice but a strategic tool for climate resilience and rural sustainability." Discuss the significance of agroforestry in India's sustainable development goals. Also highlight the challenges and recent reforms aimed at promoting it. (250 words, 15 marks)
17. The rise of Tier-2 influencers signifies a major shift in India's cultural landscape, democratizing influence but also presenting new challenges. Critically analyze the impact of this phenomenon on Indian society and its economy. (250 words, 15 marks)
18. The Axiom-4 mission represents a significant milestone for India's space ambitions. Discuss the mission's importance for the Gaganyaan programme and the broader development of India's space ecosystem. Also, analyze the major technological obstacles India faces in launching its own manned space missions. (250 words, 15 marks)
19. With the recent development of India's first gene-edited sheep using CRISPR-Cas9 technology, the debate around gene editing in animals has intensified. Critically analyze the potential benefits of this technology for India's agricultural and livestock sectors, while also addressing the major ethical concerns involved. (250 words, 15 marks)
20. "India's ancient maritime traditions not only shaped its trade and cultural outreach but also laid the foundation for its modern naval and diplomatic initiatives." Examine in the light of recent efforts to reclaim India's maritime heritage. (250 words, 15 marks)


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ANSWERS AND EXPLANATION



13.1. MCQs Answer and Explanation

1. Answer: B.

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is correct: The SC has held that involuntary Narco-tests violate Article 20(3) (right against self-incrimination) and Article 21 (right to personal liberty).
- Statement 2 is incorrect: Voluntary Narco-tests cannot be the sole basis for conviction.
- Statement 3 is correct: Even if done voluntarily, it has limited evidentiary value; only new information discovered may be admissible.

2. Answer: B.

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is incorrect: QCI is a non-profit organisation (not statutory) registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- Statement 2 is correct: It was formed in partnership with industry associations—ASSOCHAM, CII, and FICCI.
- Statement 3 is correct: The Chairman is appointed by the Prime Minister based on industry recommendations.

3. Answer: B.

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is correct: ECINET provides near real-time updates on voter turnout.
- Statement 2 is incorrect: Form 17C is a statutory requirement under the 1961 Rules; ECINET does not replace it.
- Statement 3 is correct: The app aids in the publication of the Index Card, a post-election document with detailed data.

4. Answer: C

Explanation:

- India became a full member of SCO in 2017, along with Pakistan. Hence, Statement 1 is correct.
- All decisions in SCO are taken by consensus. Any single country's objection blocks adoption. Hence, Statement 2 is correct.

5. Answer: B

Explanation:

- India is not a member of G7 but is often invited as an outreach partner. Statement 1 is incorrect.
- India participated in 2025 G7 Summit held in Canada. Statement 2 is correct.

6. Answer B

Explanation:

- WTO does not impose sanctions. Its core functions include:
 - Administering trade agreements.
 - Acting as a forum for negotiations.
 - Settling trade disputes.
 - Reviewing national trade policies
 - Building trade capacity

7. Answer B

Explanation:

- India does not endorse the BRI due to sovereignty issues related to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Hence, Statement 1 is incorrect.
- The Zangezur Corridor would allow Azerbaijan to connect directly to its exclave Nakhchivan, bypassing Armenia and threatening India's strategic investment in Iran's Chabahar Port. Hence, Statement 2 is correct.

8. Answer: B**Explanation:**

- Statement 1 is correct as rural MPCE rose 9.2% compared to urban 8.3%.
- Statement 2 is incorrect as the urban-rural gap in MPCE declined.
- Statement 3 is correct as non-food items are dominating average monthly expenses, mimicking urban consumption patterns.

9. Answer: C**Explanation:**

- Statement 1 is incorrect: quick commerce typically delivers within an hour or less, while e-commerce generally takes 3-4 days.
- Statement 2 is incorrect; Dark Stores are solely for processing online orders and are not accessible to the public.
- Statement 3 is correct; the COVID-19 pandemic boosted demand for contactless deliveries, accelerating quick commerce adoption.

10. Answer: B**Explanation:**

- Statement 1 is incorrect: India's net FDI inflows fell by 96% in FY25 compared to FY24.
- Statement 2 is correct: the automatic route does not require prior approval.
- Statement 3 is incorrect: Lottery Business is an FDI prohibited sector in India.

11. Answer: C

Explanation: The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) lays down Aviation Security Standards per Annex 17 to the Chicago Convention of ICAO.

12. Answer: A.**Explanation:**

- Statement 1 – Correct: The Silver Notice, introduced recently, is specifically meant for tracing and gathering information on assets of fugitives or accused individuals.
- Statement 2 – Correct: The Red Notice is a well-known INTERPOL notice requesting the location and provisional arrest of a person pending extradition.
- Statement 3 – Incorrect: INTERPOL notices are not binding international arrest warrants. They are requests for cooperation, and it is up to member states to act upon them as per their national laws.

13. Answer: B**Explanation:**

Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution is hosted by UNEP, not WHO.

- It is part of a scientific trio that includes IPCC and IPBES

14. Answer: B**Explanation:**

- The headquarters of CDRI is located in New Delhi, not Geneva.
- CDRI was launched by India at the UN Climate Action Summit in 2019.

15. Answer C**Explanation:**

- The photic zone (top 200m) is affected, where most marine life exists by ocean darkening.

16. Answer C**Explanation:**

- A Thirstwave is defined as at least three consecutive days when the daily evaporative demand is greater than its historical 90th percentile.

17. Answer: C.

Explanation: Raising taxes on tobacco.

18. Answer: B.**19. Answer: C****Explanation**

- The mission was a collaboration between Axiom Space, NASA, and SpaceX, and it was launched aboard a SpaceX Dragon Spacecraft by the Falcon 9 launch vehicle.

20. Answer: B.**Explanation:**

- Statement 1 is correct: The Act prohibits the use of specified emblems and names for commercial, professional, or trademark purposes without prior approval from the Central Government.
- Statement 2 is incorrect: The Act applies across India and also to Indian citizens abroad — it has extra-territorial jurisdiction in this regard.
- Statement 3 is correct: The Act includes emblem, seal, flag, insignia, coat-of-arms, or pictorial representation under the definition of an "emblem".

13.2. True/False Answers

Answers

1. T 2. T 3. T 4. F 5. T 6. F 7. F 8. T 9. F 10. T
 11. T 12. T 13. F 14. T 15. T 16. F 17. F 18. F 19. F 20. F

13.3. Approach to the Mains Practice Questions

1. Approach

- **Introduction:** Define personality rights and explain their components (right to publicity and right to privacy).
- **Body:** Highlight threats to personality rights. Also discuss judicial recognition (e.g. Puttaswamy judgment, Rajinikanth case). Analyze limitations in the current legal framework.
- **Conclusion:** Conclude with the need for comprehensive legislation, especially in light of AI misuse.

2. Approach:

- **Intro:** Brief intro to SCO & India's membership
- **Body:** Explain India's principles (anti-terrorism, anti-BRI stance) with Case examples: Pahalgam attack, refusal to endorse BRI. Explain SCO as a tool for Central Asian outreach
- **Conclusion:** Mention India's selective participation & challenges (China-Pakistan axis) with providing way forward. (principle-based diplomacy)

3. Approach:

- **Introduction:** Start with timeline of recent conflict and what is writing briefly reason behind it.
- **Body:** Explain India's diplomatic balancing act amid Trade and connectivity disruptions (Chabahar, IMEC) Diaspora and energy security concerns.
- **Conclusion:** Suggest India's possible mediator role

4. Approach

- **Introduction:** Emphasize India's current status in aviation.
- **Body:** Address issues like manpower shortage, imbalanced capital allocation, and outdated infrastructure.
- **Conclusion:** Briefly mention efforts like alignment with ICAO standards, AAIB establishment, and the Delhi Declaration.

5. Approach

- **Introduction:** Note that India continues to attract significant gross FDI inflows
- **Body:** Reasons like repatriation, rising outward FDI, policy liberalisation, and global economic uncertainty.
- **Conclusion:** Mention reforms like Jan Vishwas Act, PLI schemes, and sectoral cap hikes.

6. Approach:

- **Introduction:** Start by discussing how coastal zones are lifelines.
- **Body:** Mention their vulnerability to the climate change.
- **Conclusion:** suggest way forward to address the challenges.

7. Approach:

- **Introduction:** Start by giving context to some recent stampede instances.
- **Body:** Define stampede as a disaster, and reason behind it.
- **Conclusion:** While giving India's recent approach mention how technology can help here with some best practices example.

8. Approach

- **Introduction:** Begin by acknowledging recent positive developments.
- **Body:** Significance of Women's Participation, Persistent Challenges and Way Forward / Measures
- **Conclusion:** Modern warfare becomes more technology-centric and integrating women effectively is not just an issue of equality but a strategic necessity.

9. Approach

- **Introduction:** Highlight India's dual position as a major tobacco producer and exporter, and also a global leader in tobacco control measures, as recognized by WHO.

- **Body:** Implementation of **COTPA, 2003, NTCP, and Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2019.**
- **Conclusion:** Suggest stronger taxation, strict enforcement, and support for alternative livelihoods in tobacco-growing areas to balance economic and health priorities.

10. Approach

- **Introduction:** Understand the artistic excellence and techniques of Ajanta paintings.
- **Body:** Interpret their religious, philosophical, and moral narratives (primarily Buddhist). Briefly Appreciate their historical value—as in depictions of real events or figures like King Pulakeshin II.
- **Conclusion:** Reflect on how these paintings showcase India's engagement with the world (e.g., Persian embassy) and values (e.g., compassion, sacrifice).

11. Approach

- **Introduction:** Briefly mention Constitutional framework of Article 352 (National Emergency).
- **Body:** Mention constitutional provisions, the impact of its invocation on Centre-State relations, democratic principles, and citizen rights.
- **Conclusion:** Briefly conclude with checks and balances (like special majority, revocation provisions) to prevent misuse.

12. Approach:

- **Introduction:** Start by briefly talking about WTO and current paralysis.
- **Body:** Explain India's demands, concerns associated with WTO.
- **Conclusion:** Suggest global cooperation mechanisms for reform

13. Approach

- **Introduction:** Briefly introducing the recent robust growth in India's rural consumer market and its significance as a new engine for India's consumption-driven economy.
- **Body:** Factors Contributing to Growth, Concerns/Challenges and Measures for Sustainability
- **Conclusion:** Rural India is poised to be the engine for India's consumer-led growth trajectory.

14. Approach

- **Introduction:** Define Asset Monetization, briefly mention NHAI's strategy and the National Monetization Pipeline to provide context.

- **Body:** Explain need for Asset Monetization in India, Models of Asset Monetization in India (briefly mention), Key Impediments in Asset Monetization and Strategic Interventions Required.
- **Conclusion:** How asset monetization is a transformative approach for economic growth and sustainable development.

15. Approach:

- **Introduction:** Explain the technological features of a 5th-generation fighter jet.
- **Body:** discuss the major highlights and the strategic and geopolitical significance of the AMCA project. Assess the challenges in development and production.
- **Conclusion:** Conclude with ways to overcome them.

16. Approach:

- **Introduction:** Define agroforestry and its 2014 policy.
- **Body:** Explain how agroforestry leads to climate resilience and how can it help to sustainable development.
- **Conclusion:** Mentioning the challenges discuss the reforms promoting it.

17. Approach

- **Introduction:** Define "cultural capital" (Bourdieu) and explain how Tier-2 influencers are challenging traditional, metro-centric norms.
- **Body:** Positive Impacts, Challenges and Concerns
- **Conclusion:** Conclude by summarizing that while Tier-2 influencers are heralding a more inclusive and diverse cultural discourse.

18. Approach:

- **Introduction:** Briefly introduce the Axiom-4 mission and mention its context with respect to Gaganyaan mission.
- **Body:** Significance for Gaganyaan and India's Space Ecosystem and Major Technological Obstacles for India:
- **Conclusion:** Mention how this will help India at International level.

19. Approach:

- **Introduction:** Defining gene editing (specifically CRISPR-Cas9) and mention the recent achievement.

- **Body:** Potential Benefits for Agriculture and Livestock and major Ethical Concerns
- **Conclusion:** Conclude by stating that while gene editing holds immense promise for addressing India's food security and agricultural challenges, it is imperative to establish a robust regulatory framework.

20. Approach







- **Introduction:** Briefly Discuss India's historical maritime legacy in trade, culture, and naval power.
- **Body:** Link this legacy with contemporary initiatives (like INSV Kaundinya, Sagarmala, etc.) to reclaim maritime heritage.
- **Conclusion:** Briefly Show how this heritage is being positioned as a tool for soft power and maritime diplomacy in the 21st century.



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14. Self-Evaluation



Progress Tracking Table

Activity Type	Total Questions	Correct Answers	Attempted	Score/Percentage
MCQ's				
True/False Statements				



Monthly Learning Summary

Top 3 Learnings/Insights

1.

2.

3.



Progress Comparison

Previous Month's Score

Current Month's Score

Areas of Improvement



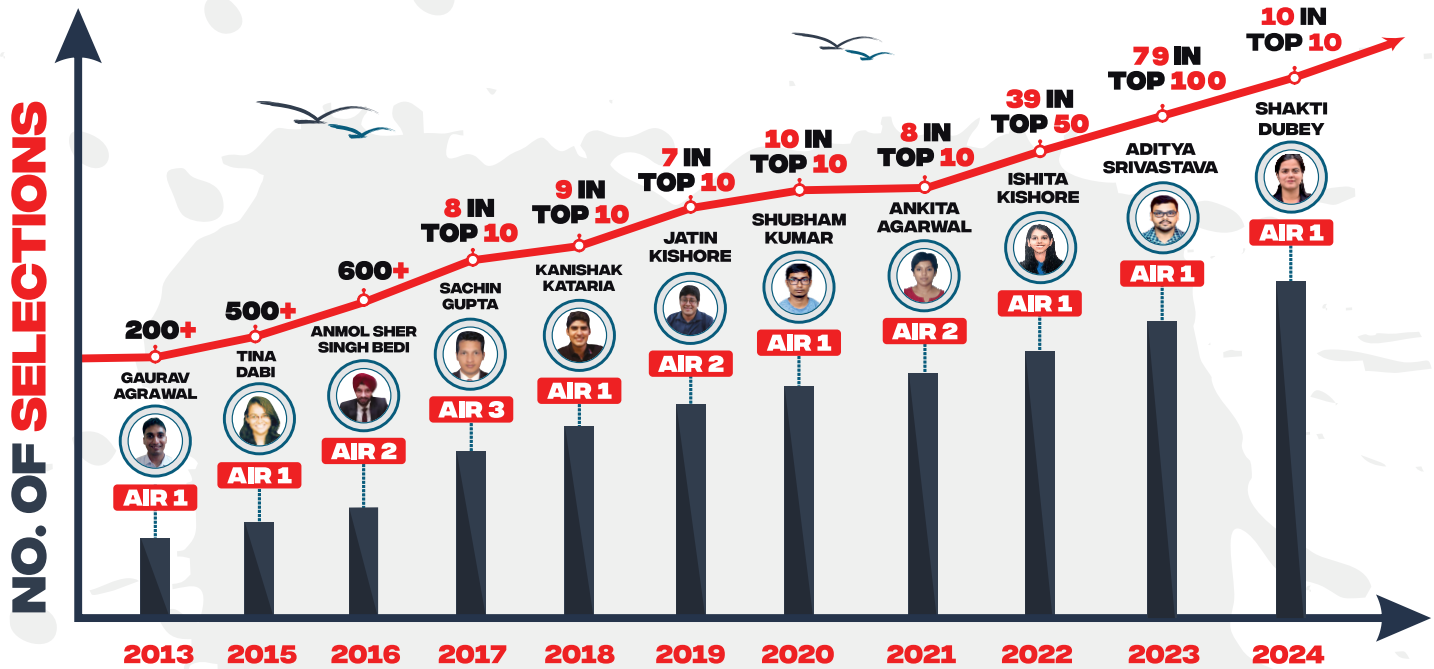
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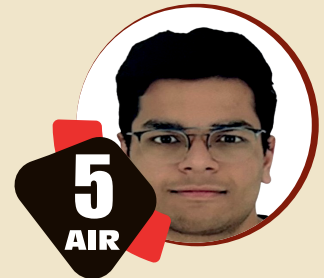
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