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CSE 2024 TOPPERS TESTIMONIAL

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Abhishek Vashishtha
AIR-14, CSE 2024

I am Abhishek Vashishtha, I have secured AIR 14 in CSE 2024. Kalam IAS played an important role in my UPSC journey. I practiced PYQs at Kalam IAS, which helped me understand the exam pattern and improved my answer writing skill.

The face to face evaluation of my answers was very helpful. Interview Video analysis by Ajendra Chaudhary Sir was very useful. The detailed feedback provided to me by him helped me a lot.

Thank you Kalam IAS for being a constant support during my journey.

Abhishek
Abhishek Vashishtha
UPSC CSE Rank 14.



TANMAY
AIR-346, 2024

Hello,
Kalam IAS Team
I am writing this testimony to express my sincere thanks to whole team. Especially mock analysis of interview video was helpful. Daily discussion with Ankit Sir was also helpful. Once again thank you for your efforts in my interview preparation.
Tanmay,
AIR-346,
UPSC CSE 2024



Kanisk Singh
AIR 380, 2024

I am Kanisk, I cleared UPSC CSE-2024 with AIR 380 (Roll No-3007235). My fight with Kalam IAS Academy began when I attempted UPSC Exam just before Prelims 2024. I already knew that the test was about a mental state in my clearing Prelims of 2024. My summary of my experience is as follows:
① Excellent coverage of General Affairs - Very subtle questions compared to other UPSC Exams.
② Youth and death of Gaurav - Static selection was covered by very carefully crafted questions.
③ Spectacular Mock Interview - Not only was the format of the paper covered but also the selection topics were highly probable as future questions. I was confident I will.
④ Excellent Interview Preparation - My entire experience was an extremely high level of preparation. Now I am going to reveal some that in Prelims 2024. My 12th attempt is well.
Thank you
Kanisk Singh



Video Testimonials <https://bit.ly/4jGiyRJ>

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2	How AI can be a solution – not a problem – in the fight against climate change

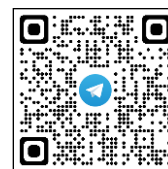
3	Expert Explains: Why Axiom 4 matters
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5	Work underway for changes in two key laws, can open up civil nuclear sector
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2	Prime Minister hails addition of two New Ramsar Sites in Rajasthan
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4	Operation Black Forest - Maoist Stronghold Dismantled
5	PM Modi hails grassroots green initiatives, calls 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' movement for future generations
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2	How AI in criminal justice spark a human rights crisis for the marginalised



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QUOTES OF THE DAY

June 2025

Sl No	Quote
1	"No one leaves home unless home is the mouth of a shark." – WARSAN SHIRE
2	"The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them." – IDA B WELLS
3	"A different language is a different vision of life"– FEDERICO FELLINI
4	"An egg today is better than a hen tomorrow"– BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
5	"We can judge the heart of a man by his treatment of animals."– IMMANUEL KANT
6	"The most important things in our intimate lives can't be discussed with strangers, except in books."– EDMUND WHITE
7	"I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change. I am changing the things I cannot accept." – ANGELA DAVIS
8	"History in its broadest aspect is a record of man's migrations from one environment to another." – ELLSWORTH HUNTINGTON
9	"Tip the world over on its side and everything loose will land in Loss Angeles." – FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT
10	"The job of the artist is always to deepen the mystery." – FRANCIA BACON
11	"There is nothing fast or easy about diplomacy." – HILLARY CLINTON
12	"Cricket is such a sport that you get to learn something from someone every day." – RAVINDRA JADEJA
13	"Every man is surrounded by a neighbourhood of voluntary spies." – JANE AUSTEN
14	"Behind every exquisite thing that existed, there was something tragic." – OSCAR WILDE
15	"Nothing in life is to be feared. It is only to be understood." – MARIA SKLODOWSKA-CURIE
16	"The best way to find out if you can trust somebody is to trust them." – ERNEST HEMINGWAY
17	"All war is a symptom of man's failure as a thinking animal." – JOHN STEINBECK
18	"The real problem is not whether machines think but whether men do." – B F SKINNER
19	"Dictatorships are one-way streets. Democracy boasts two-way traffic." – ALBERT MORAVIA
20	"The Earth is the cradle of humanity, but mankind cannot stay in the cradle forever." – KONSTANTIN TSIOLKOVSKY
21	"In every work of art, the spirit of the age and the individual artist's soul unite." – FRIEDRICH SCHLEGEL
22	"Learning is never done without error and defeat." – VLADIMIR LENIN
23	"If you know a country's geography, you can understand and predict its foreign policy." – NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

June 2025

Sl No	Quote
1	"The political bullying of international students...is not only a blatant violation of individual rights and a betrayal of the spirit of contract, but also a fundamental attack on the principles of international scientific and educational cooperation" – GLOBAL TIMES, CHINA
2	"The nation's fiscal authorities have a formidable challenge ahead of them as they try to balance IMF's programme goals with the government's growing desire to deepen the feel-good factor through some fiscal extravagance" – DAWN, PAKISTAN
3	"Mr. Trump now has an opportunity to display strength and push Russian and Ukraine toward a settlement that would allow him to claim success and far more important, end this gruesome war" – THE NEW YORK TIMES
4	"Mr. Nawrocki's improbable rise – from relative obscurity to the presidency – signals the unfortunate entrenchment of nationalist grievance in Polish politics." – THE GUARDIAN
5	"So far as the Indian threat to Pakistan's water security is concerned, this battle will have to be fought and won at the multiple dispute-resolution forums provided under the treaty if New Delhi tries to implement its... plan – at its own peril." – DAWN, PAKISATAN
6	"Mr Putin set out to conquer Ukraine and install a puppet government, and he has failed. Instead, Ukraine's young democracy has survived and sent a message to other would-be conquerors: Wars of aggression rarely result in the thorough victories that aggressors like to imagine." – THE NEW YORK TIMES
7	"Instead of doing what is ideally the responsibility of historians or society at large, we feel the interim government, which by definition is meant to do only crucial tasks, should focus on more urgent and present-day reforms that the nation is eagerly waiting to see." – THE DAILY STAR, BANGLADESH
8	"The biggest challenge posed by Mr Trump federalising the National Guard is this: What's the limiting principle?... And ultimately, who and what is the US military service to – the American public or the President's political agenda?" – THE NEW YORK TIMES
9	"It is a mark of Americans' pride in their capacity for self-government that federal troops intervene in what should be local matters only in the rarest of circumstances. This did not need to be one of them" – THE WASHINGTON POST
10	"We urge the international community not to forget the plight of the Rohingya and to come forward with aid." – THE DAILY STAR, BANGLADESH
11	"All those who stand against Mr Trump's weaponised bigotry and hunger for untrammelled power must make it clear that they are defending the law and not defying it." – THE GUARDIAN
12	"[Trump] said [he] was not concerned about a regional war breaking out due to Israel's strikes. Few will feel so sanguine. The current incoherence and incomprehensibility of US foreign policy fuels instability and risks drawing adversaries towards fateful miscalculations." – THE GUARDIAN
13	"With prospects for peace looking dim, the world, particularly Iran's neighbours – including Pakistan and Middle East states – must be prepared for prolonged geopolitical turbulence and economic tremors." – DAWN, PAKISTAN
14	"If there is any value to identifying the disruptive actions of the Trump administration as the antithesis of the movement for change six decades ago, it is in asking which if the two really tried to make America great." – THE NEW YORK TIMES

15	"What is collapsing in Gaza is not just infrastructure. It is the principle that even war has rules. When those rules are waived for allies, no life is safe." – THE GUARDIAN
16	"Washington must not join Tel Aviv's war party, while the global community must censure Israel for sowing chaos in the region, while unleashing... violence in the occupied territories." – DAWN, PAKISTAN
17	"The US President promised to keep his country out of conflicts. The Israeli Prime Minister has other ideas." – THE GUARDIAN
18	"After putting the United States into the middle of a shooting war with Iran, one for which the U.S. military appears to have been amply prepared, but the rest of the country was not, Trump did not define what 'peace' would look like." – THE WASHINGTON POST
19	"The US President has chosen war at Israel's behest. He may imagine he has scored an easy win, but the world is likely to pay a steep price." – THE GUARDIAN
20	"There is no denying that Israel, having started the war based on a false claim that Iran was on the verge of acquiring nuclear weapons, bears primary responsibility for ending it." – THE DAILY STAR, BANGLADESH
21	"Better diplomacy than war, but the US president's inconsistency and Benjamin Netanyahu's political needs increase the dangers in this Middle East crisis." – THE GUARDIAN
22	"Yet while economic stability is sacrosanct to the global elite, starving and butchered Palestinian children do not raise much concern. The inhumanity must end now. Mr Trump and other Western states must prevail upon Israel to end the genocide in Gaza" – DAWN, PAKISTAN
23	"The Big Beautiful Bill would tangle Obamacare in red tape. Under the legislation now before Congress, millions of people would lose their health insurance." – THE WASHINGTON POST
24	"It is difficult to imagine how the strained India-Bangladesh relations can improve with India continuing to hint at its desire to do otherwise." – THE DAILY STAR, BANGLADESH

PERSONALITIES IN NEWS

June 2025

Personality in News: National Statistics Day: 5 things about PC Mahalanobis, who could decipher stories data tells [Link](#)

Why in News?

June 29 is celebrated as National Statistics Day, marking the birth anniversary of PC Mahalanobis, the father of statistics in India.



Key Contributions

National Sample Surveys

- Launched India's first National Sample Survey in 1950
- Created method to collect representative data from small samples to understand country-wide conditions
- Nobel laureate Angus Deaton praised: "Where Mahalanobis and India led, the rest of the world has followed"

Mahalanobis Distance

- Developed statistical measure in 1936 to identify outliers in datasets
- Still widely used for data analysis globally [1](#)
- Helps flag unusual patterns, like stunted children in affluent households

Flood Prevention Work

- **1922 North Bengal floods:** Statistical analysis showed proposed retarding basins would be ineffective; recommended improved drainage instead
- **1926 Odisha floods:** Proved through 60-year data analysis that river bed hadn't risen; recommended dams for flood control
- Provided calculations for Hirakud Hydroelectric Project (inaugurated 1957)

Career Turning Points

Two Chance Events

- **Missed train (1913):** Led to Cambridge admission instead of University of London
- **Delayed boat:** Extra time in King's College library introduced him to Biometrika journal, sparking his statistics career

Cold War Obstacle

- Americans refused UNIVAC computer access in 1950s due to his perceived "Soviet sympathiser" reputation
- Described as having "exceptional personal charm" but considered a political threat

History, Art & Culture

June 2025

History in News: Magna Carta: What is this 'blueprint for democracy', signed 800 years ago [Link](#)

Why in News?

Harvard University recently discovered one of the earliest versions of the Magna Carta from 1300 in its collections, marking 810 years since the original document was signed.

Background and Context

- **Signed:** June 15, 1215, at Runnymede Meadows near London
- **Immediate cause:** King John's military defeats, particularly at Battle of Bouvines (1214), and heavy taxation to fund failed military campaigns
- **Feudal tensions:** Barons refused to support John's wars due to constant defeats and arbitrary rule
- **Document scope:** 63 clauses spanning 3,500+ words covering both local administrative issues and universal principles



Key Provisions and Significance

- **Clause 39:** Prohibited arbitrary arrest, imprisonment, or exile without lawful judgment by peers
- **Clause 40:** Guaranteed that justice would not be sold, denied, or delayed
- **Core principle:** Established that the king must act under the law, not above it
- **Rule of law:** First document to formally restrict a ruler's arbitrary power in Europe

Immediate Aftermath

- **Quick annulment:** King John had it annulled within three months with Pope Innocent III's help
- **Civil conflict:** Barons invited French prince to take English crown
- **Reestablishment:** After John's death (1216), document was reissued under his 9-year-old successor Henry III
- **Survival:** Four original copies exist; 1297 version sold for \$21.3 million in 2007

Modern Legacy and Criticism

- **Limitations:** Applied only to "free men" (less than half the population), excluded serfs and women
- **Elite focus:** Primarily concerned with power distribution between king and barons, not true democratization
- **Lasting impact:** Clauses 39 and 40 remain in UK statutes; influenced American Revolution and Constitution
- **Symbolic value:** Represents foundational principles of modern democracy despite its narrow original scope

NEWS IN SHORT: HISTORY, ART & CULTURE

Operation Shiva - Amarnath Yatra Security



- 1) **Duration & Timeline:** The Amarnath Yatra will run for 38 days from July 3 to August 9, 2025
- 2) **Massive Security Deployment:** 581 companies of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) deployed for protection
- 3) **Advanced Technology Integration:**
 - a) RFID tags issued to all registered pilgrims for real-time tracking
 - b) Signal jammers deployed for first time to protect convoy movement
 - c) Drones, CCTV networks, and sniffer dogs (K9 units) for surveillance
- 4) **Strategic Security Measures:**
 - a) Road Opening Parties (ROPs) to secure routes ahead of movement
 - b) Quick Action Teams (QATs) for rapid response
 - c) Bomb Disposal Squads (BDS) for explosive neutralization

Temporary roadblocks during convoy passage

Ambubachi Mela: Assam's Major Religious Festival at Kamakhya Temple

- 1) One of Northeast India's largest religious gatherings held annually at Kamakhya Temple, Guwahati

- 2) Attracts several lakh devotees (approximately 7 lakh visitors last year)
- 3) Held during monsoon season, typically in June



Religious Significance:

- 1) Celebrates the annual menstruation period of Goddess Kamakhya
- 2) Temple remains closed during the festival period (June 22-25, 2025, reopening June 26)
- 3) Associated with fertility, Earth's creative power, and monsoon onset
- 4) Name "Ambubachi" translates to "water flowing"

Rituals and Beliefs:

- 1) Devotees worship the process of menstruation rather than a deity image
- 2) All agricultural activities cease during this period
- 3) Blood-stained cloth fragments are distributed as protective amulets
- 4) Festival connects Earth's fertility with the goddess's creative power

The festival represents a unique blend of Tantrik Shaktism, fertility worship, and agricultural traditions, making it a significant cultural and religious event in Assam.

Polity & Governance

June 2025

Ethics News of the Day: Supreme Court's Moral Responsibility in POCSO Case [Link](#)

Case Background

- 1) A man was convicted under POCSO for sexual assault of a 14-year-old girl from West Bengal in 2018 and sentenced to 20 years imprisonment.
- 2) The Calcutta High Court controversially reversed the conviction, making objectionable remarks about "consensual relationships" with minors.
- 3) The Supreme Court set aside the High Court's ruling, reaffirming that minors cannot legally consent under POCSO.

Supreme Court's Unprecedented Decision

- 1) Using **Article 142** (extraordinary jurisdiction), the SC withheld sentencing the convicted man despite upholding his conviction
- 2) The court prioritized the victim's current welfare over punitive justice, noting she is now an adult, married to the accused, and has a child with him

Moral vs Legal Justice Tension

- 1) An expert committee found the victim "did not see it as crime" and suffered more trauma from the legal proceedings than the original incident.
- 2) The court observed: "The society judged her, the legal system failed her, and her own family abandoned her".
- 3) The SC stepped into executive territory by directing West Bengal government to ensure the victim's welfare and rehabilitation.

Key Judicial Concerns

- 1) The court called this case "an eye-opener" highlighting "lacunae in the legal system".
- 2) Emphasized this unusual deviation must not set a precedent for future POCSO cases.
- 3) Demonstrated the tension between strict legal compliance and achieving "complete justice" in exceptional circumstances.

Facts of the Day: Legislature Performance Statistics

Lok Sabha Performance Statistics (Recent Years)

Average Sitting Days:

- 1) **17th Lok Sabha (2019-2024):** Only 55 sitting days annually
- 2) **Functionality:** 88% of scheduled time in Lok Sabha, 73% in Rajya Sabha
- 3) **Historical Decline:** Dropped from 135 days (1st Lok Sabha, 1952-57) to current 55 days

Legislative Output (2024):

- 1) **Bills Introduced:** 24 in Lok Sabha, 5 in Rajya Sabha

State Assembly Performance Statistics (2024)

- 1) **Average Sitting Days:** State assemblies met for only 20 days on average in 2024, totaling approximately 100 hours
- 2) **Top Performers:** Odisha led with 42 sitting days, followed by Kerala (38 days) and West Bengal (36 days)
- 3) **Poor Performers:** Nagaland met for just 6 days, Sikkim 8 days, while larger states like UP and MP met only 16 days each

- 2) **Bills Passed:** 20 in Lok Sabha, 18 in Rajya Sabha
- 3) **Bills Passed by Both Houses:** 16 total

Key Performance Indicators

Quality of Legislative Process:

- 1) **Quick Passage:** 35% of bills passed with less than one hour discussion in Lok Sabha
- 2) **Voice Voting:** Majority of bills passed without recorded voting
- 3) **Recorded Voting:** Only 9% of bills had at least one instance of recorded voting
- 4) **80% of Budget voted without discussion** (2019-2023)

- 4) **Legislative Output:** States passed average 17 bills in 2024, with Karnataka topping at 49 bills, followed by Tamil Nadu (45) and Maharashtra (32)
- 5) **Poor Legislative Activity:** Delhi passed only 1 bill while Rajasthan passed just 2 bills in entire 2024
- 6) **Quick Passage:** 51% of all bills were passed within 24 hours of introduction, with only 4% examined by committees
- 7) **Long-term Decline:** Assembly sitting days dropped from 28 days average in 2017 to current 20 days, with pandemic low of 16 days in 2020

News / UPSC Current Affairs / UPSC Essentials / As SC raps ED, a look at agency's powers, role and red lines

As SC raps ED, a look at agency's powers, role and red lines

Of late, the Enforcement Directorate's actions have been subject to criticism from the Supreme Court on various grounds, including for "violating the federal structure". But where do the loopholes lie in the economic intelligence agency whose mandate has evolved over time since its inception in 1956?

IE CA; By

Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Polity & Governance [Link](#)

- Court stayed ED proceedings and granted protection from coercive steps to TASMAL officials
- SC asked ED to identify the predicate offense justifying PMLA invocation
- CJI remarked ED was "totally violating the federal structure"

Broader ED Issues

Low Conviction Rate:

- Only 40 convictions out of 5,297 PMLA cases registered from 2014-2024
- SC directed ED to "focus on quality prosecution and evidence" in August 2024

Powers and Concerns:

- ED can arrest, attach properties, and has reversed burden of proof under PMLA
- Allegations of political misuse and targeting opposition leaders
- Recent arrest of senior ED official by CBI for bribery eroded public trust

Federal Structure Implications

- ED's actions undermine state autonomy in investigations already handled by state police since 2017
- Court emphasized need to respect constitutional limits and avoid disrupting union-state balance
- Case highlights broader concerns about central agencies overstepping jurisdiction

Why in News?

Supreme Court stayed ED's investigation against Tamil Nadu's TASMAL and criticized the agency for "crossing all limits" and "violating federal structure" in May 2025.

TASMAL Case Background

- ED conducted raids at TASMAL headquarters in Chennai between March 6-8, 2025
- Investigation based on 41 FIRs by Tamil Nadu Vigilance Department since 2014
- Allegations include Rs 1,000 crore fraud involving overpricing, tender manipulation, and bribery
- TASMAL operates about 7,000 liquor outlets as state monopoly

Supreme Court's Criticism

- SC bench led by CJI BR Gavai questioned ED's authority to file criminal cases against state corporations

News / Explained / Population Census-2027: Why this reopens debate on delimitation, timeline

Premium

Population Census-2027: Why this reopens debate on delimitation, timeline

The many processes of the exercise and what will follow put a question mark on whether all this can be completed before the next Lok Sabha elections in 2029.

IE Explained; By Deeptiman Tiwary , Manoj C G;
Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Polity & Governance [Link](#)

Why in News?

Government announced Population Census-2027 with caste enumeration, reigniting delimitation debate as southern states fear reduced parliamentary representation.

Key Details

- 1) **Reference date:** March 1, 2027 for most areas; October 1, 2026 for snow-bound regions of J&K, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Ladakh.
- 2) **Two-phase process:** House listing (March-April 2026 to September 2026) followed by 21-day enumeration in February 2027.
- 3) **Caste enumeration:** First time since independence that caste will be counted.
- 4) **Digital process:** Expected to speed up data collection and processing using handheld devices.
- 5) **Scale:** 25-30 lakh enumerators to be involved

Delimitation Controversy

- 1) **Southern states' concern:** Fear losing parliamentary seats due to better population control compared to northern states
- 2) **Tamil Nadu's opposition:** CM Stalin accused BJP of deliberately delaying census to reduce TN's 39 Lok Sabha seats
- 3) **Constitutional mandate:** Delimitation must follow first census after 2026
- 4) **Current freeze:** Parliamentary seats frozen at 543 since 1971 census; extended until 2026 by 84th Amendment
- 5) **Projected impact:** Analysis suggests UP could gain seats (80 to 143) while southern states see minimal increase

Timeline & Process Concerns

- 1) **Data availability:** Provisional data expected within 10 days of enumeration completion; final data by late 2027

- 2) **Delimitation steps:** Parliament must pass Delimitation Act → Form Commission → Constitutional amendment to increase total seats → Implement women's reservation
- 3) **2029 election uncertainty:** Questions whether entire process can be completed before next Lok Sabha elections
- 4) **Political implications:** Delay could maintain existing seat structure for 2029 polls, avoiding North-South political confrontation.

News / Explained / ExplainSpeaking: The critical importance of the next Census for India's economy

ExplainSpeaking: The critical importance of the next Census for India's economy

The national Census provides the fundamental statistical basis for all other types of surveys and analysis in the country. In other words, the Census is a reality check for the country — a look in the mirror without which a self-portrait is not possible.

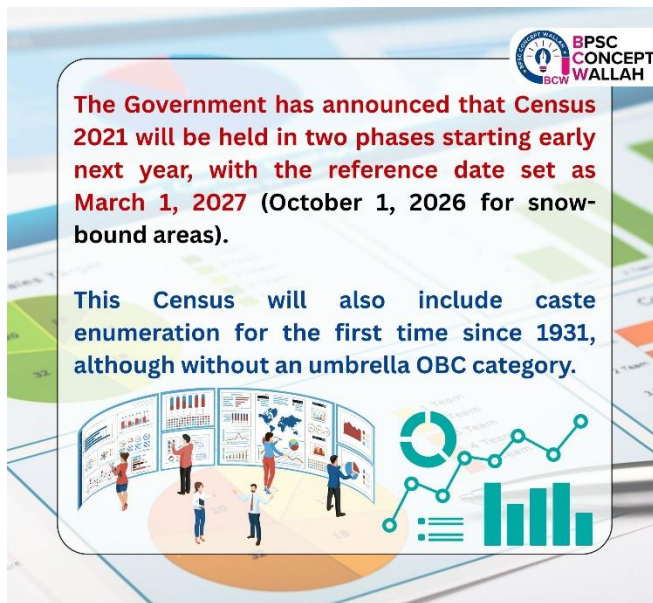
IE Explained; By Udit Misra;
Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Governance [Link](#)

Why in News?

Government announced India's next Census will be conducted in 2026-2027 with effective date March 1, 2027, after a 6-year COVID-related delay.

Key Issues and Concerns

- 1) **Delay Impact:** First break in decadal Census tradition since 1881; 6-year delay longer than neighbouring countries
- 2) **Political Sensitivity:** Caste census and delimitation (rebalancing Lok Sabha seats) may affect data quality as people might provide biased responses
- 3) **Data Quality Risk:** Politicization could compromise Census credibility and accuracy



- 3) Survey accuracy depends on updated Census baseline data
- 4) Costs of maintaining accuracy increase with each year of delay

News / Explained / Explained: How India conducts its Census — and what is new in 2027

Explained: How India conducts its Census — and what is new in 2027

A total of 30 lakh enumerators, primarily school teachers, are estimated to be deployed for the conduct of Census. Caste enumeration for all individuals — not just SC/ST — has been reintroduced after 90 years.

IE Explained; By Deeptiman Tiwari;
 Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Polity & Governance [Link](#)

Economic Importance

Foundation for Policymaking:

- 1) Provides fundamental statistical basis for all surveys and analysis in India
- 2) Reality check offering complete image of India's demographics, economic status, education, migration patterns

Inflation Control:

- 1) Census data determines Consumer Price Index weights (e.g., food articles currently 46%)
- 2) Outdated weightage leads to incorrect inflation calculations and monetary policy decisions
- 3) Wrong data results in inappropriate interest rate policies affecting economic growth

Migration and Urbanization:

- 1) Current migration data based on 2011 Census is outdated
- 2) Most migration is local: intra-district (62%), inter-district (26%), inter-state only 12%
- 3) Rural-to-rural migration dominates (48%), followed by urban-to-urban
- 4) Urbanization estimates vary wildly (30-70%) due to definitional differences
- 5) Cities generate 60% of GDP on just 3% of land

No Viable Alternatives

- 1) Administrative data from government departments is unreliable and incomparable across states
- 2) Example: Government claimed Open Defecation Free status, but 2020-21 survey showed 30% households lack toilets

Why in News?

Government announced India's 16th Census for 2027, marking first nationwide caste enumeration since 1931.



Timeline and Scope

- Reference dates: March 1, 2027 (most areas), October 1, 2026 (snow-bound regions like Ladakh, J&K)
- House-listing phase in 2026, population enumeration in February 2027
- 30 lakh enumerators (mainly teachers) to be deployed
- Enumeration completion expected in 20-21 days

Key Changes from 2011 Census

- **Digital-first approach:** Mobile apps, online self-enumeration, real-time monitoring
- **Caste data:** All communities included, not just SC/ST

- **GPS integration:** Household tagging and geofencing to avoid gaps
- **New coding system:** Pre-loaded dropdown menus instead of handwritten entries
- **Self-enumeration option:** Households can fill details online and get unique ID

New Questions Added

House-listing (34 columns):

- Internet connection availability
- Mobile/smartphone ownership
- Drinking water access inside dwelling
- Gas connection type (piped/LPG)
- Vehicle ownership categories
- Type of cereal consumed

Population enumeration (28 columns):

- Technology usage (internet/smartphones)
- Transgender identity option
- Climate displacement as migration reason

Implementation Features

- Census Management and Monitoring System (CMMS) for real-time supervision
- Offline functionality with auto-sync capability
- Quality control with error alerts and validation checks
- Higher remuneration for digital enumeration

Now is the time to disclose the entire truth known to the ECI

Election Commission doesn't share adequate voting-related information with people. That prevents a meaningful analysis of the electoral process.

IE Opinion; By Jagdeep S. Chhokar;


Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Polity & Governance [Link](#)

Why in News?

Article responds to contradictory reports about alleged irregularities in 2024 Maharashtra Assembly elections between an op-ed and newspaper's analysis.

Matter of concern

The NGO's plea before the Supreme Court has asked for these specific interventions



- Direct the Union of India to appoint the vacant positions of Election Commissioners, till the pendency of the case in the Supreme Court, in accordance with the Selection Committee laid down by the *Anoop Baranwal vs Union of India* judgment of March 2023
- Stay the implementation of Section 7 of The Chief Election Commission and other Election Commissions (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023
- Bring the CJI back on board the high-profile selection committee headed by the Prime Minister for appointment of ECs

Key Issues Raised

Election Commissioner Appointments:

- 2023 Act allows PM and Home Minister to outvote Opposition leader (2:1 majority)
- Supreme Court had mandated committee of PM, Opposition leader, and CJI in March 2023
- Parliament passed law only after SC intervention, tilted toward executive
- Constitutional challenge pending in Supreme Court

Information Transparency Problems:

- ECI has exclusive physical access to all electoral system components
- Citizens cannot access complete data for meaningful analysis
- Form 17C (polling day vote details) not accessible to all candidates or voters
- Only major parties/wealthy candidates can afford polling agents to collect forms

Electoral System Vulnerabilities:

- Four manipulation possibilities: voter rolls, poll scheduling, post-poll activities, EVMs
- Impossible to prove irregularities didn't occur due to limited information access
- ECI claims rule compliance but actual implementation differs

Author's Demand:

- Full disclosure of all information known only to ECI
- Current incomplete information prevents proper electoral process analysis
- Calls this "the entire truth" that needs revelation

Fifty years after Emergency, the new threats to democracy

Now beset by a rising tide of strong-armed rulers and demagogues worldwide, democracy is also the best check on their unrestrained power. Those who resisted the Emergency understood this

IE Opinion; By Amitabh Sinha;

Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Polity & Governance [Link](#)

Why in News?

Marking 50 years since India's Emergency (1975-1977), the article examines how new forms of despotism threaten democracies worldwide.

New 21st Century Despotism

- **Global rise:** Despotic rule emerging in Russia, Iran, China, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Hungary, Mexico, Israel, and America
- **Key characteristic:** Rules through manipulation and voluntary servitude, not just force
- **Methods:** Rigged elections, patronage, media propaganda, legal trickery, defending "the people" against enemies
- **Support base:** Wins loyalty from middle classes, workers, and poor through handouts and deception

Despots Working Together

- **Trump's West Asia tour (May 2025):** Lavish reception in Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar with fighter jet escorts, luxury ceremonies
- **Outcomes:** Trillion-dollar defense contracts, nuclear energy programs, AI chip imports, luxury jet gifts
- **Pattern:** Despots form alliances for mutual support and legitimacy

Democracy as Defense System

- **Core purpose:** Protects against unaccountable power that causes harm and suffering
- **Key principle:** No person/group can be permanently trusted to govern others
- **Function:** Early warning system allowing citizens to raise alarms against potential harm
- **Emergency lesson:** Those who resisted Indira Gandhi's Emergency (1975-77) understood democracy prevents power abuse
- **Reality check:** Brings power back to earth, prevents leaders from living in "cuckoo land" with lies and weaponized nonsense

News / Explained / Explained: Emergency and its lessons

W Premium

Explained: Emergency and its lessons

Emergency 1975 Explained: The 21-month period from June 25, 1975 to March 21, 1977 saw the government of Indira Gandhi suspend civil liberties, curtail press freedom, make mass arrests, cancel elections, and rule by decree

IE Explained; By Vikas Pathak;

Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Polity & Governance [Link](#)

Why in news?

Today marks the 50th anniversary of the Emergency declared by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on June 25, 1975.



Background and Trigger

Political Context:

- Economic crisis: inflation, unemployment, food shortages in early 1970s
- Student movements in Gujarat and Bihar against government
- JP Movement led by Jayaprakash Narayan calling for "total revolution"
- Railway strike by George Fernandes in May 1974

Immediate Trigger:

- June 12, 1975: Allahabad High Court convicted Indira Gandhi of electoral malpractice
- Court invalidated her 1971 Lok Sabha election victory from Rae Bareilly
- Disqualified her from holding office for six years

Declaration and Implementation

- June 25, 1975: President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed signed Emergency proclamation under Article 352
- Cited "internal disturbances" as justification
- Lasted 21 months until March 21, 1977
- Electricity cut to newspaper offices; announcement made via All India Radio

Key Happenings During Emergency

Political Suppression:

- Over 1.12 lakh people detained under MISA, COFEPOSA, and other laws
- Opposition leaders jailed including JP Narayan, Morarji Desai, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, L.K. Advani
- Elections cancelled, Parliament term extended

Constitutional Changes:

- 42nd Amendment passed giving unbridled power to Parliament
- Judicial review of Emergency proclamation prohibited
- Federal structure converted to unitary system

Civil Liberties Curtailed:

- Fundamental rights suspended including Article 19(1)(a) - freedom of speech¹
- Press censorship imposed; 250+ journalists jailed
- Forced sterilization program led by Sanjay Gandhi

End and Legacy

- Emergency lifted in early 1977; Indira Gandhi called elections
- Congress routed; Janata Party won with Morarji Desai as PM
- 44th Amendment made future Emergency declaration more difficult
- Marked beginning of end of Congress one-party dominance

Four Key Strategic Projects

Pir Ki Gali Tunnel (Mughal Road)

- 9-km tunnel costing Rs 3,830 crore
- Connects Chatta Pani (Poonch) to Zaznar (Shopian)
- Provides all-weather connectivity through historic Mughal Road
- Alternative to frequently blocked Jammu-Srinagar Highway
- Will be constructed by Border Roads Organisation (BRO)

Sadhna Tunnel (Kupwara)

- 7-km tunnel costing Rs 3,330 crore
- Connects Kupwara to Karnah region on Line of Control
- Provides year-round access to remote border area
- Currently, Karnah gets disconnected in winters causing hardships
- Essential for soldiers accessing frontier region

Zaznar-Shopian Road

- 28-km stretch costing Rs 852 crore
- Part of proposed Surankote-Shopian-Baramulla highway
- High-priority project in south Kashmir
- Connects to broader 300-km highway project worth Rs 10,000 crore

Trehgam-Chamkote Road

- 68-km stretch costing Rs 966 crore
- Connects Kupwara to Teetwal (last point on LoC)
- Part of 124-km Rafiabab-Kupwara-Chamkote road project
- Resurfacing/improvement of existing route

Strategic Importance

- Reduces dependence on vulnerable NH44 highway within Kashmir valley
- Provides alternative connectivity during crisis or war situations
- Enhances troop mobility and access to border regions
- Ensures year-round connectivity to previously isolated areas
- Both tunnel projects transferred to BRO for strategic reasons

News / Explained / Infra push for Jammu and Kashmir: 4 key projects Centre has approved

Infra push for Jammu and Kashmir: 4 key projects Centre has approved

While the Centre has sanctioned a total of 19 projects in Jammu and Kashmir, four of them, two roads and two tunnels, are high-value projects with strategic importance. We explain.

IE Explained; By Bashaarat Masood;

Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Polity & Governance [Link](#)

Why in News?

Centre approved 19 infrastructure projects worth Rs 10,637 crore for Jammu and Kashmir on June 24, 2025, with four projects having high strategic importance.

NEWS IN SHORT: POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Demand for inclusion of Kokborok and Bhojpuri in Eighth Schedule of Constitution

Kokborok Demand

- 1) The Kokborok Sahitya Parishad (tribal literary body) demanded inclusion of Kokborok in the Eighth Schedule in April 2025, writing to Tripura Chief Minister.
- 2) **Widespread Usage:** Kokborok is the mother tongue of 1.5 million Tripuri people across Tripura, Assam, Mizoram, and six districts of Bangladesh, and serves as one of Tripura's official languages
- 3) **Cultural Significance:** It's one of the oldest and most widely spoken indigenous languages in Tripura, serving as a vital medium of cultural expression and identity for tribal communities
- 4) **Script Debate:** While Kokborok Sahitya Parishad prefers Bengali or Devanagari script, TIPRA Motha founder Pradyot Kishore Debbarma advocates for Roman script

Bhojpuri Demand

- 1) **Long-standing Demand:** Bhojpuri inclusion has been sought since 1971 when Communist Party of India MP Bhogendra Jha first brought a bill in Lok Sabha, which was rejected
- 2) **Massive Speaker Base:** Spoken by approximately 16 crore people across UP, Bihar, MP, Jharkhand and 27 other countries worldwide, with 33 million identifying it as their mother tongue
- 3) **Political Support:** BJP leaders including Sushil Kumar Modi and Yogi Adityanath have repeatedly promised inclusion, while opposition Mahagathbandhan recently renewed calls for official language status
- 4) **International Recognition:** Bhojpuri has constitutional status in Mauritius and Nepal but remains constitutionally unrecognized in India

Current Status

- 1) **Government Position:** The Ministry of Home Affairs states there are currently 22 languages in the Eighth Schedule with 38 more languages including Bhojpuri proposed for inclusion, but no fixed criteria exists for inclusion

Under Consideration: Both Bhojpuri and Rajasthani language inclusion matters remain under government consideration

Lokpal's New Motto - "Empower Citizens, Expose Corruption"

- 1) The Full Bench of Lokpal of India adopted this new motto to replace the previous Sanskrit motto "Ma Gridhah Kasyasvid Dhanam" (Do not be greedy for anyone's wealth)
- 2) Purpose: Enhance institutional visibility and public outreach

About Lokpal: Key Facts

Definition and Purpose

- 1) Lokpal is an anti-corruption authority or ombudsman representing public interest in India
- 2) Sanskrit term meaning "defender of people" or "People's Friend"
- 3) Established to inquire into corruption allegations against public functionaries

Establishment Timeline

- 1) Term "Lokpal" coined by Dr. L.M. Singhvi in 1963
- 2) First recommended by Administrative Reforms Commission in 1966
- 3) Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act passed on December 17, 2013
- 4) Act came into force on January 16, 2014
- 5) Foundation Day celebrated annually on January 16

Current Leadership

Current Chairperson: Justice Ajay Manikrao Khanwilkar

Composition

- 1) Multi-member body with one Chairperson and maximum 8 members
- 2) 50% must be judicial members
- 3) 50% must belong to SCs, STs, OBCs, minorities, or women

Jurisdiction Coverage

- 1) Prime Minister, Union Ministers, and Members of Parliament
- 2) Group A, B, C, and D officers of central government
- 3) Public sector undertakings and NGOs receiving government funding above ₹10 lakh
- 4) Chairpersons, members, officers of boards, corporations, societies, trusts established by Parliament

Powers and Authority

- 1) Superintendence over Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)

- 2) Can give directions to CBI and approve transfers of investigating officers
- 3) Authority to confiscate property gained through corruption
- 4) Protection for whistleblowers reporting corruption

Selection Process

Selection committee includes Prime Minister, Lok Sabha Speaker, Leader of Opposition, and Chief Justice of India

Census 2025 Announcement

- 1) Union Home Minister Amit Shah reviews preparation for forthcoming Census
- 2) Census notification to be published in official gazette on June 16, 2025
- 3) Census will be conducted in two phases: Houselisting Operation (HLO) and Population Enumeration (PE)
- 4) Caste enumeration will also be done during Census
- 5) About 34 lakh enumerators and supervisors to be deployed
- 6) This will be the 16th Census since beginning and 8th after independence
- 7) Census to be conducted through digital means using mobile applications
- 8) Self-enumeration provision will be available

DIGIPIN: India's New Digital Address System

Why in News?

Indian government launched DIGIPIN digital address system to enable precise location identification nationwide.

What is DIGIPIN?

- 1) Unique 10-character alphanumeric code for properties approximately 4x4 square meters on Indian land

- 2) Developed by Department of Posts with IIT Hyderabad and National Remote Sensing Centre (ISRO)
- 3) Open-source, interoperable, privacy-focused system encoding geographic coordinates
- 4) Supplements traditional 6-digit PIN system, doesn't replace it
- 5) Available through portal: dac.indiapost.gov.in/mydigipin/home

Key Applications

- 1) Streamlines last-mile delivery for e-commerce (Amazon, Flipkart)
- 2) Improves emergency response times for police, ambulance, fire services
- 3) Enhances geographical accuracy across urban and rural areas

Related Initiatives

- 1) **NAKSHA:** National geospatial Knowledge-based land Survey under Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme
- 2) **Know Your PINCODE:** Web application using GNSS for PIN code accuracy
- 3) **National Geospatial Mission:** Launched in Union Budget 2025 for foundational geospatial infrastructure

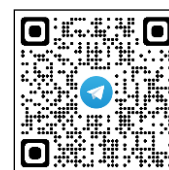
GNSS Technology

- 1) Global Navigation Satellite System uses satellite constellation for positioning via trilateration
- 2) India's NavIC system: 8 satellites covering India and 1,500km radius
- 3) Provides Standard Positioning Service (commercial) and Restricted Service (defense)



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GS 2 07:30–10:30 PM

24th Aug: GS 3 02:00–5:00 PM

GS 4 07:30–10:30 PM

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Society & Social Justice

June 2025

Case Study: Historic Milestone for Women in Indian Armed Forces

- 1) **First-ever batch:** 17 women cadets graduated from National Defence Academy (NDA) Pune on Thursday
- 2) **Historic achievement:** Marks a groundbreaking moment for women's participation in Indian armed forces
- 3) **Legal breakthrough:** Following a landmark Supreme Court verdict in 2021 (**Kush Kalra v. Union of India**)
- 4) **Policy change:** UPSC opened NDA examination to women candidates for the first time
- 5) **Breaking barriers:** Ends decades of male-only tradition at India's premier military training institution



News / Explained / What Mizoram, Goa's 'fully literate' tag under the ULLAS program means

What Mizoram, Goa's 'fully literate' tag under the ULLAS program means

ULLAS is the latest adult literacy programme rolled out by the Indian government. It aims to equip 5 crore 'non-literate individuals' over the age of 15 with foundational literacy and numeracy skills.

IE Explained;

Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Society [Link](#)

Why in News?

Mizoram and Goa declared themselves "fully literate" states under the ULLAS program, with literacy rates of 98.2% and 99.72% respectively.

ULLAS Scheme Overview

- 1) Launched 2022-2027, aims to educate 5 crore non-literate individuals aged 15+ with foundational literacy and numeracy skills
- 2) Teaches basic reading, writing, arithmetic plus digital and financial literacy

- 3) Uses registered volunteers (students, teachers, community members) and NCERT-developed materials in local languages
- 4) Latest in series of adult literacy programs since 1950s

Performance and Assessment

- 1) 1.77 crore people appeared for Functional Literacy Numeracy Assessment Test (FLNAT) since March 2023
- 2) 2.43 crore registered learners, 1.03 crore certified so far
- 3) National average 90% pass rate; Tamil Nadu and Goa achieved 100% pass rates
- 4) Over 70% test-takers were women in several states including Mizoram, Tamil Nadu, Punjab

"Full Literacy" Definition

- 1) Ministry defines 95% literacy as equivalent to being "fully literate"
- 2) Literacy includes reading, writing, computing with comprehension plus critical life skills
- 3) Three states achieved this: Ladakh (first in June 2024), followed by Mizoram and Goa

Reality Check

- 1) PLFS 2023-24 shows different figures: Goa 93.6%, Mizoram 98.2%, Ladakh 81% literacy
- 2) 2011 census showed national literacy at 74.04% with 25.76 crore non-literate individuals

India's real fertility crisis is about choice, not numbers

UNFPA's new report reveals the real demographic emergency is the denial of reproductive agency, not declining birth rates

IE Opinion; By S Irudaya Rajan;
 Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Society and Social Justice
[Link](#)

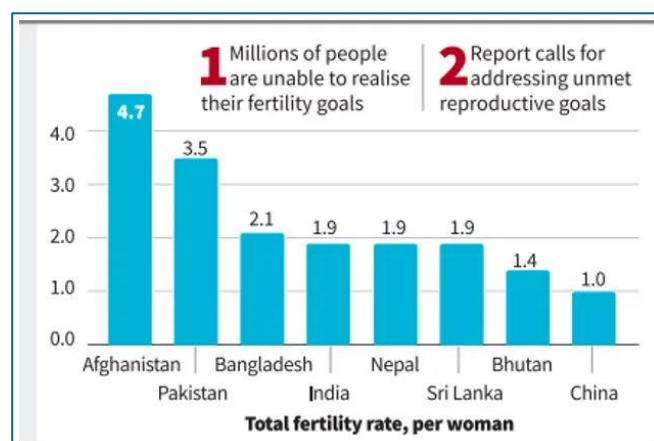
Why in News?

UNFPA's State of World Population Report 2025 highlights that India's fertility crisis stems from denial of reproductive choice, not declining birth rates.

India's Fertility Landscape

- National fertility rate dropped from 2.9 (2005) to 2.0 (2020) with significant inter-state variations
- Population of children under 5 peaked in 2004, under 15 peaked in 2009

- India's population projected to peak mid-century despite declining fertility



The Real Crisis: Unmet Reproductive Aspirations

Dual Challenge:

- Over 36% reported unintended pregnancies
- Over 30% unable to have children when desired
- 9.4% of married women (15-49) have unmet family planning needs

Economic Barriers:

- Financial insecurity and unemployment
- Inadequate housing
- Limited access to quality childcare

Social Constraints:

- Unequal household responsibilities for women
- Difficulty finding suitable partners
- Workplace lacks supportive policies (paid leave, flexible hours, childcare)
- Career discrimination fears due to pregnancy

Key Issues

Infertility Stigma:

- Marriage equated with childbearing
- Limited, expensive, poorly regulated treatment options
- Lack of insurance coverage

Contraception Challenges:

- Over-reliance on sterilization
- Limited access to reversible modern methods
- 4% unmet need for birth spacing
- Social stigma around family planning discussions

Changing Patterns:

- Later marriages (late 20s-early 30s)
- First child soon after marriage
- Poor spacing practices for second child
- Male child preference undermines women's autonomy

Solution Framework

- Focus on reproductive autonomy through informed choices
- Build demographic resilience within human rights framework
- Center policies on people's aspirations rather than population control
- Anticipate and adapt to demographic changes proactively

News / Explained / Explained: Centre's rationale behind MGNREGS spending cap, the problems with it

Explained: Centre's rationale behind MGNREGS spending cap, the problems with it

The 60% spending cap seeks to address long standing financial troubles plaguing the programme. But in doing so, it undermines the letter and spirit of the MGNREGA

IE Explained; By Laavanya Tamang, Purbayan Chakraborty;
 Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Society and Social Justice
[Link](#)

Why in News: Union Finance Ministry imposed 60% spending cap on MGNREGS for first half of FY 2025-26 under expenditure control mechanism.

Centre's Rationale

- **Financial troubles:** Over 70% budget exhausted by September annually, pending dues of Rs 15,000-25,000 crore over last five years
- **Budget management:** 20% of subsequent year's budget spent clearing previous dues
- **Current situation:** FY 26 budget Rs 86,000 crore, pending dues Rs 21,000 crore from FY 25
- **Objective:** Ensure adequate budget remains for latter half, avoid supplementary allocations

Problems with Spending Cap

Demand fluctuation issues:

- MGNREGS acts as rural distress buffer during lean harvests, weather events
- Peak demand April-June and post-September after kharif sowing
- Weather abnormalities create unexpected high demand (2023: Karnataka spent 70% budget in six months due to drought)

Legal concerns:

- MGNREGS based on statutory right under MGNREGA Act 2005, not government scheme

- 60% cap makes statutory employment guarantee impossible to fulfill
- Constitutional courts ruled financial inability cannot override statutory duties
- Violates workers' rights: employment within 15 days of demand, wage payment within 15 days of work completion

Implementation clarity:

- No guidance on post-ceiling scenarios
- States may deny employment despite demand
- Workers may work without timely payment
- Both scenarios violate statutory rights under the Act

ExplainSpeaking: The truth about poverty in India

Bizarre as it may seem, especially for a country with so many people at low levels of income and consumption, as well as a country with an enviable record of studying poverty, India's poverty lies in the eyes of the beholder. Here is why.

IE Explained; By Udit Misra;
 Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Society & Social Justice [Link](#)

Why in News?

World Bank updated its poverty methodology showing India's extreme poverty rate dropped to 5.75% in 2022-23 from 27% in 2011-12.

INDIA'S HISTORICAL POVERTY RATE (AT INTERNATIONAL \$2.15) HAS BEEN REVISED DOWNWARDS

Year	September 2024	June 2025
1977-78	64.00%	47.00%
1983	57.00%	38.00%
1987-88	51.00%	39.00%
1993-94	48.00%	34.00%
2004-05	41.00%	33.00%
2009-10	33.00%	23.00%

Source: World Bank's Poverty & Inequality Platform (PIP)

Note: In purchasing power parity terms, 1 international dollar is equal to ₹20.6

World Bank's Updated Poverty Data

Key Changes:

- New poverty line set at \$3/day (Rs 62/day in PPP terms)
- Historical poverty rates revised downward (1977-78: 47% vs previous 64%)

- 171 million Indians lifted from extreme poverty in 10 years
- Current extreme poverty: 75.22 million Indians (5.75%)

Methodology:

- Uses Purchasing Power Parity (PPP), not market exchange rates
- PPP conversion rate for India: 20.6 (not 85 market rate)
- Based on poorest countries' national poverty lines from 1980s

ESTIMATES OF INDIA'S POVERTY RATE VARY WILDLY BASED ON THE CHOICE OF POVERTY LINE, SOURCE DATA, AND METHODOLOGY

Method	2011-12	2022-23
Tendulkar methodology@	21.90%	9.9%*
Rangarajan methodology&	29.50%	12.2%*
World Bank's latest abject poverty line for low income countries [int-\$3 a day (or Rs 62 a day)]#	27.10%	5.30%
World Bank's latest poverty line for lower middle-income countries [int-\$4.2 a day (Rs 87 a day)]#	57.70%	23.90%
World Bank's latest poverty line for upper middle-income countries [int-\$8.30 a day (Rs 171 a day)]#	92.50%	82.10%
Sethu et al (using Rangarajan methodology)	29.50%	26.40%
Bhalla and Bhasin (using World Bank's int-\$1.9 a day poverty line)^	12.20%	2.00%
Bhalla and Bhasin (using World Bank's int-\$3.2 a day poverty line)^	53.60%	20.80%

2021 PPP estimates | @ The last officially recognised methodology on poverty estimates (2009) | *Calculation by Himanshu et al (2025) | & The officially commissioned methodology on poverty estimates (2014) | ^2017 PPP estimates
Note: In purchasing power parity terms, 1 international dollar is equal to ₹20.6

Source: Himanshu et al (2025), World Bank, Bhalla et al (2024), Indian Express Research

- Rangarajan 2014 recommendation: Rs 47/day urban, Rs 33/day rural (never adopted)

Current Confusion:

- No updated domestic methodology since 2011-12
- Poverty estimates vary from 2% to 82% depending on method used
- India relies on World Bank data due to lack of official updates

INDIA'S POVERTY LINE (PER PERSON PER DAY): IN PERSPECTIVE

₹62	World Bank's poverty line for abject poverty in India. In 2022-23, 7.5 crore Indians (5.25% of total population) lived at this level or less
₹63	Price of a litre of Amul milk in 2022
₹87	World Bank's poverty line for "lower middle-income" countries such as India. In 2022-23, 34.23 crore Indians (that is, 23.89% of all Indians) lived below this daily expenditure level
₹171	This is the World Bank's poverty line for "upper middle-income" countries. In 2022-23, 117.57 crore (or 82.7% of India's population) lived below this daily expenditure level
₹286	This was the average daily income of a woman working as a casual labourer (think construction worker)
₹398	This was the average daily income of casual labourers when incomes of both men and women were taken into consideration
₹432	This was the average daily income of a self-employed person in 2022-23
₹533	If the total GDP of India in 2022-23 was divided equally into all citizens then this would be the daily GDP (think income) created per Indian
₹651	This was the average daily income of a salaried person in 2022-23
₹3,288	This is the daily income of an Indian who earns ₹12 lakhs per annum but enjoys complete exemption from Income Tax

Source: MoSPI, PLFS, Indian Express Research

India's Poverty Measurement Challenge

Historical Context:

- Last official Indian poverty line: 2011-12 (Tendulkar Committee)
- Tendulkar line: Rs 36/day urban, Rs 30/day rural

Reality Check

Different Poverty Perspectives:

- 5.75% live on under Rs 62/day (extreme poverty)
- 24% under "lower middle-income" poverty line
- 83% of Indians live on Rs 171/day or less
- Government considers Rs 3,288/day as tax-free threshold

NEWS IN SHORT: SOCIETY & SOCIAL JUSTICE

India's SDG Ranking Achievement

Current Position

- 1) 99th rank out of 167 countries in 2025 SDG Index
- 2) Score: 67 points
- 3) First-ever entry into top 100

Progress Trajectory

- 1) 2024: 109th rank
- 2) 2023: 112th rank
- 3) 2022: 121st rank
- 4) 2017: 116th rank



Regional Comparison

- 1) China: 49th (74.4 points)
- 2) US: 44th (75.2 points)
- 3) Bhutan: 74th (70.5 points)
- 4) Nepal: 85th (68.6 points)
- 5) Bangladesh: 114th (63.9 points)
- 6) Pakistan: 140th (57 points)

Key Improvement Areas

- 1) Poverty reduction
- 2) Clean energy expansion
- 3) Education access
- 4) Healthcare delivery
- 5) Swachh Bharat Mission impact
- 6) Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana

Global Context

- 1) Only 17% of global SDG targets on track for 2030

- 2) East and South Asian countries showing fastest progress

European/Nordic countries dominate top positions

India's Social Security Coverage Achievement

- 1) Coverage jumped from **19% in 2015 to 64.3% in 2025** - a remarkable 45 percentage point surge
- 2) Over 94 crore people now covered under at least one social protection benefit
- 3) India ranks 2nd globally in terms of beneficiary count for social security coverage

Global Recognition:

- 1) First country worldwide to update 2025 social protection coverage data in the ILO's ILOSTAT database
- 2) International Labour Organization (ILO) officially acknowledged India's achievement during the 113th International Labour Conference in Geneva
- 3) ILO Director-General Gilbert F. Houngbo praised India's focused welfare policies under PM Modi's leadership

Future Projections:

- 1) Current figure reflects only Phase I of data pooling exercise covering central schemes and women-centric programs in 8 states
- 2) Coverage expected to cross 100 crore mark once Phase II data is verified and incorporated

Global Gender Gap Report 2025

Why in News? WEF released Global Gender Gap Report 2025 showing global gender gap at 68.8% with full parity still 123 years away.

Key Report Highlights

- 1) **Index Framework:** Measures gender parity across 4 dimensions - Economic Participation & Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health & Survival, Political Empowerment
- 2) **Global Progress:** 68.8% gender gap closed globally across 148 countries; strongest advancement since COVID-19
- 3) **Dimension-wise Closure:** Health & Survival (96.2%), Educational Attainment (95.1%), Economic Participation (61.0%), Political Empowerment (22.9%)
- 4) **Leadership Gap:** Women represent 41.2% of workforce but only 28.8% of top leadership positions

Race to equality

The report said the global gender gap has closed to 68.8%. Below are the rankings of select countries:



Top 10 countries

1	Iceland
2	Finland
3	Norway
4	United Kingdom
5	New Zealand
6	Sweden
7	Republic of Moldova
8	Namibia
9	Germany
10	Ireland

India and its neighbours

Bangladesh	24	Bangladesh, with a ranking of 24, emerged as the best performer in South Asia
Bhutan	119	
Nepal	125	
Sri Lanka	130	
India	131	
Maldives	138	
Pakistan	148	

Report said full parity remains **123 years** away at current rates

Top Performers

- 1) **Global Leader:** Iceland (16th consecutive year) - 92.6% parity
- 2) **Top 5:** Finland, Norway, UK, New Zealand
- 3) **South Asia Best:** Bangladesh (rank 24, jumped 75 positions)
- 4) **Regional Rankings:** Nepal (125), Sri Lanka (130), Bhutan (119), Maldives (138), Pakistan (148)

India's Performance

- 1) **Overall Rank:** 131/148 (dropped 2 positions from 129)
- 2) **Parity Score:** 64.1% (improved +0.3 points)

Component-wise Performance:

- 1) **Economic Participation:** 144th rank (40.7% score)
- 2) **Educational Attainment:** 110th rank (97.1% score)
- 3) **Health & Survival:** 143rd rank (95.4% score)
- 4) **Political Empowerment:** 69th rank (24.5% score)

Key Declines: Female parliamentary representation fell from 14.7% to 13.8%; women ministers decreased from 6.5% to 5.6%

Other Gender Indices

- 1) **Gender Inequality Index (GII):** UNDP measure; India ranks 102/17
- 2) **Gender Development Index (GDI):** UNDP; India's score 0.874
- 3) **Global Gender Parity Index (GGPI):** UNDP-UN Women composite measure

Women's Empowerment Index (WEI): UNDP-UN Women; India scores 0.52

NAVYA Launch

Launch Details:

- 1) NAVYA (Nurturing Aspirations through Vocational Training for Young Adolescent Girls) was launched on June 24, 2025, in Sonbhadra, Uttar Pradesh
- 2) Joint initiative by Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) and Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)

Target Group:

- 1) Adolescent girls aged 16-18 years with minimum Class 10 qualification
- 2) Focus on vocational training in non-traditional job roles

NAVYA
Nurturing Aspirations through Vocational Training for Young Adolescent Girls

Aimed at equipping adolescent girls, aged 16-18 years*, with vocational training mainly in non-traditional/modern job roles such as:

- Drone Assembly Expert
- Smartphone Technician
- Graphic Designer
- Professional Makeup Artist
- CCTV Installation Technician

*With a minimum qualification of Class 10

Coverage:

- 1) Pilot programme implemented across 27 districts in 19 states
- 2) Includes aspirational districts and North-Eastern states
- 3) Reflects government's inclusive approach to reach underserved regions

Programme Features:

- 1) Builds on existing schemes like Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) and PM Vishwakarma

- 2) Formalizes inter-ministerial collaboration for adolescent girls' skilling
- 3) Launch event included interactions with trainees and certificate distribution

Vision:

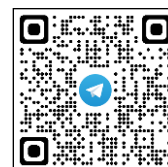
- 1) Aligns with Prime Minister's Viksit Bharat@2047 vision

Aims to empower girls as catalysts in India's journey towards developed, self-reliant future



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International Relations

June 2025

ISRAEL – IRAN CONFLICT

Why in News?

Israel and Iran are engaged in their most intense direct military confrontation in decades, with both nations exchanging missile and drone attacks for four consecutive days since June 13, 2025, raising fears of a broader regional war.

Timeline of Escalation

- **June 13 (Friday):** Israel launched surprise airstrikes on Iran under "Operation Rising Lion," targeting nuclear facilities and military installations, killing several senior military officers and nuclear scientists
- **June 14-15 (Weekend):** Iran retaliated with missile barrages targeting Israeli cities, while Israel continued strikes on Tehran and other Iranian locations
- **June 16 (Monday):** Both nations continued exchanging attacks with fresh missile salvos reported early Monday morning

Root Causes of Israel-Iran Conflict

- 1) **Historical Alliance to Enmity:** Iran and Israel were close allies under the Shah until the 1979 Iranian Revolution, when Iran transformed from Israel's ally to declaring it an "enemy of Islam" and the "Little Satan".
- 2) **Religious and Ideological Divide:** Iran is an Islamic republic governed by Shia Islam while Israel is a predominantly Jewish state, creating fundamental religious and ideological differences that fuel mutual suspicion and animosity.
- 3) **Iranian Nuclear Program:** Israel views Iran's nuclear program as an existential threat, fearing Iran may develop nuclear weapons that could undermine Israel's regional nuclear monopoly. Netanyahu claims Iran has "enough highly-enriched uranium for nine nuclear bombs".
- 4) **Palestinian Conflict Support:** Iran became a staunch supporter of Palestinian causes, backing militant groups like Hamas and Hezbollah that Israel considers terrorist organizations, while calling for Israel's destruction.
- 5) **Regional Power Competition:** Both nations are regional rivals vying for Middle East influence with conflicting interests in Syria, Yemen, and Lebanon, where Iran supports Assad regime and Houthis while Israel opposes Iranian influence.
- 6) **Proxy Warfare:** Since 1985, Iran and Israel have engaged in proxy conflicts, with Iran funding and training anti-Israel groups like Hezbollah, while Israel conducts targeted assassinations of Iranian nuclear scientists and military commanders.
- 7) **Geopolitical Realignment:** The collapse of the Soviet Union and Iraq's weakening in the 1990s removed common threats that previously aligned Iran and Israel, allowing their rivalry to intensify.

Military Operations

- **Israeli Strikes:** Targeted Iran's nuclear facilities in Natanz, defense ministry headquarters in Tehran, weapon production sites, and oil infrastructure including the Shahr oil depot
- **Iranian Retaliation:** Launched "Operation Honest Promise 3" with advanced missiles including the Haj Qassem missile, successfully penetrating Israeli air defenses to hit residential areas in Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Bat Yam
- **Current Status:** Israel targeting surface-to-surface missile sites in central Iran while Iran promises to "unleash hell" in response

Nuclear Dimension

- **Israeli Objectives:** Netanyahu claims the operation aims to eliminate Iran's "nuclear threat" and prevent final steps toward weapons development
- **Suspended Talks:** Nuclear negotiations between US and Iran, scheduled for Sunday, were canceled due to the ongoing conflict
- **Iranian Position:** Iran maintains its nuclear program is peaceful and refuses ceasefire talks while under attack

International Response

- **US Position:** Trump expresses full support for Israel while hoping for eventual ceasefire, reportedly blocked Israeli plan to assassinate Iran's Supreme Leader
- **G7 Summit:** World leaders meeting in Canada with Israel-Iran conflict as primary agenda item, focusing on preventing nuclear proliferation and regional escalation
- **European Stance:** EU's von der Leyen emphasizes Israel's right to self-defense while calling for diplomatic resolution and stating Iran must never obtain nuclear weapons

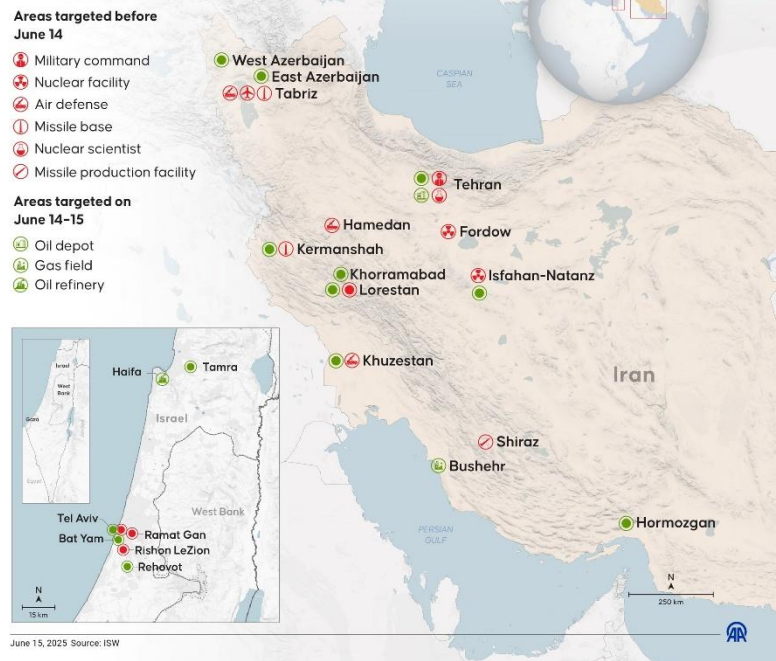
Economic and Regional Impact

- **Oil Prices:** Brent crude rose 1.1% to \$75.39 per barrel due to strikes on Iran's energy infrastructure
- **Flight Disruptions:** Israeli airline EL AL extended flight suspensions until June 19⁵
- **Regional Concerns:** Iran warned Israel's allies that their military installations would be targeted if they assist in intercepting Iranian missiles

Current Situation

- **School Closures:** Israel extended school closures until June 17 evening and issued public safety guidelines
- **No Ceasefire:** Iran rejected mediation efforts from Qatar and Oman, stating talks are "premature" during active hostilities
- **Continued Attacks:** Both sides showing no signs of backing down, with Israel threatening greater force and Iran vowing sustained retaliation

Strikes between Iran and Israel



War in Middle East: What next?

Why in News?

Israel and Iran are engaged in their most intense direct military confrontation since 1979, with Israel launching massive airstrikes on Iran's nuclear facilities starting June 13, 2025.

Key Events

- **Operation Rising Lion:** Israel launched surprise airstrikes on June 13 targeting Iran's nuclear and military facilities across dozen locations
- **Primary targets:** Natanz nuclear facility, Isfahan uranium conversion facility, missile sites, IRGC facilities
- **Key assassinations:** Killed IRGC commander Hossein Salami, Chief of Staff Mohammad Bagheri, intelligence chief Mohammad Kazemi, nuclear scientists Fereydoon Abbasi and Mohammad Mehdi Tehrani
- **Iranian retaliation:** Launched "Operation Severe Punishment" with 270+ missiles targeting Israeli cities including Tel Aviv, Haifa
- **Ongoing escalation:** Conflict entered fourth day with continued strikes from both sides



Casualties and Damage

- **Iranian losses:** 224+ killed, 1,200+ wounded; widespread infrastructure damage
- **Israeli losses:** 24+ killed, 592+ wounded; residential areas and oil refinery hit
- **Israeli claims:** Destroyed one-third of Iran's surface-to-surface missile launchers, achieved "full air superiority over Tehran"

What's Next?

- **Israeli position:** Netanyahu vows continued strikes until Iran's nuclear threat eliminated; maximal objectives require US involvement
- **Iranian response:** Parliament considering exit from Non-Proliferation Treaty; Supreme Leader promises fierce response
- **International reaction:** Trump supports Israel but urges nuclear deal; EU/UN call for de-escalation; regional Arab states condemn Israeli aggression
- **Strategic implications:** Iran pushed toward nuclear breakout while facing intelligence penetration; Israel achieves tactical success but faces limitations without full-scale war

Israel-Iran conflict: Why the world can't afford a blocked Strait of Hormuz

Link

Why in News?

Iranian legislators suggested closing the Strait of Hormuz after Israel widened attacks on Iran's oil facilities and civilian infrastructure.

Strategic Importance of Strait of Hormuz

- **Global Energy Transit:** Nearly one-fifth of global oil shipments and most Qatari LNG (one-third of global total) pass through the strait
- **Regional Dependency:** Half of global oil and gas reserves located under/around Persian Gulf waters
- **Limited Alternatives:** UAE and Saudi Arabia have bypass pipelines, but Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, and Iran have no alternative routes
- **Critical Chokepoint:** World's most strategically important maritime passage for global energy supplies



Iran's Control and Capabilities

Geographic Advantage:

- Controls northern side of Persian Gulf and Strait of Hormuz
- Maintains military presence on 7 of 8 major islands in the strait
- Navy bases at Bushehr, Bandar Abbas, and Chah Bahar
- Shipping corridor only 9km wide with two 3.2km lanes

Military Options Available:

- Armed speedboats to harass maritime traffic
- Armed drones targeting specific ships
- Anti-ship mines to saturate the strait
- Anti-ship missiles to sink tankers at strategic blocking points
- 4 Russian Kilo-class submarines and 19-23 midget submarines

Factors Preventing Closure

- **US Military Response:** Would likely draw US intervention capable of neutralizing Iranian anti-ship missiles
- **Economic Dependencies:** Japan, India, South Korea, and China heavily dependent on West Asian oil
- **Regional Relations:** Oman controls southern half of strait; Iran wants to avoid rifts with GCC nations
- **Self-Harm:** Closing strait would hurt Iran's own energy exports and revenue

Iran moves to block Strait of Hormuz: What this will mean for India, Tehran, world, in 4 points [Link](#)

Why in News?

Iran's Parliament approved closing the Strait of Hormuz after US strikes on three Iranian nuclear sites (Natanz, Fordow, Isfahan) on June 22, 2025, with final decision pending from Supreme National Security Council.

Strategic Importance of Strait of Hormuz

- **Geographic bottleneck:** 33 km wide at narrowest point, shipping lanes only 3.2 km wide each direction
- **Global oil dependency:** 20-30% of world's daily oil (20-21 million barrels) passes through daily
- **LNG transit:** One-third of world's liquefied natural gas, including all Qatar's LNG exports
- **No alternatives:** Persian Gulf region lacks sufficient alternative export routes



Iran's Blocking Capabilities

- **Methods available:** Mining the strait, missile attacks on vessels, drone strikes, physical blockade with warships, cyberattacks
- **Military assets:** Short and medium-range missiles, Shahed drones, Revolutionary Guard naval forces
- **Historical precedent:** Tanker Wars during 1980s Iran-Iraq conflict, 2023 seizure of Advantage Sweet tanker
- **Limitations:** Would face swift US Fifth Fleet response, lacks legal authority to block international waters

Global and Indian Impact

- **Price surge:** Oil prices expected to reach \$80-100 per barrel
- **India's vulnerability:** Major impact on crude imports from Iraq and Saudi Arabia, 84% of Hormuz oil goes to Asian markets
- **China factor:** Beijing heavily dependent on Iranian oil through Hormuz, US urging Chinese intervention
- **Economic disruption:** \$1 billion daily oil exports at risk, global supply chain disruptions

News / Explained / Explained Global / Fallout of Trump-Zelenskyy showdown: Where the major players stand

Fallout of Trump-Zelenskyy showdown: Where the major players stand

Ukraine is the biggest loser. Europe comes a close second. Meanwhile, Russia is likely thrilled at what just unfolded. India maintains caution

IE Explained; By Arjun Sengupta

Syllabus: Pre/Mains – International Relations [Link](#)

Why in news?

Israel launched unprecedented strikes against Iran's nuclear facilities and military leadership on June 13, 2025, under "Operation Rising Lion," killing top commanders and escalating Middle East tensions.

Israel's strikes on Iran

Israel launched strikes on military and nuclear targets across Iran on Friday (Jun 13). Revolutionary Guards chief Hossein Salami and armed forces chief of staff Mohammad Bagheri were killed in the attacks.



Background Context

- **Nuclear talks stalemate:** US-Iran negotiations ongoing since April 2025, sixth round scheduled for Sunday in Muscat
- **IAEA resolution:** Day before strikes, IAEA declared Iran non-compliant with nuclear obligations for first time in 20 years
- **Uranium enrichment:** Iran currently enriching to 60% purity, close to weapons-grade 90%
- **Trump pressure:** US President reportedly told Netanyahu to end Gaza war and stop Iran attack talk

Current Status

- **Israel emergency:** Nationwide state of emergency declared, schools closed, expecting missile/drone retaliation
- **Nuclear talks uncertain:** Sunday negotiations in Muscat now deeply uncertain following strikes
- **Regional escalation risk:** Middle East faces potential wider conflict as both sides prepare for further retaliation

Key Strike Details

- **Operation name:** Rising Lion - targeted Iran's nuclear enrichment sites, military infrastructure, and senior officials
- **Primary targets:** Natanz nuclear facility, nuclear scientists, ballistic missile sites, Revolutionary Guard headquarters
- **Casualties:** Three top Iranian military commanders killed - Hossein Salami (Revolutionary Guard chief), Mohammad Bagheri (Armed Forces Chief), Amir Ali Hajizadeh (missile program head)
- **Nuclear scientists killed:** Fereydoon Abbasi and Mohammad Mehdi Tehrani
- **Scale:** Over 200 Israeli aircraft, 330+ munitions, 100+ targets across multiple waves

Iran's Response

- **Immediate retaliation:** Launched 100+ drones toward Israel, most intercepted
- **Threatened escalation:** Supreme Leader Khamenei warned of "bitter fate" for Israel
- **Nuclear program acceleration:** Announced new uranium enrichment facility at "strategically secure site"

Premium

Targeting nuclear plants in Iran and Ukraine: Playing with fire

These actions cross more than red lines — they pose global risks in an age of fragile energy transitions

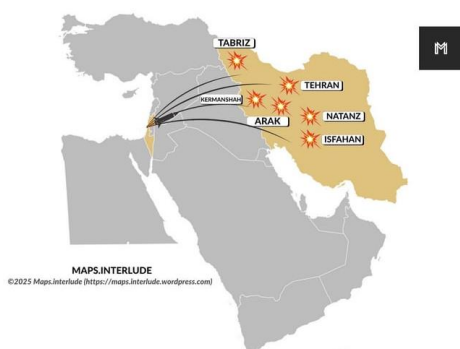
IE Opinion; By Syed Akbaruddin;
 Syllabus: Pre/Mains – International Relations [Link](#)

Why in News?

Israel's strikes on Iranian nuclear sites and military activity around Ukraine's nuclear facilities are normalizing attacks on civilian nuclear infrastructure, crossing international red lines.

Israel struck several nuclear sites in Iran

13/06/2025


Current Threat Pattern

- Nuclear facilities becoming strategic targets despite longstanding protection principles
- Recent incidents echo past precedents (Iraq's Osirak 1981, Syria's Deir ez-Zor 2007)
- Civilian nuclear infrastructure now treated as legitimate military targets
- Erosion of global understanding that previously helped avert catastrophe

International Legal Framework

- Article 56 of 1977 Geneva Convention prohibits attacks on nuclear plants
- IAEA condemns strikes on safeguarded facilities as international law violations
- Current legal instruments fragmented and lack enforcement mechanisms

Conflicting Justifications
Israeli Position:

- Preventive self-defense against Iran's undeclared facilities
- Concerns over Iran's missile program and weapons-grade enrichment levels

Iranian Position:

- NPT signatory maintaining peaceful nuclear program
- Declared facilities under IAEA safeguards

Global Implications

- Radiation spreads beyond borders regardless of political causes
- Risk of radiological disaster endangering thousands
- Undermines confidence in multilateral non-proliferation regime
- Nuclear power gaining renewed relevance for climate goals and energy security

India's Stakes

- Target of 100 GW nuclear capacity by 2047 (currently 8 GW)
- Nuclear power central to energy strategy and net-zero goals
- India-Pakistan Agreement (1988) shows nuclear restraint is possible
- Annual exchange of facility lists demonstrates responsible stewardship

Proposed Solution

- Need for binding international convention banning attacks on civilian nuclear facilities
- Such norm would promote restraint and protect global nuclear framework
- Nuclear infrastructure should never be considered a legitimate target

Premium

From the Opinions Editor: India needs a well thought out trade strategy, but first it needs a China strategy

China's centrality to the global production system is a reality that cannot be wished away

IE Explained; By Ishan Bakshi;
 Syllabus: Pre/Mains – International Relations [Link](#)

Why in News?

Modi government pursues trade deals with UK, US, EU while grappling with China's dominant role in global supply chains.

Economic Context & Trade Deals
Current Performance

- Average growth of 6.2% between 2014-25, less than spectacular despite government efforts
- Trade deals struck with UK, ongoing talks with US and EU
- Aim to embed India in global supply chains and boost exports

China's Central Role in Global Supply Chains
Apple Case Study

- Apple scaling up iPhone production in India for US market
- 156 of Apple's suppliers located in China vs only 14 in India (2023 data)
- Over 20 component suppliers now in India, but China remains central

Trade Reality

- India's trade deficit with China surged from \$53.5 billion (2018-19) to \$99.2 billion (2024-25)
- This happened despite not joining RCEP trade agreement
- US deficit with China still at \$295 billion despite decoupling efforts

Critical Dependencies

- China controls 90% of global rare earth processing
- Chinese export restrictions affecting India's EV manufacturers
- Multiple sectors risk impact from supply disruptions

India's Strategic Dilemma

Key Questions

- Should India join RCEP and CPTPP for regional integration?
- How to balance China concerns with supply chain realities?
- Need for clear China strategy beyond current approach

Investment Impact

- Unclear trade strategy affects domestic and foreign investment decisions
- Firms prefer other jurisdictions due to unfavorable risk-return matrix in India
- Stable trade relations essential for manufacturing scale-up

- Iran is NPT signatory with mandatory IAEA safeguards agreement
- Real-time radiation monitoring systems installed at all facilities
- Gamma rays can be detected from long distances, even by satellites

Facility Damage Assessment

- Most crucial infrastructure is underground making damage assessment difficult
- Fordow facility almost entirely underground
- IAEA preliminary findings: Natanz fuel enrichment plant hit, craters visible at Fordow, Isfahan buildings and tunnel entrances damaged
- IAEA teams ready for inspections but safety concerns prevent immediate access

Nuclear Material Accountability

- Iran possesses 400kg uranium enriched to 60% - close to weapons-grade 90% level
- Iran claims sensitive materials evacuated to undisclosed locations before attacks
- Satellite images show vehicle convoys at Fordow suggesting material movement
- Risk of unverified nuclear material use or proliferation if IAEA loses tracking capability
- Future inspections may be compromised, affecting global nuclear material accounting

News / Explained / Explained Global / Explained: Challenges before IAEA after attacks on Iran's nuclear sites

Explained: Challenges before IAEA after attacks on Iran's nuclear sites

According to the IAEA, Iran has 400 kg of uranium that is already enriched to 60%, just a few steps away from further enrichment to weapons-grade level of 90% or more

IE Explained; By Amitabh Sinha;
Syllabus: Pre/Mains – International Relations [Link](#)

Why in News?

US and Israel attacked Iran's nuclear facilities at Natanz, Isfahan and Fordow - marking the first time operational nuclear sites have been targeted for destruction.

Key Challenges for IAEA

Radiation Risk Assessment

- No radiation increase detected so far by IAEA monitoring equipment

Six takeaways from war-torn West Asia

India's bilateral relations with Israel have acquired a new chemistry and are at an all-time high but Iran is a partner that cannot be dispensed with either

IE Opinion; By Pankaj Saran;
Syllabus: Pre/Mains – International Relations [Link](#)

Why in News?

Recent Israeli and US military strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities have significantly escalated West Asian tensions, prompting analysis of regional power dynamics and India's diplomatic balancing act.

Six Key Takeaways from West Asian Crisis

Strategic Developments

- **Israel's systematic approach:** Started with Hamas (Oct 7, 2023), progressed through Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, ending with Iran - described as "strategic sanitising on fast forward"
- **Iran isolated but surviving:** Regime remains intact despite military degradation and regional isolation

- **Israel's pyrrhic victory:** Military success but loss of international public opinion, lacking political solution

International Order Impact

- **Rules-based order collapse:** Unilateralism trumps multilateralism; interests override values
- **Double standards exposed:** Different treatment for different countries (Iran vs Pakistan example cited)
- **Modern warfare evolution:** Speed, precision, timing replace protracted ground wars with high-tech contactless operations

India's Strategic Position

- **Multi-alignment approach:** Balancing ties with Israel (all-time high), Gulf states (Saudi Arabia, UAE), and Iran
- **Israel partnership:** United against terrorism, mutual support during crises
- **Iran necessity:** Cannot be dispensed with due to civilizational links, geography, Pakistan counter-balance factor
- **Consistent policy:** Country-specific approach rather than pan-regional strategy

Regional Implications

- **Gulf states' stance:** Condemned Iran's strikes, silent relief over nuclear defanging but uncertain about permanence
- **Limited global support:** Islamic world offers only lip service; Russia-China avoid involvement
- **India's Operation Sindoor:** Defended national interests similar to US-Israeli actions against threats

News / Explained / Everyday Explainers / Rajnath refuses to sign SCO draft statement: Significance, explained in 3 points

Rajnath refuses to sign SCO draft statement: Significance, explained in 3 points

SCO Summit: What is the SCO, and what is the significance of Rajnath Singh's action in a China-dominated organisation? We explain in 3 points.

IE Explained;
Syllabus: Pre/Mains – International Relations [Link](#)

Why in News?

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh refused to sign SCO draft statement on June 26 after it omitted reference to Pahalgam terror attack but mentioned Pakistan's Jaffar Express hijacking.

About SCO and the Incident

What is SCO:

- 10-member grouping including India, China, Russia, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Iran, and Belarus
- Established June 15, 2001 in Shanghai, evolved from "Shanghai Five" (1996)
- World's largest regional organization by area and population
- Focuses on security cooperation and anti-terrorism



What Happened:

- Rajnath Singh refused to sign draft statement at SCO Defence Ministers' meeting in Qingdao, China
- Document excluded Pahalgam terror attack (April 22) but included train hijacking in Pakistan's Balochistan
- MEA spokesperson confirmed India wanted terrorism concerns reflected, which "one particular country" (Pakistan) opposed
- No joint statement issued as India refused participation

Significance of Rajnath's Action

Strategic Context:

- SCO traditionally dominated by Russia-China, now China leads due to Russia's Ukraine engagement
- China is current SCO chair, meeting held in Chinese city
- Pakistan is China's major ally; Beijing shields Pakistan in international forums

Policy Implications:

- Demonstrates India's "no compromise on terrorism" stance
- Shows India won't accept business as usual while terrorism persists
- Reinforces India's position against cross-border terrorism as state policy
- Sets precedent for India's approach in China-dominated multilateral forums

Next key event: SCO Council of Heads of State meeting in Tianjin this autumn.

SCO is a reminder: India needs to rethink its regional policy

Delhi can't rely on multilateral forums to fight battle against terror.

IE Opinion;

Syllabus: Pre/Mains – International Relations [Link](#)

Why in News?

India refused to sign the SCO joint statement due to omission of the Pahalgam terror attack while including references to Balochistan militancy.



Key Issues

SCO Statement Controversy

- **Pahalgam attack excluded:** April 22 terror attack reference blocked by Pakistan
- **Balochistan included:** Joint statement referenced militant activities favoring Pakistan's narrative
- **India's response:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh refused to sign the skewed statement

Multilateral Forum Limitations

- **China's dominance:** Beijing protects Pakistan as its "all-weather ally"
- **Russia's shift:** Moscow increasingly dependent on China, won't support India against Beijing
- **Veto power reality:** Each country can block unfavorable content in joint declarations

Strategic Implications

Regional Power Dynamics

- **China's expanding influence:** Recent trilateral meeting with Pakistan and Bangladesh in Kunming
- **Pakistan's resilience:** Despite economic weakness, retains capacity to challenge India through US outreach and China partnership

- **Bangladesh's alignment:** Since August government change, aligning with anti-India forces

Policy Recommendations

- **Abandon illusions:** Stop believing India can diplomatically isolate Pakistan or unilaterally dictate terms to Bangladesh
- **Revive communication:** Restart channels with Islamabad and Rawalpindi
- **Reset Bangladesh approach:** Stop condescending attitude toward Dhaka
- **Address internal polarization:** Religious polarization creating dangerous strategic trap

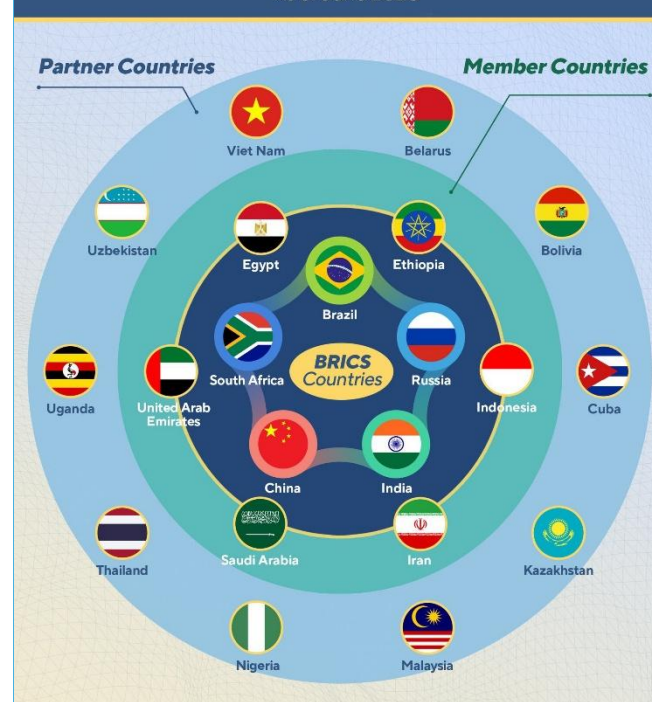
The core message: India must abandon reliance on multilateral forums for counter-terrorism battles and proactively engage regional neighbors to prevent China from exploiting South Asian divisions.

NEWS IN SHORT: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Vietnam officially Joins BRICS As 'Partner Country'

THE GROWING BRICS FAMILY

* As of June 2025



Official Announcement: Brazil's Ministry of Foreign Affairs officially announced Vietnam's admission as a BRICS partner country on June

13, 2025, in its capacity as the rotating BRICS chair.

Partnership Status

- 1) Vietnam became the **10th BRICS partner country**, joining Belarus, Bolivia, Kazakhstan, Cuba, Malaysia, Nigeria, Thailand, Uganda, and Uzbekistan.
- 2) The partner country category was established at the XVI BRICS Summit in Kazan in October 2024.

Strategic Significance

- 1) Vietnam stands out as a relevant actor in Asia with nearly 100 million people and a dynamic economy deeply integrated into global value chains.
- 2) The move reflects Vietnam's strategy to diversify trading relationships and reduce reliance on the US amid rising trade tensions and tariff risks.

Policy Alignment

- 1) Vietnam shares BRICS members' commitment to a more inclusive and representative international order and South-South cooperation.
- 2) Vietnamese officials confirmed this reaffirms the country's foreign policy of independence, multilateralization, and diversification of external relations.

Economic Context

- 1) Vietnam is the **fourth ASEAN country** to gain BRICS partner status, following Malaysia, Indonesia (full member), and Thailand.

The partnership offers potential benefits including access to BRICS institutions like the New Development Bank and opportunities for infrastructure financing.

Global Peace Index 2025

Global Peace Crisis

- 1) Global peace is at its lowest level since the Index's inception, with conditions that precede conflict being the worst since World War II
- 2) The world has become less peaceful over the past 17 years, with the average country score declining by 5.4% since 2008
- 3) There are currently 59 active state-based conflicts – the most since the end of WWII, with 152,000 conflict-related deaths recorded in 2024

Economic Impact

- 1) The global economic impact of violence reached \$19.97 trillion in 2024, equivalent to 11.6% of global GDP1
- 2) Military expenditure alone accounted for \$2.7 trillion, while peacekeeping efforts totaled just \$47.2 billion

Country Rankings and Regional Trends

GPI Rank 2025	Country	Region	GPI Score 2025
1	Iceland	Europe	1.095
2	Ireland	Europe	1.260
3	New Zealand	Oceania	1.282
4	Austria	Europe	1.294
115	India	South Asia	2.229
162	Ukraine	Europe	3.434
163	Russia	Europe/Asia (Eurasia)	3.441

- 1) Iceland continues as the world's most peaceful country, a position held since 20082
- 2) India ranks 115th globally with a GPI score of 2.229, showing a 0.58% improvement from the previous year2
- 3) The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) remains the least peaceful region for the tenth consecutive year2
- 4) South Asia recorded the largest average deterioration of all regions

Conflict Internationalization

- 1) Conflicts are becoming more internationalized, with 78 countries involved in conflicts beyond their borders in 20241

The number of globally influential countries has nearly tripled since the Cold War, rising from 13 to 34 by 2023

UNGA declares 2026 as the International Year of the Woman Farmer



- 1) **UN Resolution Adopted:** The UN General Assembly adopted a resolution in May 2024 declaring 2026 as the International Year of the Woman Farmer, proposed by the United States and supported by over 100 countries.
- 2) **Implementation Leadership:** The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), in collaboration with other Rome-based UN agencies, will facilitate the implementation and observance of this international year.
- 3) **Core Objectives:** The initiative aims to raise awareness about the crucial role women farmers play in global food systems, food security, nutrition, and poverty eradication.
- 4) **Addressing Challenges:** The year will serve as a platform to address barriers women farmers face, including limited access to land ownership, credit, financing, and agricultural technologies.
- 5) **Global Support:** The resolution invites UN member states, international organizations, civil society, private sector, and academia to participate in activities promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in agriculture.

Significance for Agriculture: Despite comprising 39% of the global agricultural labour force, women farmers face significant discrimination and challenges, making this recognition crucial for advancing inclusive and sustainable food systems.

India's Election to UN Economic and Social Council

Election Details:

- 1) India was elected to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for the term 2026-28 on June 5, 2025
- 2) India received overwhelming support with 181 out of 187 valid votes cast
- 3) External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar announced the election and thanked member states for their trust

Significance and Commitment:

- 1) This marks at least the 18th term for India on ECOSOC, having last completed a four-term run from 2008 to 2020
- 2) ECOSOC is at the heart of the UN system to advance economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development
- 3) India pledged its commitment to championing development issues and strengthening ECOSOC

Council Structure:

- 1) ECOSOC has **54 members with terms distributed across regional groups** for fair geographical representation
- 2) The council plays a key role in recommending policies related to economic and social issues

As Pakistan fails to get into 'expected' UNSC panels, India in talks with friends



Pakistan's Demands vs. Reality

- 1) Pakistan demanded leadership of 4 major counter-terrorism committees: 1267 Sanctions Committee, 1540 Non-Proliferation Committee, 1988 Taliban Committee, and 1373 Counter Terrorism Committee

- 2) Only received 1 full chairship: Chair of the 1988 Taliban Sanctions Committee, with Russia and Guyana as Vice-Chairs
- 3) Other minor positions granted: Vice-Chair of 1373 CTC (ceremonial role), co-chair positions in working groups with Greece and Denmark

Process and Reactions

- 1) Caused significant delays: Pakistan's "unreasonable demands" delayed committee allocation by 5 months, when it should have been completed by January 2025
- 2) UNSC members unhappy: Council members were dissatisfied with Pakistan's "uncompromising and undeserving attitude"
- 3) Historic precedent set: For the first time in UNSC history, an Informal Working Group will have two co-chairs, interpreted as a move to "rein in Pakistan"

India's Response Strategy

- 1) Working with allies: India is collaborating with "friends" on the UNSC to counter Pakistan's moves
- 2) Leveraging Pakistan's terrorism record: Sources noted Pakistan has over 50 individuals and entities designated in the 1267 Sanctions Committee, reflecting its role as a "state sponsor of terrorism"

The outcome represents a significant diplomatic setback for Pakistan, falling "far below its aspirations" despite its efforts.

Operation Sindhu - Iran Evacuation

- 1) 110 Indian students evacuated from conflict-hit Iran
- 2) Due to escalating Iran-Israel tensions
- 3) Students moved from northern Iran to Armenia by road June 17
- 4) Special IndiGo flight 6E 9487 from Yerevan to Delhi
- 5) Departed Armenia June 18 at 14:55 IST, landed Delhi early June 19
- 6) 90 students from Kashmir, studying at Urmia University of Medical Sciences
- 7) Coordinated by Indian Embassies in Tehran and Armenia
- 8) MoS External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh welcomed evacuees
- 9) 24x7 helplines activated for assistance

WHA's landmark resolution on skin diseases

Historic Recognition

- 1) First-ever WHO resolution declaring skin diseases a global public health priority
- 2) Adopted unanimously at 78th World Health Assembly in May 2025
- 3) Led by Côte d'Ivoire, co-sponsored by Colombia, China, Egypt, Micronesia, Nigeria, and Togo

Addressing Massive Global Burden

- 1) Over 2 billion people affected by skin conditions worldwide
- 2) Skin diseases among top 10 causes of disability globally
- 3) Long neglected despite being most common health conditions

Key Mandates for Equity

- 1) Development of WHO Global Action Plan for comprehensive response
- 2) Strengthening primary healthcare systems and workforce training
- 3) Expanding access to affordable diagnostics and treatments
- 4) Integration into disability, rehabilitation, and mental health policies

Addressing Social Impact

- 1) Tackling stigma and discrimination from visible skin conditions
- 2) Recognizing emotional distress and social consequences
- 3) Promoting dignity and human rights for affected populations

Innovation and Research Focus

- 1) Promoting multidisciplinary research on new diagnostics
- 2) Advancing digital tools and tele-dermatology
- 3) Ensuring equitable access to affordable treatments

Systemic Change

- 1) Integrating skin health into broader health systems
- 2) Improving surveillance and early detection capabilities

Strengthening universal health coverage progress

Economy and Agriculture

June 2025

World Milk Day 2025 (May 31)

- 1) World Milk Day 2025 theme: "Let's Celebrate the Power of Dairy"
- 2) India maintains position as **world's largest milk producer since 1998**
- 3) India produces 25% of world's milk with 63.56% growth in production between 2014-15 and 2023-24
- 4) **Uttar Pradesh** leads milk production contributing 16.21% of total output
- 5) **West Bengal** shows fastest growth at 9.76% compared to 2022-23

Government Schemes Highlighted:

- 1) **Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM):** To enhance productivity of bovines and increase milk production sustainably while promoting indigenous cattle and buffalo rearing and conservation
- 2) **National Programme for Dairy Development (NPDD):** To modernize dairy infrastructure and improve milk procurement, processing capabilities, and quality control measures for better market access.
- 3) **Livestock Health & Disease Control Programme (LHDCP):** To improve animal health through prophylactic vaccination programs, disease surveillance, and strengthening veterinary infrastructure to prevent and control livestock diseases.
- 4) **Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF):** To increase milk and meat processing capacity and product diversification by providing greater market access for rural producers to organized markets.
- 5) **Kisan Credit Card for livestock/dairy farmers:** To provide adequate and timely credit support to farmers including those in animal husbandry and fisheries for working capital needs under a simplified single-window system.

Indian cities have a drainage problem

Stormwater drains invariably carry sewage in a majority of our cities, including Delhi. This is largely due to poorly managed sewerage systems

IE The Editorial Page; By Ashvani Kumar Gosain;
Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Economy [Link](#)

Why in News?

Indian cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata are experiencing increased urban flooding due to failing drainage infrastructure and climate change.

Core Problems

- Design limitations: Drainage systems built for 1-in-2-year rainfall frequency, inadequate for current climate patterns
- Urban expansion: Increased concretization reduces natural water absorption, strains existing drain capacity
- Poor maintenance: Improper desilting allows silt accumulation, reducing drain carrying capacity
- Mixed systems: Stormwater drains carry sewage due to poorly managed sewerage networks

- Climate impact: Increased rainfall intensity overwhelms existing infrastructure designed for lower magnitudes
- Encroachment: Water body encroachment reduces natural drainage outlets
- Access issues: Many drains permanently covered, making maintenance virtually impossible

Technical Challenges

- Catchment changes: Population growth and land use changes exceed original drain design parameters
- Gravity flow issues: Low-lying areas require pumping systems for water evacuation
- Capacity mismatch: Actual stormwater volume exceeds designed capacity due to increased paved surfaces
- Cross-sectional inadequacy: Drain sizes insufficient for increased water flow from expanded catchments

Solutions Framework

- Immediate measures: Proper desilting, creating access points for maintenance, scientific planning using GIS simulation

- Long-term strategies: Underground storage systems, enhanced groundwater recharge, rooftop gardens for water retention
- Infrastructure upgrades: Consider 1-in-5-year return period for new designs, install stormwater tunnels (expensive option)
- Natural solutions: Rejuvenate water bodies, prevent encroachment, increase permeable surfaces

News / Explained / Explained: The cost of rising imports

Explained: The cost of rising imports

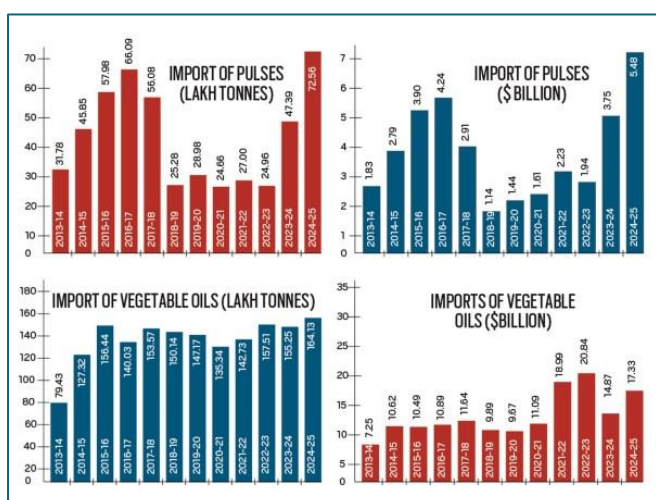
Imports of pulses and edible oils have scaled new highs, even as cultivation of these crops have turned increasingly unremunerative for farmers

IE Explained; By Harish Damodaran;
 Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Economy [Link](#)

Why in News? Record-high imports of pulses and edible oils are making cultivation of these crops increasingly unprofitable for Indian farmers.

Farmer's Dilemma

- Rao Gulab Singh Lodi harvested 90 quintals summer moong from 16 acres in MP's Narsinghpur district
- Market price Rs 6,000/quintal vs MSP of Rs 8,682 - no government procurement
- Grows soyabean (kharif), chana and masoor (rabi), summer moong - none have systematic MSP procurement
- Soyabean selling at Rs 4,100-4,200/quintal, below MSP of Rs 5,328 for 2025-26
- Black cotton soil suitable only for pulses/oilseeds, not rice/wheat



Record Pulses Imports

- **2024-25 imports:** 7.3 million tonnes worth \$5.5 billion - surpassing previous record of 6.6 mt (\$4.2 billion) in 2016-17
- **Import composition:** Yellow/white peas (2.2 mt), chana (1.6 mt), arhar and masoor (1.2 mt each), urad (0.8 mt)
- **Production decline:** Dropped from 27.3 mt (2021-22) to 24.2 mt (2023-24) due to El Niño drought
- **Price impact:** CPI inflation eased from double digits to -8.2% by May 2025
- Arhar selling at Rs 6,400-6,450/quintal vs MSP Rs 7,550

Vegetable Oil Import Surge

- **11-year trend:** Imports doubled from 7.9 mt to 16.4 mt (2013-14 to 2024-25)
- **Value increase:** From \$7.2 billion to \$20.8 billion by 2022-23
- **Import composition:** Palm oil (7.9 mt), soyabean oil (4.8 mt), sunflower oil (3.5 mt)
- **Import dependence:** Over 60% (domestic production only ~10 mt)
- **Duty cuts:** Government reduced customs duty from 27.5% to 16.5% on May 30

Future Outlook

- USDA projects record global vegetable oil output of 235 mt for 2025-26
- Duty cuts expected to further increase imports, especially US soyabean oil
- Industry warns of "flooding Indian market with cheaper imported oils"
- Farmers may reduce oilseed cultivation area in upcoming kharif season

When it comes to critical minerals, India cannot rely on China — it needs to fast track its own exploration

It is near-impossible to secure mineral supply chains from overseas — even the US is struggling. As a country that is geologically rich, India must explore within

IE Opinion; By Dhiraj Nayyar;
 Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Geography, Economy [Link](#)

Why in News?

Trump's focus on critical minerals for annexing territories and India's under-exploration despite geological richness highlights urgent need for domestic mineral exploration.

Critical Minerals Driving Global Politics

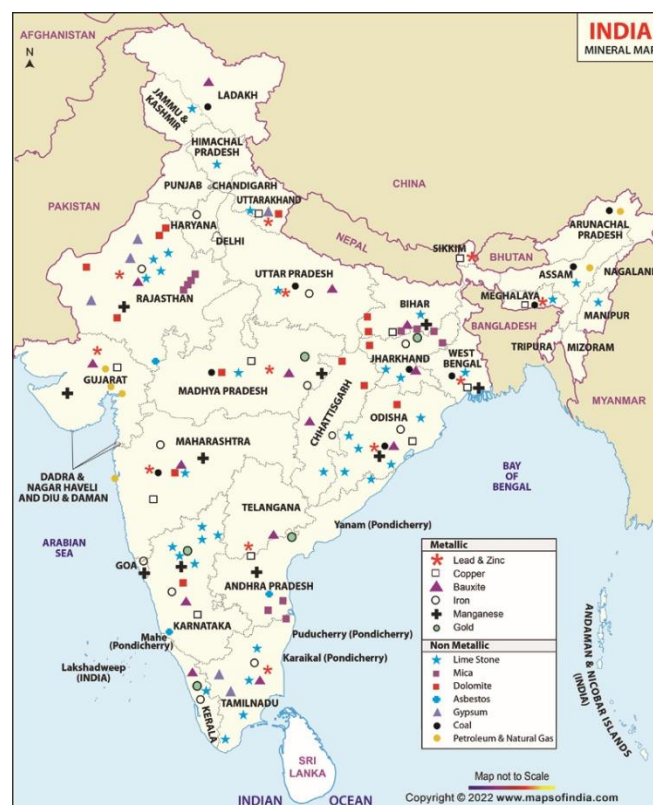
- **Trump's mineral strategy:** Targeting Canada, Greenland for mineral wealth; fast-tracking US federal land exploration
- **China's dominance threat:** Using rare earth control to threaten US and global supply chains
- **Geopolitical shift:** Minerals replacing oil as center of international security concerns

Technology Driving Mineral Demand

- **Climate tech intensity:** EVs use 6x more minerals than conventional vehicles; offshore wind projects consume 9x more minerals than conventional power plants
- **Fourth industrial revolution:** AI, robotics, big data require copper-intensive digital infrastructure and energy-hungry data centers
- **Growing demand-supply gap:** Increasing adoption creating critical shortages

Dangerous Supply Concentration

- **Mining concentration:**
 - Cobalt: Almost exclusively from Congo
 - Nickel: Indonesia dominates (50% global supply)
 - Rare earths: China controls two-thirds
 - Lithium: Australia, Chile, China dominate
- **Processing monopoly:** China controls 66% of critical mineral processing, 90%+ for rare earths
- **Strategic vulnerability:** China can halt global EV industry by restricting rare earth supply



India's Imperative

- **Cannot rely on China:** Overseas supply chain security nearly impossible even for US
- **Under-explored potential:** India geologically rich but remains under-explored
- **Manufacturing ambitions:** Critical for becoming serious manufacturing player
- **Domestic exploration urgency:** Must fast-track internal mineral exploration following US model

NEWS IN SHORT: ECONOMY & AGRICULTURE

Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) for Kharif 2025

Cabinet approved Rs 37,216 crore subsidy for phosphatic and potassic (P&K) fertilizers for Kharif season 2025 (April-September)

About Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS)

- 1) Government subsidy scheme for **phosphatic and potassic (P&K) fertilizers** based on nutrient content rather than product-wise subsidies.
- 2) Introduced in April 2010, replacing the earlier **Retention Price Scheme (RPS)**
- 3) **Nutrient-Based Calculation:** Subsidy rates fixed per kg of nutrients - Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P), Potash (K), and Sulphur (S)

- 4) **Annual Fixation:** Government announces subsidy rates at the beginning of each fiscal year for both Kharif and Rabi seasons
- 5) **Direct Payment:** Subsidy paid directly to fertilizer manufacturers/importers, not farmers
- 6) **Fertilizers Included:** All P&K fertilizers like DAP, MOP, NPK complexes, Single Super Phosphate (SSP)
- 7) **Exclusions:** Urea remains under separate statutory pricing control with different subsidy mechanism

NAKSHA

NAKSHA
 A Step Towards Accurate, Transparent, and
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SIX DAYS
National Training Programme on NAKSHA

Designed for ULB's and district-level officers to enhance their understanding of NAKSHA and its implementation framework.

Centre of Excellence:

- Guwahati (Centre of Excellence on Land Governance)
- Chandigarh (MCSIPA)
- Pune (YASHADA)
- Mussoorie (LBSNAA)
- Mysuru (ATI)

NAKSHA stands for **NAtional geospatial Knowledge-based land Survey of urban HABitations** - a city survey initiative under the Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP)

Recent Developments

- 1) The second phase of NAKSHA capacity building programme was launched on June 2, 2025, by the Department of Land Resources, **Ministry of Rural Development**.
- 2) 304 ULB-level and district officers from 157 Urban Local Bodies are undergoing week-long training across five Centres of Excellence.
- 3) Training covers modern geospatial technologies, GNSS surveying, Web-GIS applications, and land parcel mapping.

Program Scope

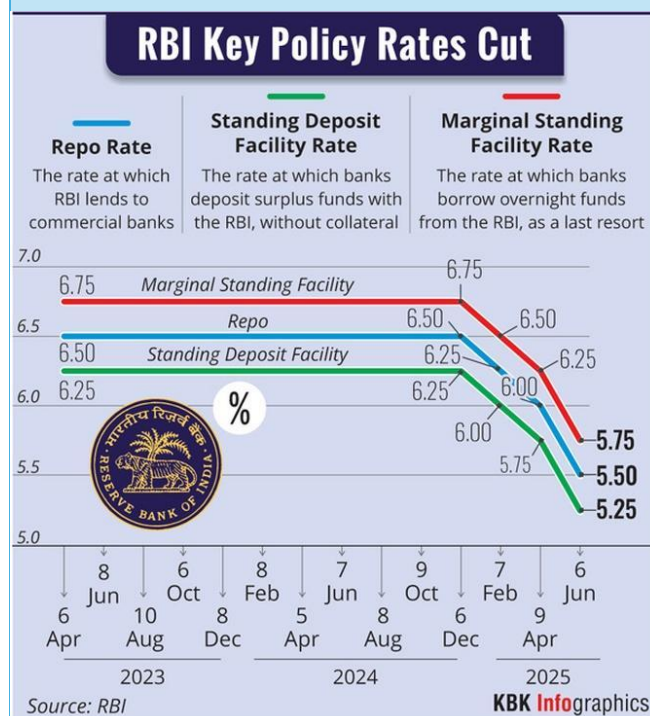
- 1) **Coverage:** 157 Urban Local Bodies across 27 states and 3 Union Territories.

- 2) **Target cities:** Those with area less than 35 sq km and population under 2 lakhs.
- 3) **Timeline:** Aims to cover entire urban areas in the country within 5 years.

Key Objectives

- 1) Create comprehensive geospatial database for urban land records using aerial surveys and GIS technology.
- 2) Address India's fragmented land records system and reduce land disputes (currently 66% of civil cases are land-related).
- 3) Support urban planning as India's urban population is expected to exceed 600 million by 2031.

RBI Repo Rate Cut - Economic Relief



- 1) **Rate Reduction:** Repo rate slashed by 50 basis points from 6% to 5.5% - the most aggressive cut since Covid-era
- 2) **Additional Liquidity Boost:** Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) cut by 100 basis points to 3%, releasing ₹2.5 lakh crore into the banking system
- 3) **EMI Relief:** Home loan EMIs expected to drop significantly - savings of ₹800-1,200 per lakh for borrowers
- 4) **Policy Stance Change:** RBI shifted from 'accommodative' to 'neutral' stance, indicating future rate cuts less certain

Economic Projections:

- 1) Inflation forecast lowered to 3.7% from 4% for current fiscal
- 2) GDP growth estimate retained at 6.5%
- 3) Current inflation at 3.16% in April, lowest since July 2019

Market Impact: Decision made unanimously by MPC to support economic growth amid global uncertainties and US tariff concerns.

Digital Agriculture Mission - Rs 2,817 Crore Initiative**Mission Overview:**

- 1) Union Cabinet approved Rs 2,817 crore outlay with Rs 1,940 crore central government share
- 2) Umbrella scheme to create Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) for agriculture sector
- 3) Aims to provide farmer-centric digital solutions and timely crop-related information

Key Components:

- 1) **AgriStack:** Digital farmer registry providing Aadhaar-like unique IDs to 11 crore farmers
- 2) **Krishi Decision Support System:** Integrates remote sensing data on crops, soil, weather, and water resources
- 3) **Digital General Crop Estimation Survey:** Provides accurate agricultural production estimates
- 4) **Soil Profile Mapping:** Detailed maps of 142 million hectares of agricultural land

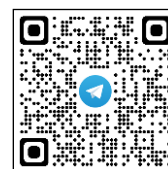
Expected Benefits:

- 1) Enhanced access to credit, insurance, and government schemes through digital authentication
- 2) Direct-indirect employment opportunities for around 2,50,000 trained youth and Krishi Sakhis
- 3) Improved transparency in crop insurance and loan systems



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Ayan Jain, AIR-16

I want to thank Kalam IAS for their support in CSE 2023. I was a part of the interview guidance course where I found the current affairs material to be extremely good, and I have also benefited previously from the value addition material provided by Kalam IAS for Mains
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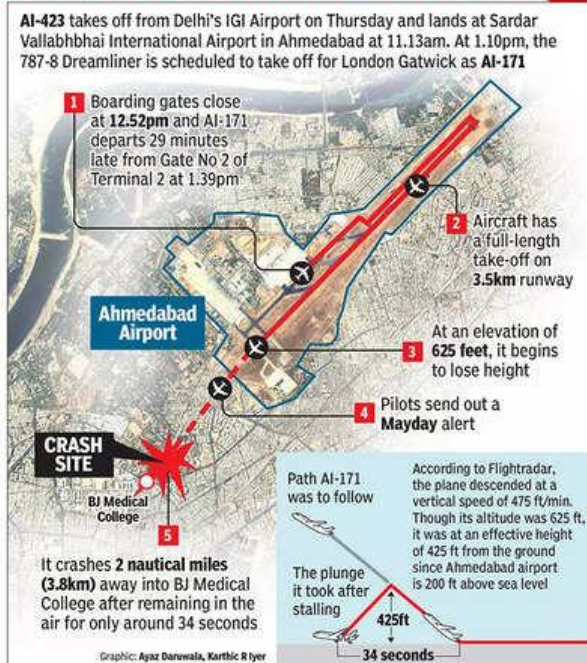
Science and Technology

June 2025

AHMEDABAD FLIGHT CRASH

- **Flight Details:** Air India flight AI-171, a Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, crashed on June 12, 2025, shortly after takeoff from Ahmedabad's Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport while en route to London Gatwick
- **Timeline:** The aircraft crashed approximately 33 seconds after takeoff at 1:38 PM local time, with the pilot issuing a "Mayday" distress call
- **Casualties:** 242 people were on board (230 passengers and 12 crew members), with only one British national surviving the crash
- **Total Death Toll:** Approximately 260 people died, including 241 from the aircraft and additional fatalities when the plane crashed into a medical college hostel
- **Crash Site:** The aircraft struck the BJ Medical College and Hospital hostel in Ahmedabad's Meghani area, killing medical students and staff on the ground
- **Investigation:** The black box was recovered 27 hours after the crash, and international investigation teams from the US and UK have been deployed to assist Indian authorities
- **Passenger Composition:** The flight carried 169 Indian nationals, 53 British nationals, 7 Portuguese nationals, and 1 Canadian national

TAKE-OFF TO CRASH IN A FLASH



How AI can be a solution — not a problem — in the fight against climate change

While concerns about AI's energy footprint are valid, its powerful potential for deep decarbonisation and systemic change is undeniable

IE The Editorial Page; By Zenin Osho;
 Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Environment, Science [Link](#)

Why in News?

AI is being repositioned as a climate solution despite concerns about its energy consumption, with real-world applications showing significant environmental benefits.

AI Climate Solutions

Agriculture & Water Management

- 1) Sugarcane farmers in Maharashtra using **AI-driven irrigation** reduced water use by 30% and electricity costs by 25%.

- 2) AI tools can **optimize rice cultivation** to reduce methane emissions from flooded paddy fields.

Methane Reduction

- 1) **GHGSat** uses AI-powered satellites to detect facility-level methane leaks.
- 2) **Startups like Rumin8 and Symbrosia** develop AI-informed feed supplements for livestock.
- 3) **DSM-Firmenich's Bovaer** reduces cattle methane emissions by 30%+ in 55+ countries

Energy Systems

- 1) **Alphabet's Tapestry project** automates clean energy project approvals.
- 2) **AI improves demand forecasting**, grid load balancing, and fault prediction.
- 3) Indian startups (**Ambee, Atsuya, Sustlabs**) deploy AI for sustainable energy solutions.

Industrial Applications

- 1) **Cement manufacturing** uses AI to optimize kiln operations, cutting fuel use and emissions.
- 2) **Shipping deploys AI navigation systems** for efficient routes, saving fuel and carbon.
- 3) **Quantum computing** linked to AI helps design better battery materials.

News / Explained / Expert Explains: Why Axiom-4 matters

Premium

Expert Explains: Why Axiom-4 matters

Globally, the space market is worth about \$500 billion, and is expected to double by the year 2030. India, despite being a major spacefaring nation, accounts for a just 2% share of this market

IE Explained; By Somak Raychaudhury;
 Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Science Tech [Link](#)

Why in News?

Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla travels to International Space Station on Axiom-4 mission, marking new era in Indian space exploration.

Key Significance

Practical vs Symbolic Value

- 1) Unlike Rakesh Sharma's 1984 flight (purely symbolic), Shukla's mission has direct practical applications
- 2) Closely integrated with India's own space plans and Gaganyaan mission
- 3) Will provide critical inputs for India's first human spaceflight mission



Benefits for Gaganyaan Mission

- 1) Real-life pilot experience in spacecraft operations and complex orbital maneuvers

1. SLAWOSZ UZNANSKI-WISNIEWSKI Mission Specialist, Polish

Scientist and engineer, was member of European Space Agency's Astronaut Reserve Class of 2022. Has made significant contributions at the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) in Geneva, where he served as a reliability expert and project lead. From 2018 to 2020, was Engineer in Charge for the Large Hadron Collider (LHC), overseeing its round-the-clock operations.

3. SHUBHANSHU SHUKLA Pilot, Indian

Group Captain Shukla was commissioned into IAF's fighter wing in June 2006; has 2,000 hours of flight experience across a range of aircraft. Will pilot Axiom 4 mission to the ISS. Named on February 27, 2024, as one of four elite astronauts for Gaganyaan, India's maiden human spaceflight mission.

2. PEGGY WHITSON Commander, American

Most experienced American astronaut with more than 38 years of experience. Three previous missions to ISS; holds record among US astronauts & among women for spending the most time in space, 675 days. Trailblazer: first female commander of ISS; only woman to serve as ISS commander twice; first female commander of a private space mission (Axiom 2); most spacewalks by a woman (10 walks, 60 hours).

4. TIBOR KAPU Mission Specialist, Hungarian

Mechanical engineer, specialist in polymer technology, has contributed to pharma and logistical industries. In 2022-23, he focused on space radiation protection at an aerospace technology company. In 2023, was selected as one of four Hungarians for the Hungarian to Orbit (HUNOR) Astronaut Program.

WHAT ASTRONAUTS WILL DO

■ More than 60 scientific studies and activities scheduled to take place aboard the ISS

■ This will be the most research and science-related activities conducted on an Axiom Space mission aboard the ISS to date

■ Thirty-one countries involved in these studies, including the US, India, Poland, Hungary, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, Nigeria

■ ISRO has designed 10 experiments. These include: growing crops in space; examining tardigrades in space; investigating muscle loss in astronauts in space; and analysing impact of gazing at computer screens in microgravity

■ Astronauts will also engage in scientific outreach activities such as addressing students and people from the space industry

Source: Axiom Space

- Human spaceflight missions are orders of magnitude more complex than uncrewed ones
- Knowledge transfer from actual ISS operations for India's future space station plans

Scientific Experiments

- First opportunity for ISRO's customized space experiments
- Muscle behaviour studies in zero-gravity conditions
- Experiments on moong dal sprouts and micro-algae tailored to Indian requirements

Economic and Strategic Impact

Market Opportunity

- Global space market worth \$500 billion, expected to double by 2030
- India currently holds only 2% share despite being major spacefaring nation
- Ambition to increase share to 10% in coming years

Future Roadmap

- Part of series leading to human Moon landing by 2040
- Will attract private sector participation and young talent
- Expected to inspire next generation like school children witnessing the mission

News / UPSC Current Affairs / UPSC Essentials / Knowledge Nugget: What is RFID technology in FASTag? Key concept for your UPSC exam

Knowledge Nugget: What is RFID technology in FASTag? Key concept for your UPSC exam

FASTag-based annual passes address the "long-standing concerns" related to toll plazas. But what is the technology behind FASTag? What is the plan for a satellite-based tolling system? In 'Beyond the Nugget', learn about the NavIC system.

IE Knowledge Nugget; By Khushboo Kumari;
Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Science & Tech [Link](#)

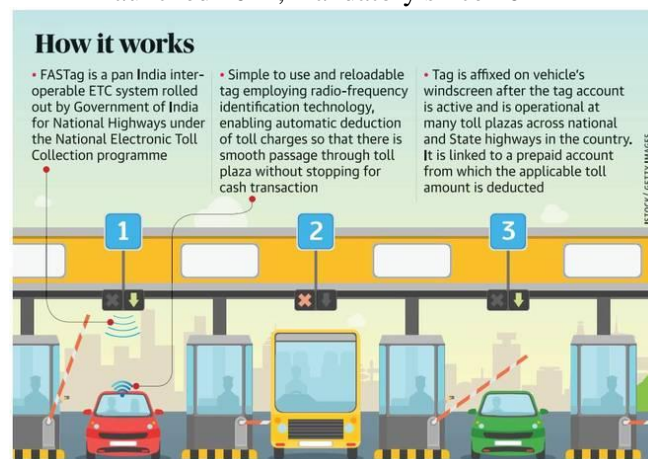
Why in News?

Minister Nitin Gadkari announced FASTag-based annual pass at Rs 3,000 for hassle-free highway travel, effective from August 15.

RFID Technology in FASTag

- Electronic toll collection system managed by NPCI and NHAI
- Uses Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology with scanners at toll plazas
- Automatically deducts toll from linked bank account or prepaid wallet

- FASTag sticker pasted on windscreen, launched 2014, mandatory since 2021



RFID System Components

- Wireless tracking system with tags and readers
- Uses radio waves to communicate information to nearby readers
- Tags carry encrypted information, serial numbers, descriptions
- Readers can be hand-held or fixed on poles/buildings

RFID Tag Types:

- Passive tags:** Activated by reader's electromagnetic energy, used in FASTag
- Active tags:** Use own power source, longer range (~300 ft)
- Semi-passive tags:** Internal circuit with power but rely on reader waves

RFID vs Barcode

- Barcode:** Uses light to read printed black-white patterns, requires line of sight
- RFID:** Uses radio waves, no line of sight needed, works when tag unpowered

RFID VS BARCODE: THE DIFFERENCE		
RFID	Technology	BARCODE
Radio Waves		Visual Representation of Data & Laser Scanning
Can Store and Transmit Larger Amounts of Data	Data Storage	Can Store Only a Limited Amount of Data
Can be Read Without Requiring a Direct Line of Sight Between the Tag and the Reader	Readability	Need to be in the Direct Line Of Sight of the Scanner to be Read
Can be Read From a Distance	Range	Requires Close Proximity to the Scanner
Durable and Damage-Resistant	Durability	Can be Easily Damaged Or Unreadable Due to Wear and Tear
Higher Initial Cost	Cost	Affordable and Easier to Implement
Can be Embedded Within Objects or Integrated Into Product Packaging	Flexibility	Printed on Surfaces and Require Sufficient Space for Placement

Future Systems

ANPR FASTag System:

- Combines Automatic Number Plate Recognition with FASTag
- Barrier-free tolling, vehicles don't need to stop

Satellite-based Tolling:

- GNSS system deferred due to privacy concerns
- Will use India's complete satellite system when available
- Toll calculated based on distance traveled using satellites and on-board units

NavIC Navigation System

- Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) by ISRO
- Seven-satellite constellation: 3 geostationary, 4 geosynchronous orbits
- Conceived after 1999 Kargil war when GPS was unavailable
- Only 5 of 11 satellites fully operational due to atomic clock failures
- Provides Standard Positioning Service (civilian) and Restricted Service (defence)

News / Explained / Work underway for changes in two key laws, can open up civil nuclear sector

Work underway for changes in two key laws, can open up civil nuclear sector

The government has committed to getting both these legislations passed, including an explicit assurance to this effect made in the Union Budget presented earlier this year.

IE Explained; By Anil Sasi;

Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Science & Technology [Link](#)

Why in News?

India is amending two key nuclear laws to open up the civil nuclear sector and address foreign investor concerns.

Key Legislative Changes

Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010 (CLNDA)

- **11 amendments** being worked out, with **2 key changes**
- **Section 17(b) modification** - Currently allows operators to recover costs from suppliers for defective equipment, deterring foreign investment
- **Clarify "supplier" definition** - Address concerns that sub-suppliers are included in broad current definition

- **Liability caps** being considered - Limit monetary exposure to original contract value and time frame
- **Align with international standards** - Bring provisions in line with 1997 Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage

Atomic Energy Act, 1962

- **Enable private company operations** - Currently restricted to state-owned companies like NPCIL
- **Allow foreign minority equity** participation in nuclear projects

Background Context

US Regulatory Clearance

- **March 2025:** US Department of Energy gave **10CFR810 authorization** to Holtec International
- Permits transfer of **small modular reactor technology** to Indian partners including Tata Consulting Engineers and L&T
- Removes major US regulatory hurdle for Indo-US civil nuclear cooperation

Implementation Timeline

- **Government committed** to passing both legislations, with assurance in Union Budget
- **Originally targeted** for monsoon parliamentary session, **likely to spill over** to next session
- **Challenge:** Building political consensus for amendments

NEWS IN SHORT: SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

One Nation, One Time Initiative

- 1) Government mandating IST for all legal, commercial, digital activities
- 2) Legal Metrology (Indian Standard Time) Rules, 2025 being notified
- 3) Five Regional Reference Standard Laboratories in Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Bhubaneswar, Faridabad, Guwahati
- 4) Atomic clocks with millisecond to microsecond accuracy
- 5) Collaboration between Consumer Affairs Department, CSIR-NPL, ISRO
- 6) Round Table Conference held June 18 at Vigyan Bhawan
- 7) Minister Pralhad Joshi announced time sovereignty vision

Current Status:

- 1) No new launch date has been announced yet
- 2) SpaceX teams are working to repair the leak and conduct necessary validation tests
- 3) ISRO Chairman V Narayanan, present in the US for the launch, confirmed the delay and expressed confidence in SpaceX's ability to resolve the issues

Historic Significance:

- 1) This mission would make Shubhanshu Shukla the first Indian astronaut to visit the International Space Station

The 14-day mission aims to foster international collaboration and scientific research aboard the ISS

Shubhanshu Shukla ISS Mission

- 1) First Indian astronaut to reach International Space Station
- 2) Second Indian in space after Rakesh Sharma (1984)
- 3) Axiom-4 mission launched June 25, 2025 from Kennedy Space Center

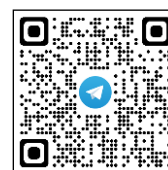
- 4) Docked with ISS June 26, 2025 at 4:30 PM IST
- 5) 28-hour journey to reach ISS
- 6) Mission duration: 14 days
- 7) Crew: Peggy Whitson (commander), Polish and Hungarian astronauts
- 8) Will conduct ~60 experiments, 7 led by Shukla
- 9) ISRO investment: ₹5 billion (\$59 million)

Collaboration: NASA, ISRO, ESA, SpaceX



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Geography and Environment

June 2025

Fact of the Day: India's Clean Energy Progress Report

Record-Breaking Renewable Energy Achievements:

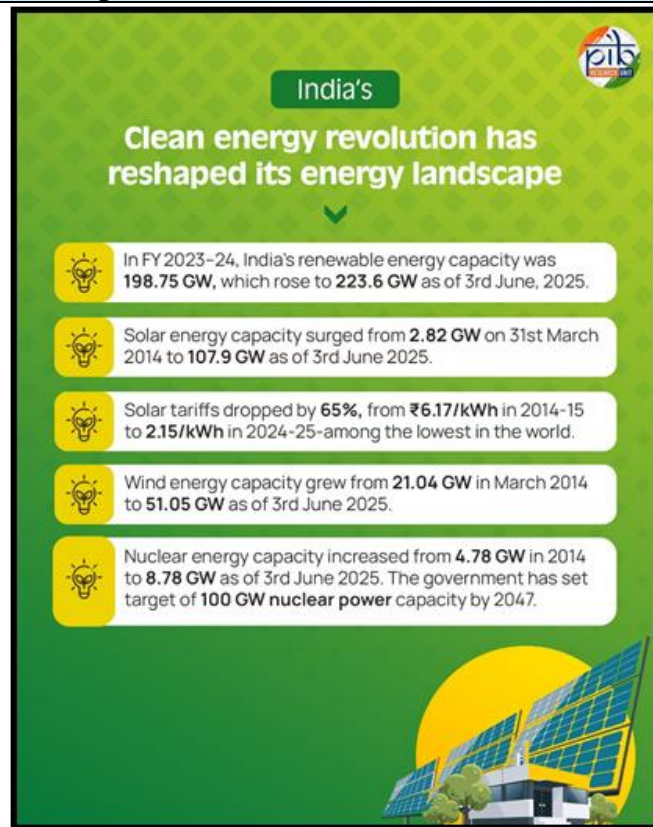
- 1) India's total non-fossil fuel based energy capacity reached **217.62 GW** as of **January 2025**
- 2) Record addition of **24.5 GW solar capacity** and **3.4 GW wind capacity in 2024**, representing a more than twofold increase in solar installations
- 3) India **achieved the milestone of 100 GW installed solar capacity**, with solar energy accounting for 47% of total renewable energy capacity
- 4) Total renewable energy capacity reached **220.10 GW as of March 2025**, with **29.52 GW added in FY 2024-25**

State-wise Performance:

- 1) **Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu** emerged as top-performing states, contributing 71% of India's utility-scale solar installations
- 2) Utility-scale solar capacity addition of 18.5 GW in 2024 showed a 2.8x increase compared to 2023

Progress Toward 2030 Goals:

- 1) India is steadily advancing toward its commitment to achieve **500 GW of non-fossil fuel-based energy capacity by 2030**
- 2) Solar power sector witnessed extraordinary **3,450% growth over the past decade**, rising from 2.82 GW in 2014 to 100 GW in 2025



World Environment Day 2025 | How India pushes for ecological restoration

[Link](#)

Why in News?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch the Aravalli Green Wall Project on June 5, 2025, to mark World Environment Day.

About the Aravalli Green Wall Project Project

- 1) Large-scale land restoration project to revive the 700 km Aravalli mountain range across four states: Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Gujarat
- 2) Creates a green corridor covering 6.45 million hectares with a 5 km buffer zone around the mountain range
- 3) Project cost: Rs 16,053 crore
- 4) Initially launched in 2019, with detailed action plan released in March 2025
- 5) Inspired by Africa's Great Green Wall project

Key Objectives

- 1) Combat land degradation and desertification caused by Thar desert expansion
- 2) Create additional carbon sink of 2.5-3 billion tonnes CO₂ equivalent by 2030
- 3) Restore 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030
- 4) Enhance biodiversity and ecosystem services in the Aravalli range
- 5) Act as natural barrier against sand and dust from Thar desert

SHIELD AGAINST DESERT



- Forest belt likely to run roughly from **Porbandar to Panipat**, covering entire Aravalli range and beyond
- 'Green wall' will act as barrier for dust from west and check eastward march of Thar desert
- It will check desertification by **restoring degraded land through massive afforestation**
- Project yet to get formal nod, details to be worked out

(The Times of India)

Implementation Strategy

- 1) Remove invasive Prosopis juliflora species and plant native trees like Khair, Ronjh, Dhau, Neem, Amaltas
- 2) Establish 1,000 nurseries across 29 districts
- 3) Rejuvenate 75 water bodies starting with 5 per district
- 4) Focus on agroforestry and pasture development for community livelihoods
- 5) Funding through CAMPA, MNREGA, and state green initiatives

Significance

- 1) Addresses 30% land degradation and 25% desertification in India
- 2) Supports wildlife habitat including tigers, bears, wolves, and leopards
- 3) Improves water quality, reduces air pollution, and provides socio-economic benefits
- 4) Contributes to India's climate commitments under Paris Agreement

News / Explained / Rail link to Valley | How it was done: 'For 12 years, we ate, lived, breathed the Chenab'

Premium

Rail link to Valley | How it was done: 'For 12 years, we ate, lived, breathed the Chenab'

The 359-metre-high Chenab Bridge is the world's highest railway arch bridge

IE Explained; By Rinku Ghosh;
Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Geography [Link](#)

Why in News?

Prime Minister Modi inaugurated the world's highest railway arch bridge (Chenab Bridge) connecting Kashmir Valley by rail for the first time.

Bridge Specifications

- 1) Height: 359 meters above Chenab riverbed
- 2) Central arch span: 467 meters

- 3) Part of Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project
- 4) Located in Grade V seismic zone



Construction Challenges

- 1) Terrain Access: No roads initially; used mules, ponies, and foot travel to reach site
- 2) Rock Formation: Young Himalayan fold mountains with shifting, maturing strata

- 3) Weather: Constant rain, strong winds up to 266 kmph
- 4) Landslides: Frequent site abandonment and tunnel relocations

- 4) Technology: Self-climbing cranes, CNC machines, Mi-26 helicopters for equipment transport

Engineering Solutions

- 1) Foundation: Football field-sized plinths for pylons

ELEVATING KASHMIR'S Connectivity with Chenab Bridge

Where snow-capped peaks meet the sky and the Chenab carves deep into the earth, India has etched its resolve in steel. The Chenab Bridge, now the world's highest railway bridge, rises 359 metres above the riverbed, standing as a symbol of engineering excellence and national ambition.


Part of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project, the bridge connects not just terrain but aspirations — linking the Kashmir Valley to the rest of India with an all-weather, reliable rail route.

Stretching 1,315 metres across the Chenab River near the Salal Dam, the bridge features a stunning main arch span of 467 metres, and can withstand wind speeds up to 266 kmph. It surpasses the Eiffel Tower in height and is nearly five times taller than the Qutub Minar from riverbed to rail level.

The construction of this engineering marvel involved over 28,000 metric tonnes of steel and introduced a first-of-its-kind cable crane system in Indian Railways — used to ferry materials across a 915-metre-wide gorge with two massive cable cars and pylons towering over 100 metres high.

Built in the geologically complex and unstable terrain of the Himalayas, the Chenab Bridge is more than a feat of infrastructure — it is a symbol of India's grit, innovation, and unwavering resolve to bring progress to even the most remote corners.

As it stands tall over the Chenab, the bridge doesn't just connect two mountains — it connects dreams, development, and a new era for Jammu & Kashmir.





467 metre Main Arc

359 metre Height from the river

324 metre

35 metre higher

286.5 metre higher

72.5 metre

1,315 metre Total Length of the bridge

17 Total number of Spans

Designed for high wind speeds up to 266 km/hr


Best-load resistant for superior safety and durability

Built to withstand Zone-V seismic activity

Gauge Broad Gauge

“ The iconic Chenab Bridge is an example of such new chapters and dimensions of development materialised by the inspiring leadership of the Hon'ble Prime Minister. **”**

-Ashwini Vaishnaw, Railway Minister



- 2) Rock Reinforcement: 30-40m long rock bolts with 300-bar water jet pressure
- 3) Bridge Design: Interlocking beams and girders instead of suspension design
- 4) Construction Method: Hollow girders transported by boat, filled with concrete on-site

Human Effort

- 1) Duration: 12-year project with engineers living on-site
- 2) Workforce: Engineers from southern states working in unfamiliar Himalayan terrain
- 3) Local Support: Residents helped survey teams, provided food and shelter

News / Explained / Why Kerala wants Wildlife Act amended to allow it to kill some wild animals

Why Kerala wants Wildlife Act amended to allow it to kill some wild animals

Kerala wants the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 amended so it can be allowed to kill wild animals that foray into human habitats. Here's why.

IE Explained; By Shaju Philip;

Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Environment [Link](#)

Why in News? Kerala seeks Union government's approval to amend Wildlife Protection Act 1972 to allow killing of wild animals threatening human life and property.

The Wildlife Problem

- 1) 273 out of 941 village local bodies identified as wildlife attack hotspots
- 2) 919 deaths and 8,967 injuries from wildlife attacks (2016-17 to 2024-25)
- 3) Problem animals: tiger, leopard, elephant, bison, wild boar, bonnet macaque, peafowl
- 4) Farmers abandoning agricultural land due to repeated animal raids



Causes of Human-Wildlife Conflict

- 1) Population explosion of wild pigs and monkey species
- 2) Declining habitat quality forcing animals to move out
- 3) Regional wildlife population fluctuations
- 4) Domestic cattle grazing in forest areas
- 5) Changes in cropping patterns

Current Legal Constraints

- 1) Schedule I animals require chief wildlife warden's approval before killing
- 2) Must prove animal cannot be captured, tranquilized or relocated
- 3) Captured animals cannot be held in confinement
- 4) Court orders prevent district collectors from using public nuisance removal powers
- 5) Wild boar control system with licensed shooters has failed due to impractical guidelines

Government's Demands

Proposed Amendments:

- 1) Allow killing of "all man-eating wild animals"
- 2) Region-specific and seasonal permissions for culling
- 3) Declare wild boars as vermin under Section 62
- 4) Remove bonnet macaque from Schedule I status

Justification:

- 1) All preventive measures like fencing have failed

- 2) Not seeking indiscriminate killing powers
- 3) Wildlife population control necessary to prevent human casualties

News / UPSC Current Affairs / UPSC Essentials / UN: Growing threat to oceans a global emergency

UN: Growing threat to oceans a global emergency

As the third UN Ocean Conference begins, coinciding with World Oceans Day, the UN has urged world leaders to translate their pledges into action to safeguard ocean health. But what are the major threats faced by oceans, which act as carbon sink and climate regulator?

IE CA; By Abhinav Rai;

Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Environment [Link](#)

Why in News? Third UN Ocean Conference begins in Nice, France (June 9-13) coinciding with World Oceans Day, urging global action on ocean health amid growing marine threats.

Ocean Threats & Global Emergency

- 1) **Climate Impact:** Oceans absorb 23% of annual CO₂ and 90% of excess heat, becoming 30% more acidic than pre-industrial times
- 2) **Coral Crisis:** 4th global mass bleaching event (Jan 2023-March 2025) affected 84% of world's coral reefs across 82 countries
- 3) **Pollution:** Plastic pollution and maritime accidents like MSC ELSA-3 sinking near Kochi coast threaten marine ecosystems
- 4) **Temperature Rise:** Indian Ocean warming fastest since 1950s, causing 20% decrease in western Indian Ocean phytoplankton

India's Maritime Challenges

- 1) **Coastal Vulnerability:** 30% population in coastal regions; rising sea levels threaten Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata
- 2) **Fisheries Impact:** 75% drop in oil sardine catch along Kerala coast compared to previous year
- 3) **Strategic Position:** 11,098 km coastline provides strategic importance but faces geopolitical challenges from China's 'String of Pearls'
- 4) **Economic Potential:** Blue economy contributes 4% to GDP; Exclusive Economic Zone largely unexplored

Policy Response

- 1) **Global:** UN SDG-14 focus on marine resource conservation; Conference theme "accelerating action for ocean sustainability"

- 2) **National:** Maritime India Vision 2030, SAGAR initiative, proposed National Coastal Mission, blue economy policy in final stages

News / UPSC Current Affairs / UPSC Essentials / Maternity benefits integral to right to life, health and equality

Maternity benefits integral to right to life, health and equality

Maternity benefits are an integral part of the right to life, health and equality, making it a question of social justice. But how has been the evolution of maternity benefit policies in India? Does it reflect broader shifts in the understanding of women's reproductive rights?

IE CA; By Rituparna Patgiri;
Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Environment [Link](#)

Why in News? Supreme Court on May 23, 2025, overturned Madras High Court order denying maternity leave to government teacher for third child, ruling it as constitutional right.

Historical Evolution

- 1) **Origins:** First introduced in Bombay Legislative Council (1929) by B.R. Ambedkar, N.M. Joshi, M.K. Dixit for textile industry women workers
- 2) **Pre-independence:** Provincial acts passed in Madras (1934), UP (1938), West Bengal (1939), Assam (1944)
- 3) **Post-independence:** Maternity Benefit Act enacted in 1961
- 4) **2017 Amendment:** Extended leave from 12 to 26 weeks, mandated creches for 50+ employee workplaces

Current Challenges

- 1) **Limited Coverage:** Only applies to formal sector with <10% of Indian women employed
- 2) **Implementation Gap:** Low compliance, especially for creche facilities
- 3) **Gender Discrimination:** 98% employment gap between males and females due to gender bias
- 4) **Informal Sector Exclusion:** Majority women workers in domestic work, agriculture, construction lack protection

Global Context vs India

- 1) **International Standard:** ILO's 1919 convention mandated 12 weeks paid leave, adopted by almost all countries

- 2) **Progressive Models:** Sweden (1974) introduced gender-neutral parental leave; Nordic countries provide one year family leave
- 3) **India's Gap:** No comprehensive paternity/family leave policy unlike many developed nations

Way Forward

- 1) Extend benefits to informal and contractual workers
- 2) Implement comprehensive family leave policy including paternity leave
- 3) Better compliance enforcement in private sector

Fuel for a green Viksit Bharat

Conversations on optimum use of uranium and thorium hold the key to the success of government's nuclear mission

IE Opinion; By Anil Kakodkar;
Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Environment [Link](#)

Why in News?

Article outlines India's nuclear energy strategy to achieve "Viksit Bharat" with net zero emissions by 2070, emphasizing optimal use of uranium and thorium resources.

India's Nuclear Energy Challenge

- India needs 28,000 TWh total energy annually for Viksit Bharat by 2047
- Nuclear must provide ~20,000 TWh (70% of clean energy) since renewables and hydro limited to 8,000 TWh
- Current consumption: 9,800 TWh with 96% from fossil fuels
- Clean energy needs to increase 70 times in 45 years

Nuclear Energy Mission For Viksit Bharat



A Nuclear Energy Mission for research & development of Small Modular Reactors (SMR) to be set up



At least 5 indigenously developed SMRs will be operationalised by 2033



Outlay of Rs. 20,000 crore is proposed for the Mission



- **Fast-track approach:** Introduce thorium in PHWRs now, develop thorium MSR for faster route to third stage
- **Advanced fuel:** HALEU and ANEEL fuel development for better performance and international cooperation

Technology Priorities

- Focus R&D on thorium MSR-based SMRs rather than conventional SMRs
- SMRs need two decades to mature, inconsistent with 2047 timeline
- Thorium fuel irradiation qualification essential for high burn-up performance
- Link proton accelerators with subcritical systems for capacity growth

Community forest rights can end Naxalism. Gadchiroli is an example

The district administration's strategy — combining rehabilitation packages, local infrastructure development, and decentralisation of power — is worth replicating in other Naxal-affected areas

IE Opinion; By Geetanjoy Sahu;
Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Environment [Link](#)

Three-Stage Nuclear Programme

- **Stage 1:** Uranium-based reactors (current focus)
- **Stage 2:** Fast breeder reactors using plutonium (delayed)
- **Stage 3:** Thorium-based reactors for long-term energy security
- Programme enables 60-70 times more energy from same mined fuel through recycling

100 GWe Nuclear Mission

- Government's current target still 20 times below net zero requirements
- Requires 20,000 tons uranium annually (15% of global production)
- Primary technology: Domestic PHWRs supplemented by large LWRs
- Need multiple deployment agencies beyond NPCIL and NTPC
- PHWR technology should be common national asset for accelerated deployment

Energy Security Strategy

- **Uranium constraints:** Geopolitical risks and demand-supply mismatch threaten security
- **Thorium advantage:** India has largest reserves, crucial for third-stage programme

Why in News?

Home Minister Amit Shah declared government would end Naxalism by March 31, 2026, while Gadchiroli district demonstrates how community forest rights recognition can effectively counter insurgency.



Gadchiroli Success Story

Community Forest Rights Achievement

- Forest communities collectively own 5,110.07 sq km of district's 9,902.8 sq km forest area

- 1,109 CFR-recognized villages exercising forest rights
- First community forest rights recognized in India (August 2009) at Mendha Lekha village
- 38.17% Scheduled Tribe and 11.25% Scheduled Caste population in district

Economic Impact

- Households earn minimum Rs 7,000 monthly from forest resources
- Financial support of Rs 1.78 lakh provided to CFR villages
- Reduced migration and middlemen dependence
- Investment in education and health sectors
- Democratic, transparent forest resource governance

Conservation Results

- Gram Sabha-managed forests show less deforestation than Forest Department areas
- Communities reinvest forest income into plantation programs
- Regular forest patrolling against internal/external threats

Replication Strategy

Success Factors

- Organic local tribal leadership initiatives (not NGO-driven)
- District administration's commitment to decentralization
- 728 Gram Sabhas signed MoUs for technical/financial support
- Combination of rehabilitation packages, infrastructure development, and power decentralization

Implementation Framework

- Recognition of pre-existing forest rights under Forest Rights Act 2006
- Exclusive control over minor forest produce (bamboo, tendu leaves)
- Gram Sabha management rights
- Deregulation of colonial forest produce regulations

Challenges to Address

- Displacement fears due to mining proposals
- Need to safeguard PESA and FRA rights
- Streamline convergence schemes for tribal welfare

The district administration's integrated approach combining forest rights recognition with development packages offers a replicable model for other Naxal-affected areas across India.

News / Explained / Everyday Explainers / What is the International Big Cat Alliance, launched by India?

What is the International Big Cat Alliance, launched by India?

The Indian government established the IBCA through the National Tiger Conservation Authority in 2024, with the mandate to protect seven big cats – the Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar and Puma.

IE Opinion;

Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Environment [Link](#)

Why in News?

The first Assembly of the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) was held in New Delhi on June 16, 2025, with Union Minister Bhupender Yadav endorsed as President.



What is IBCA?

- Established by Indian government through National Tiger Conservation Authority in March 2024
- Mandate: Conservation of seven big cats – Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar and Puma
- Funding: Rs 150 crore allocated from 2023-24 to 2027-28
- Objective: Facilitate collaboration among stakeholders and replicate successful conservation practices in range countries

Background & Rationale

- Announced by PM Modi in 2023 in Mysuru during 50th anniversary of Project Tiger
- India's tiger population declined from 40,000 at Independence to 1,800 by 1970 due to hunting and poaching
- Project Tiger created tiger reserves starting with nine zones across multiple states

- Big cat conservation protects entire ecosystems, prevents overgrazing, wildfires, and supports climate mitigation

Current Status

- 95 range countries exist for big cats globally
- 25 countries consented as members by September 2024
- Nine countries attended first Assembly: Bhutan, Cambodia, Eswatini, Guinea, India, Liberia, Suriname, Somalia and Kazakhstan
- India now has 3,600+ tigers (70% of world's tiger population)
- Headquarters agreement ratified, enabling IBCA to establish offices in India

News / Explained / Explained Climate / Bonn Climate Change Conference begins: Everything you need to know

Bonn Climate Change Conference begins: Everything you need to know

The Bonn Climate Change Conference is an annual mid-year meeting that takes place under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) — an international agreement, signed in 1992, that has provided a basis for climate negotiations.

IE Explained;
Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Environment [Link](#)

Why in News?

The annual mid-year UN climate conference began June 16 in Bonn, Germany, with 5,000+ delegates gathering to discuss climate finance and set COP agenda.



Conference Overview

- **Duration:** June 16-26, 2025
- **Participants:** Government delegates, Indigenous representatives, scientists, civil society

- **Format:** Sessions of UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies (SBs)
- **Purpose:** Discuss technical/scientific climate aspects and prepare for November COP

Key Bodies Leading Discussions

- **SBI (Subsidiary Body for Implementation):**
 - Reviews implementation of climate decisions
 - Facilitates financial/technical support for developing countries
- **SBSTA (Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice):**
 - Links IPCC scientific advisors with policymakers
 - Provides scientific guidance on climate matters

This Year's Focus Areas

- **Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA):** Major discussion topic
 - Aims to set common global adaptation targets
 - Framework adopted at COP28 Dubai, now needs implementation
 - Similar to 1.5°C temperature threshold for mitigation
- **Climate finance mobilization**
- **Setting agenda for upcoming COP**

Significance

- Results directly influence COP decisions
- Venue for reviewing previous COP agreement implementation
- Only other regular UNFCCC summit besides annual COP

Revamped Green India Mission: A matter of vulnerable ecosystems and livelihoods

The challenge for the revamped GIM will be to find ways to sustain and improve people's livelihoods while enhancing ecological security

IE Opinion;
Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Environment [Link](#)

Why in News?

Government revised Green India Mission to focus on restoring vulnerable landscapes like Aravalli, Western Ghats, and Himalayas.

Key Developments

Revamped Mission Focus

- Shifts from plantation-centered approach to ecological revival
- Emphasizes micro-climatic zones through "regionally conducive best practices"
- Aims to create income-generating opportunities for ecosystem-dependent communities

Challenges in Vulnerable Ecosystems

- **Western Ghats:** Degraded due to deforestation, illegal mining, erratic rainfall
- **Aravalli Range:** Destruction bringing Thar Desert closer to NCR, worsening pollution
- **Himalayas:** Face deforestation, human-wildlife conflicts, infrastructure pressure
- Wayanad landslide highlighted disaster vulnerability from green cover depletion

Implementation Challenges

- Environment-development binary trapping restoration efforts
- Gadgil and Kasturirangan panel recommendations remain unimplemented
- Illegal quarrying continues despite Supreme Court orders
- Green initiatives historically exclude local communities

Status check

The table shows State-wise physical progress under the Green India Mission. It lists the targeted increase in tree cover, achievement and shortfall for select States



Green cover: A view of a forest in Andhra Pradesh.

State	Target	Achievement	Shortfall
Uttarakhand	6,446	1,505	-4,941
Madhya Pradesh	5,858	1,882	-3,976
Kerala	1,686	616	-1,070
West Bengal	558	175	-383
Maharashtra	1,316	933	-383
Andhra Pradesh	186	75	-111

All figures are in hectares

Core Challenge

Balancing livelihood sustainability with ecological security while avoiding past failures of development-environment conflicts.

News / Explained / How India 'added' more than 3,500 km to its coastline

How India 'added' more than 3,500 km to its coastline

The length of India's coastline used to be 7,516 km, something that was ascertained in the 1970s. But this coastline has now been measured to be 11,098 km

IE Explained; By Amitabh Sinha;
Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Geography [Link](#)

Why in News?

India's measured coastline length increased by 3,582 km (from 7,516 km to 11,098 km) due to improved measurement techniques, not territorial changes.

Measurement Changes

Coastline Length:

- Previous measurement: 7,516 km (1970s data)
- Current measurement: 11,098 km
- Increase: 3,582 km (48% more)
- Old data scale: 1:4,500,000
- New data scale: 1:250,000 (higher resolution)

Islands Count:

- 2016 count: 1,382 offshore islands
- After reconciliation: 1,298 offshore + 91 inshore = 1,389 total islands
- Excludes river islands in Assam and West Bengal

Offshore and inshore islands in states

State/UT	Offshore islands	Inshore islands	Total
Gujarat	108	36	144
Maharashtra	105	15	120
Goa	39	2	41
Karnataka	88	12	100
Kerala	7	--	7
Tamil Nadu	26	2	28
Andhra Pradesh	20	12	32
Odisha	13	3	16
West Bengal	14	9	23
Daman and Diu	9	--	9
Lakshadweep	33	--	33
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	836	--	836
Total	1,298	91	1,389

Source: Office of Surveyor General of India

Reasons for Increase

Technical Improvements:

- Higher resolution satellite data captures more coastal irregularities
- Modern GIS software replaced manual calculations

- Better mapping of bends, curves, and coastal features
- Inclusion of previously omitted offshore island coastlines

Coastline Paradox:

- No finite length exists for irregular coastlines
- Length depends on measurement scale/resolution
- Higher precision always yields longer measurements
- Exercise now mandated every 10 years

Length of India's coastline along states	
State/UT	Coastline length (in km)
Gujarat	2,340.62
Maharashtra	877.97
Goa	193.95
Karnataka	343.3
Kerala	600.15
Tamil Nadu	1,068.69
Andhra Pradesh	1,053.07
Odisha	574.71
West Bengal	721.02
Daman and Diu	54.38
Pondicherry	42.65
Lakshadweep	144.8
Andaman and Nicobar	3,083.50

Source: Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways

Implications

Administrative Impact:

- Coastal Zone Regulations (CRZ) coverage may change
- Better understanding of territory and terrain
- Enhanced coastal erosion management planning
- Improved climate resilience strategies

Operational Significance:

- Tourism and infrastructure development effects
- Security and developmental planning improvements
- No changes at international level (ground situation unchanged)

For renewal of Western Ghats, put people at the centre

The process of democratic decentralisation should help in the region's ecological revival

IE Opinion; By Madhav Gadgil;


Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Environment [Link](#)

Why in News?

Madhav Gadgil advocates for people-centered forest management in Western Ghats through democratic decentralization and proper implementation of Forest Rights Act.

Current Problems with Forest Management

- Forest Survey of India (FSI) data is outdated, crude scale, and deliberately distorted
- Forest Department (FD) is anti-science, anti-nature, anti-people agency
- Historical evidence of data manipulation:
 - 1975: PISFR bamboo figures overestimated by factor of 10
 - 1972-75: NRSC satellite data showed 15% forest cover vs FD's claimed 23%
 - Government shut down NRSC assessment, created FSI as exclusive agency




2,133
VILLAGES IN 12 DISTRICTS IN MAHARASHTRA NOTIFIED AS ECOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

THE NGT ORDER (AUGUST 27, 2014)
In paragraph 'F' of the Affidavit, it has been stated that the Ministry does not wish to process the WGEEP Report, that is the Gadgil Report and would take subsequent actions only in relation to HLWG Report, that is Dr. Kasturirangan Report ...


TIMELINE

- **MARCH 2010:** Ministry of environment and forests invites Madhav Gadgil to lead a committee to study the Western Ghats
- **UP TO AUGUST 2011:** The committee travels across the Western Ghats and holds 14 panel meetings, eight consultations with government agencies and 40 with the environmental organizations
- **SEPTEMBER 2011:** Committee submits its report to the ministry
- **AUGUST 2012:** The ministry forms a committee under the chairmanship of K Kasturirangan to advise the government on Gadgil's report
- **APRIL 2013:** Kasturirangan committee submits its report to the ministry
- **OCTOBER 2013:** Ministry gives in-principle acceptance to the Kasturirangan report
- **MARCH 2014:** Ministry issues draft notification following the recommendations of the Kasturirangan report



GADGIL REPORT

- Recommended that the entire stretch of the Western Ghats should be declared an **Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA)**
- It divided the region into three zones – **ESZ1, ESZ2 & ESZ3** – and gave a broad outline of certain restrictions for each zone
- It recommended the determination of an area as ESZ1 or ESZ2 or ESZ3 be done at the block/taluka level
- No new polluting industries (red and orange category) were to be permitted in ESZ1 & ESZ2. Existing industries were to be phased out by 2016



KASTURIRANGAN REPORT

- Divided the Western Ghats into two: natural landscape and cultural landscape
- Of the natural landscape, it picked out merely 37% as **"biologically rich"** and **"with some measure of contiguity."** Any restrictions were only placed in this area
- It proposed the demarcation of ESA be done at the village level
- Only red category industries (heavily polluting such as mining) were completely restricted

The MoEF has submitted an affidavit to the National Green Tribunal stating that it was processing only the Kasturirangan report, which effectively meant that the earlier report prepared by Gadgil, has been rejected

- **Environmental destruction examples:**
 - Grasim factory in Kerala: bamboo supplied at Re 1/tonne vs market price Rs 1,400/tonne
 - Led to destruction of 10,000 hectares bamboo forests in Wayanad
 - Mercury, lead, nickel contamination in Chaliyar river

NEWS IN SHORT: GEOGRAPHY & ENVIRONMENT

Climate Change Performance Index

Why in News? Climate Change Performance Index 2025 shows only 22 out of 64 countries responsible for 90% of global GHG emissions are making progress in climate mitigation efforts.

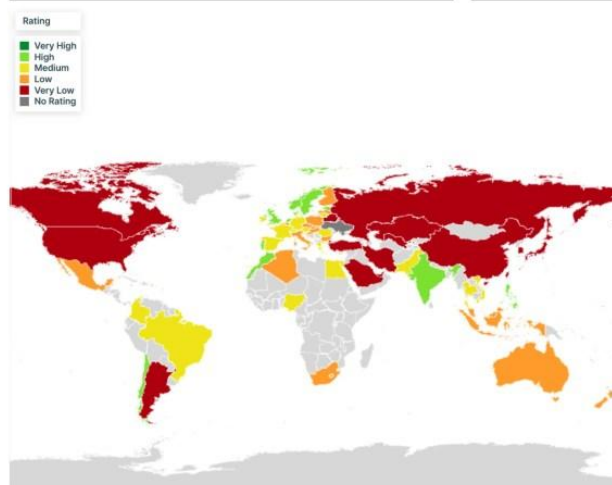
About Climate Change Performance Index

- 1) Independent monitoring tool tracking climate mitigation performance of 63 countries and EU since 2005
- 2) Published by Germanwatch, CAN International, and NewClimate Institute
- 3) Assesses four categories: GHG Emissions (40%), Renewable Energy (20%), Energy Use (20%), Climate Policy (20%)
- 4) Measures progress toward Paris Agreement climate goals

CCPI 2025 Key Highlights

- 1) **Top three positions remain vacant** - no country ranks 'very high' on all parameters
- 2) **Denmark leads at 4th position** (score: 78.37), followed by Netherlands (5th) and UK (6th)
- 3) **42 out of 64 countries are falling behind** in climate action
- 4) **14 G20 countries receive low or very low scores**; only India and UK on track with low per capita emissions
- 5) **Worst performers:** Iran (67th), Saudi Arabia (66th), UAE (65th), Russia (64th)

Overall Results



CCPI 2025 |

India's Performance

- 1) **Ranks 10th** (score: 67.99), slipping two positions but remaining top achiever
- 2) **High ratings:** GHG emissions and energy use
- 3) **Medium rating:** Climate policy
- 4) **Low rating:** Renewable energy
- 5) Progress in solar power and Rooftop Solar Scheme but slow coal phase-out remains concern

Nexus Report

- 1) IPBES assessment on interlinkages between biodiversity, water, food, and health
- 2) Examines five challenges: climate change, biodiversity loss, food insecurity, water scarcity, health risks
- 3) Emphasizes need for synergistic approaches to avoid negative cross-impacts
- 4) Recommends nature-based solutions, ecosystem restoration, sustainable diets

Prime Minister hails addition of two New Ramsar Sites in Rajasthan

- 1) Two new Ramsar Sites added: **Khichan in Phalodi and Menar in Udaipur, both in Rajasthan**, were designated as Ramsar Sites on June 4, 2025.
- 2) **India's total count increases:** With this addition, India now has a **total of 91 Ramsar Sites**, making it the country with the highest number of such wetlands in Asia.

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

प्रकृति रक्षति रक्षितः



Tally 91!

On the eve of #EnvironmentDay, India has two new entrants to the list of Wetlands of International Importance.

The latest to join the list of Ramsar sites in India are:

- ☒ Khichan, in Phalodi, Rajasthan
- ☒ Menar in Udaipur, Rajasthan

This addition takes our tally to 91. The achievement is yet another testament to the fact that PM Shri @narendramodi ji's focus on environmental conservation is successfully helping India build a greener tomorrow.

91

Ramsar sites



About the Sites

- 1) **Khichan (Phalodi):** Famous for hosting thousands of migratory **Demoiselle cranes** each year and attracts birdwatchers from across the nation
- 2) **Menar (Udaipur):** Often called the '**Bird Village**', celebrated for its community-driven conservation success and home to over 150 bird species including flamingos, pelicans, and storks

Rajasthan's tally: With these additions, Rajasthan now has four Ramsar sites, including the existing Sambhar Salt Lake and Keoladeo Ghana National Park in Bharatpur.

Plastic Pollution and Global Plastic Treaty

Why in News? World Environment Day 2025 hosted by South Korea focused on ending plastic pollution; UN's fifth round of global plastic treaty negotiations ended without agreement.

Global Plastic Crisis

Production Scale

- 1) Plastic production: **2 million tonnes (1950) → 450+ million tonnes (2019)**
- 2) Projected to **double by 2050, triple by 2060**

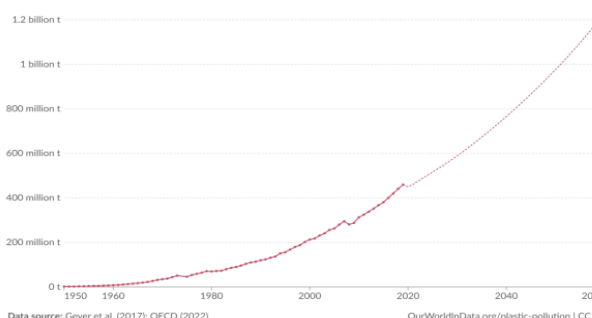
India's Contribution

- 1) **One-fifth** of global plastic pollution (**9.3 million tonnes annually**)
- 2) **Burns 5.8 million tonnes**, releases 3.5 million tonnes as debris

Symbol	Scientific name	Used in
1	Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET)	Water bottles, PET bottles, etc.
2	High Density Polyethylene (HDPE)	Milk/detergent bags, carry bags, containers, etc.
3	Poly Vinyl Chloride (PVC)	Pipes, Cables, Floorings, etc.
4	Low density polyethylene (LDPE)	Carrybags, Films, etc.
5	Polypropylene (PP)	Medicine bottles, cereal liners, etc.
6	Polystyrene resins (PS)	Foam packaging, Ice cream cups, tea cups, etc.
7	Others (O)	Thermoset plastics, Multilayer & Laminated Plastics, PUF, Bakelite, Polycarbonate, Melamine, Nylon etc.

Global plastic production with projections, 1950 to 2060

Annual production of polymer resin and fibers. Projections are based on the "business-as-usual" scenario which assumes that current policies remain unchanged in the foreseeable future.



Environmental Impact

- 1) Takes **20-500 years** to decompose
- 2) Less than **10% recycled globally**
- 3) Breaks down into **microplastics/nanoplastics** in environment

Health & Climate Effects

- 1) Causes endocrine disruption, cancer, diabetes, reproductive disorders
- 2) Generated 1.8 billion tonnes GHG emissions (3.4% of global emissions) in 2019
- 3) 90% emissions from production using fossil fuels

Key Developments in Global Plastic Treaty Negotiations Status

- 1) 170+ nations met in Busan, South Korea for final treaty discussions (INC-5)
- 2) Treaty negotiations initiated in 2022 at UN Environment Assembly in Nairobi
- 3) Deadline of end-2024 missed; discussions to continue next year

Major Disagreements

- 1) Global cap on polymer production
- 2) Eliminating harmful chemicals from plastic production
- 3) Phasing out harmful plastic products
- 4) High Ambition Coalition vs Like-minded group (oil-producing countries) divide

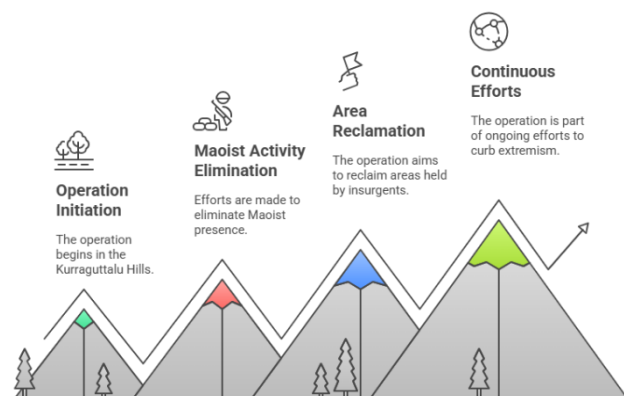
India's Position

- 1) Supports developing country assistance through finance and technology transfer
- 2) Opposes production caps on primary polymers

Focuses on reducing plastic pollution rather than production targets

Operation Black Forest - Maoist Stronghold Dismantled

Operation Black Forest Sequence



Key Achievements:

- 1) 21-day joint operation by CRPF and Chhattisgarh Police in Kurragutta Hills along Chhattisgarh-Telangana border
- 2) 31 hardcore Maoists eliminated, including top leadership carrying bounty of Rs 1.72 crore
- 3) First time in three decades a general secretary-level CPI-Maoist leader was neutralized
- 4) Complete destruction of integrated headquarters of key Maoist outfits including PLGA Battalion Number 1, DKSZC, TSC, and CRC

Strategic Impact:

- 1) Dismantled decades-old Maoist fortress in 1,200 sq km area of dense hills and forests
- 2) Recovered 336 IEDs, 818 BGL shells, 894 bundles of explosives, and weapons manufacturing equipment
- 3) Destroyed over 210 Maoist hideouts and weapon manufacturing units

Aligns with India's target to eliminate Left Wing Extremism by March 31, 2026

PM Modi hails grassroots green initiatives, calls 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' movement for future generations

Why in News?

- 1) PM Modi highlighted grassroots environmental initiatives during his address, emphasizing community-led green efforts across India

- 2) Growing success of the national campaign 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' which has gained massive public participation
- 3) Second phase launch - 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam 2.0' was launched in June 2025 with ambitious targets



About 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' Initiative

Core Concept:

- 1) Emotional environmental campaign that encourages people to plant a tree in honor of their mother
- 2) Combines personal sentiment with environmental responsibility - linking motherhood with nature conservation

Key Achievements:

- 1) 80 crore seedlings planted under the original campaign by September 2024, achieving targets ahead of schedule
- 2) Massive public participation with over 52 crore trees planted by September 2024
- 3) Guinness World Record set by Save Earth Mission for largest single-day tree plantation drive

Current Phase (2.0):

- 1) Target of 10 crore trees to be planted between June 5-September 30, 2025
- 2) Nationwide expansion with participation from schools, RWAs, and corporate offices
- 3) Digital integration with dedicated web portals and e-certificates for participants

PM Modi's Vision:

- 1) "Whole government and whole society" approach for environmental conservation
- 2) Protection of future generations through collective environmental action

Integration with Aravalli Green Wall project to reforest the 700-km Aravalli range

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GS 2 07:30–10:30 PM

24th Aug: GS 3 02:00–5:00 PM

GS 4 07:30–10:30 PM

25th Aug: Reserved 9 AM–5 PM

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Internal Security

June 2025

News / Explained / Drone warfare came home during Op Sindoor. Where does India stand?

Premium

Drone warfare came home during Op Sindoor. Where does India stand?

Ukraine's Operation Spider's Web and the recent India-Pakistan hostilities in the wake of Operation Sindoor underline the salience of drones — specifically ones sent out in swarms — in modern warfare. Relatively low-cost, low-tech drones pose significant challenges to traditional militaries, one which countries, including India, are racing to overcome

IE Explained; By Deeptiman Tiwary;

Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Internal Security [Link](#)

- **Key Strikes:** 11 Pakistani airbases including Rahim Yar Khan, Sargodha, Bholari, Jacobabad

Pakistan's Retaliation

- **May 8-9:** Coordinated drone and missile strikes on 15+ Indian military installations
- **Targets:** Srinagar, Jammu, Pathankot, Amritsar, Ludhiana, Bathinda, Bhuj
- **Weapons Used:** Turkish Bayraktar TB2, Chinese Wing Loong II drones
- **Result:** All attacks neutralized by India's Integrated Counter-UAS Grid

Operation Sindoor Summary

Why in News: Operation Sindoor marked India's first drone-centric military conflict with Pakistan in May 2025, demonstrating advanced indigenous defense capabilities.



Background

- Triggered by Pahalgam terrorist attack on April 22, 2025, killing 26 tourists by Pakistan-based TRF (The Resistance Front)
- TRF claimed responsibility twice; Pakistan refused to curb terrorist networks

Operation Details

- **Timeline:** May 7-10, 2025 (4 days)
- **Targets:** 9 terrorist training camps in Pakistan and PoK without crossing LoC
- **Aircraft Used:** Rafale, Su-30MKI, Mirage-2000 fighters
- **Weapons:** Air-launched cruise missiles, loitering munitions (Harop, Nagastra-1), swarm drones

Indian Losses vs Pakistani Losses

Indian: No assets lost

Pakistani:

- 6 fighter jets, 2 surveillance aircraft, 1 C-130 transport
- 10+ armed drones, cruise missiles, radar sites
- Chinese HQ-9 and LY-80 air defense systems destroyed
- SAAB-2000 AWACS destroyed at 315km range

Defense Systems Performance

- **IACCS:** Integrated Air Command and Control System coordinated all defenses
- **Indigenous Systems:** Akash SAMs, Akashteer, DRDO Anti-Drone System, Indrajaal
- **Mission Duration:** IAF completed strikes in 23 minutes, bypassing Chinese-supplied defenses

Strategic Significance

- First true drone war in South Asia with 1,000+ drones deployed by each side
- Showcased India's shift from strategic restraint to offensive defense doctrine
- Demonstrated indigenous defense manufacturing capabilities under Aatmanirbhar initiative
- Set new precedent for cross-border deterrence below nuclear threshold

Air Chief Marshal A P Singh is right. India's defence capabilities are dragged down by systemic issues

India's quest for atmanirbharta will be shaped by its ability to reach world-class design standards in niche high-tech sectors. ACM Singh did his duty — his svadharma — by pointing to the tip of a murky iceberg

IE Opinion; By C Uday Bhaskar;
Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Security [Link](#)

Why in News?

Air Chief Marshal A P Singh criticized systemic delays and accountability issues in India's defense aviation sector at a recent CII summit.

Key Issues Highlighted

Timeline and Delivery Failures

- No single defense project completed on time
- Contracts signed knowing timelines cannot be met
- HAL promised 11 Mk1A aircraft by February but delivered none
- ACM Singh expressed "no confidence" in HAL at Bengaluru air show

LCA Tejas Project Delays

- Project started in early 1980s to replace Soviet MiG aircraft
- First aircraft inducted only in 2015 (30 years later)
- Combat efficiency still unproven
- 83 Tejas Mk-1A delivery schedule under question
- Still dependent on imported aero-engines

Systemic Problems

- HAL monopoly in defense aviation with captive IAF customer
- Inadequate higher defense management coordination
- Import became default choice over indigenous development
- Assembly of imported designs marketed as indigenous achievement
- Lack of synergy between HAL and IAF

R&D Investment Gap

- India's 2023 R&D spending: \$71 billion vs USA (\$784B), China (\$723B), Japan (\$184B)
- Need sustained government, private sector and academic investment
- Current investment well below global median

Required Solutions

- Increase national R&D investment substantially
- Transform strategic culture with less electoral politics focus
- Invest in institutional integrity and technological competence
- Achieve world-class design standards in high-tech sectors
- Apply necessary policy correctives for genuine atmanirbharta

Illegal migration from Bangladesh has been a problem for decades. Why did no one act?

Warnings by the Task Force, the Group of Ministers and the Supreme Court remained unheeded

IE Opinion; By Prakash Singh;
Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Security [Link](#)

Why in News?

India has finally begun systematic deportation of illegal Bangladeshi immigrants after decades of inaction despite multiple high-level warnings.

Current Government Action

- **Delhi:** 770 immigrants deported in last 6 months via air and surface routes
- **Assam:** 30,000 people declared foreign nationals by Tribunals have disappeared; systematic pushback to no man's land
- **Other states:** Deportations reported from Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana
- Actions remain minimal compared to total illegal immigrant population

Historical Migration Pattern

- **1947-1971:** Initially Hindu migration from East Pakistan, later Muslims fleeing persecution
- **Post-1971:** Continued migration despite Bangladesh liberation due to religious discrimination and economic opportunities
- **Scale:** 3.5 million disappeared from East Pakistan (1951-61), another 1.5 million (1961-74)
- Migration reduced only after India fenced the 4,097 km border

Ignored Warnings Over Two Decades

- **Task Force 2000:** Estimated 15 million illegal immigrants, 3 lakh entering annually; called it "all-round failure" - report never made public
- **Group of Ministers 2001:** Termed it "grave danger to security, social harmony and economic well-being"
- **Supreme Court 2005:** Declared Assam facing "external aggression and internal disturbance," ordered Union action under Article 355

Current Context

- Deportations accelerated due to souring India-Bangladesh relations
- Assam CM's reference to Bangladesh's "chicken necks" and Chakma refugee influx
- Comparison with US and Pakistan's deportation policies
- Call for continued vigorous action regardless of Bangladesh cooperation

NEWS IN SHORT: INTERNAL SECURITY

Ministry of Defence has cleared thirteen contracts under the Emergency Procurement mechanics

Contract Details:

- 1) Ministry of Defence cleared 13 contracts worth ₹1,981 crore under Emergency Procurement mechanism
- 2) Contracts finalized against an overall sanctioned outlay of ₹2,000 crore for the Indian Army

Equipment Being Procured:

- 1) Integrated Drone Detection and Interdiction Systems (IDDIS)
- 2) Low Level Lightweight Radars (LLLR)
- 3) Very Short Range Air Defence Systems (VSHORADS) - launchers and missiles
- 4) Bullet proof jackets, ballistic helmets, and night sights for rifles
- 5) Quick Reaction Fighting Vehicles (QRFVs) and loitering munitions

Strategic Purpose:

- 1) Aimed at strengthening Indian Army's operational readiness in counter-terrorism operations

- 2) Enhance situational awareness, lethality, mobility, and protection for troops in counter-terrorism environments
- 3) Focus on equipping forces with modern, mission-critical, and completely indigenous systems

Implementation:

- 1) Executed through fast-track procedures with compressed timelines for rapid capability augmentation
- 2) Part of efforts to bridge urgent capability gaps following recent security challenges

ICG Inducts 'Adamya'



- 1) First of 8 Fast Patrol Vessels built by Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL)
- 2) Inducted on June 26, 2025 at ceremony in Goa
- 3) Over 60% indigenous content - supports Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative
- 4) First ICG vessel with Controllable Pitch Propellers (CPPs) and indigenously developed gearboxes
- 5) Advanced weaponry: 30mm CRN-91 naval gun, two 12.7mm stabilized remote-control guns
- 6) Cutting-edge systems: Integrated Bridge System, Platform Management System, Automated Power Management System
- 7) Enhanced capabilities: Maritime surveillance, interdiction, search and rescue operations
- 8) Part of Rs 473 crore contract for eight FPVs total
- 9) Specifications: 52m length, 8m breadth, 27 knots max speed, 320 tons displacement
- 10) Strategic importance: Strengthens coastal security and EEZ protection

Ethics, Integrity and Aptitude

June 2025


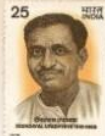
Ethics News of the Day: Roots of Deendayal Upadhyay's Integral Humanism, the 'basic philosophy' of BJP [Link](#)

Why in News?

BJP is celebrating 60 years of Deendayal Upadhyay's Integral Humanism philosophy, which forms the basis of the party's policies.

Background of Integral Humanism

- 1) **Deendayal Upadhyay:** RSS pracharak, BJS co-founder, general secretary then president
- 2) **Death:** Found dead at Mughalsarai station (Feb 11, 1968) - mystery remains unresolved
- 3) **Mumbai Lectures (April 22-25, 1965):** Delivered four lectures at Ruia College on Ekam Manavvad
- 4) **Core Question:** "What shall be the direction of our progress after independence?"
- 5) **Philosophy:** Integration of nationalism, democracy, socialism, world peace with traditional Bharatiya values

 NEHRUVIAN SOCIALISM	 DEEN DAYAL UPADHYAY'S INTEGRAL HUMANISM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tight state controls on business; state as entrepreneur dominating production of capital and intermediate goods • Emphasis on mega-projects like big dams, power, industry • In agriculture, stress on cooperative farming with heavy doses of modern science; mechanization • Foreign policy idealistic and interventionist: mediatory role for Non-Aligned Movement to promote world peace. Internationalization of Kashmir issue, yielding to China on Tibet • Special consideration for minorities, no uniform civil code, etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited intervention of state in business; encouragement of private investment and entrepreneurship, equal incentives for all • Multiplicity of small projects: production by the masses for the masses, decentralized economy • Individual land ownership, not cooperatives; technology welcome but mechanisation shouldn't displace livelihoods • Principles of peace and non-violence to be tempered independent foreign policy, assertive dealing with Pakistan and China, keeping away from wrangles of the world, aka "aligning to itself" • Secular (not theocratic) state, with no distinction between majority and minority whether linguistic, religious, racial, political, etc

Key Concepts

- 1) **Chiti:** Nation's fundamental soul determining cultural direction
- 2) **Dharma:** Repository of nation's soul; abandoning it betrays the nation
- 3) **Six Economic Objectives:**
 - a) Minimum living standard for all + defense preparedness
 - b) Progress above minimum based on own 'Chiti'
 - c) Meaningful employment + avoid resource waste
 - d) Develop Bharatiya Technology (Seven Ms: Man, Material, Money, Management, Motive Power, Market, Machine)
 - e) Protect human values and cultural life
 - f) Pragmatic ownership decisions (state/private)

Historical Roots

- 1) **Source:** Badrishah Thulgharia's "Daishik Shastra" (written decades earlier)
- 2) **Endorsements:** Gandhi called it "excellent book on Oriental politics"; Tilak agreed with views
- 3) **Publication:** 1923 as "Bal Gangadhar Tilak Smarak Daishik Shastra"
- 4) **RSS Connection:** M.S. Golwalkar advised Upadhyay to study the book
- 5) **Development:** Upadhyay stayed in Almora (1958-59), wrote Panchjanya articles (1959), then delivered Mumbai lectures (1965)
- 6) **Expansion:** Later detailed by Dattopant Thengdi (RSS pracharak, BMS founder)

How AI in criminal justice could spark a human rights crisis for the marginalised

The databases currently used in AI development do not reflect the complexities of Indian society. While AI has many exciting possibilities, it also raises serious ethical and social questions that must be addressed before it is adopted widely

IE Opinion; By Roshan Pandey and Chetna Trivedi;
 Syllabus: Pre/Mains – Ethics [Link](#)

Why in News?

India's increasing deployment of AI-based tools in criminal justice raises concerns about amplifying existing biases against marginalized communities.

AI Bias and Social Impact

- AI systems reflect existing social biases based on caste, gender, religion, and region
- 2018 MIT study: facial recognition had 0.8% error rate for White men vs 34.7% for dark-skinned women
- Technology shaped by social, political, and economic environments where it's developed
- Benefits often controlled by privileged classes rather than improving conditions for all

Digital Divide in India

- No specific legal framework regulates AI use despite widespread adoption
- Significant populations lack internet access: women, Dalits, Adivasis, minorities, rural communities
- Women use internet 33% less than men
- Only 31% rural Indians online vs 67% urban areas
- AI datasets don't represent India's social reality due to unequal digital access

Criminal Justice System Concerns

- **Current bias:** Two-thirds of prisoners are Dalits, Adivasis, or OBCs; 19% Muslim; 66% illiterate
- **AI deployment:** CCTNS (crime tracking), ICJS (information sharing), AFRS (facial recognition)
- **Global examples:** US COMPAS algorithm twice as likely to assign higher risk scores to Black defendants
- **Indian precedent:** Punjab-Haryana High Court used ChatGPT for bail rejection

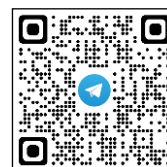
Need for Reform

- Regulations required for inclusive, transparent, and accountable AI
- Technology should empower rather than marginalize vulnerable communities
- AI development must center around marginalized communities' needs
- Prevent reinforcement of existing stigmas and exclusion



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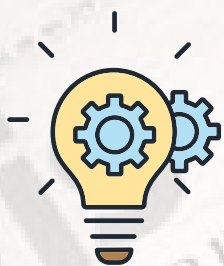
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COURSE OBJECTIVES



COMPREHENSIVE COVERAGE

Comprehensive issue-based coverage of news from January 2024 to Mains 2025. Decoding year-round editorials of The Hindu, Indian Express and other sources.



NOTES

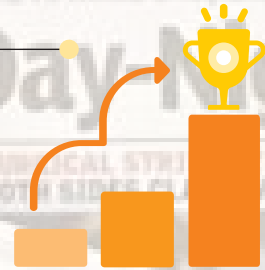
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METHODOLOGY



7 SUBJECT WISE THEMATIC SESSIONS AND 7 BOOKLETS

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- ⇒ *Geography, Environment, Disaster Management*
- ⇒ *Economy & Agriculture*



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