VISIONIAS
INSPIRING INNOVATION

Current Affairs
Workbook

August 2025

Progress Tracking Table

Mains Questions

Ethics Case Studies

MCQs

Quick facts

Self-Evaluation

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

Monthly Learning Summary

Top 3 Learnings/Insights
1.
2.
3.

Progress Comparison

Previous Month's Score
Current Month's Score
Areas of Improvement

Reflection Section

Strengths
Areas for Improvement
Goals for Next Month
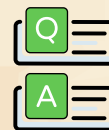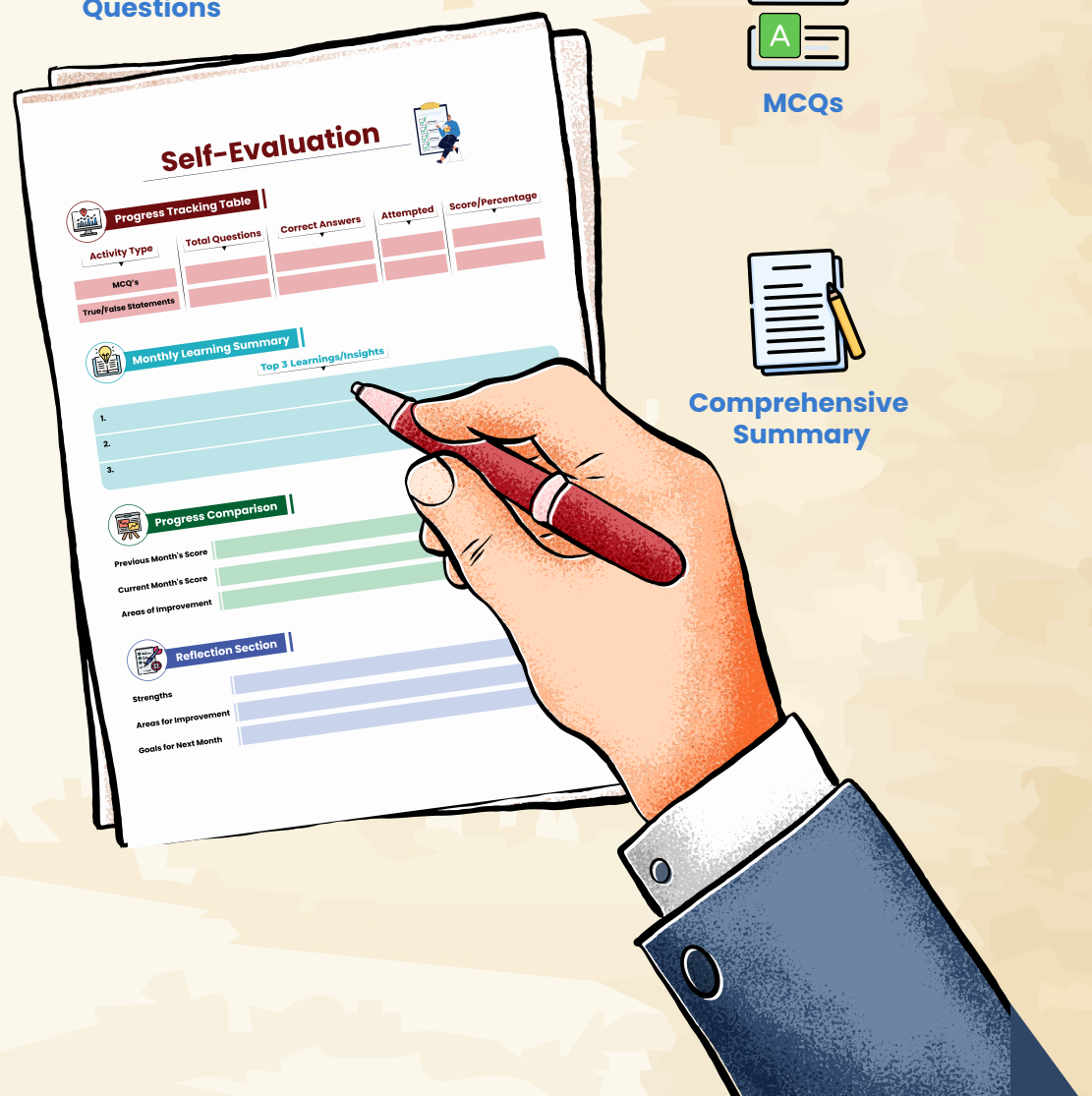
Comprehensive Summary

True/ False

AHMEDABAD   BENGALURU   BHOPAL   CHANDIGARH   DELHI   GUWAHATI   HYDERABAD   JAIPUR   JODHPUR   LUCKNOW   PRAYAGRAJ   PUNE   RANCHI

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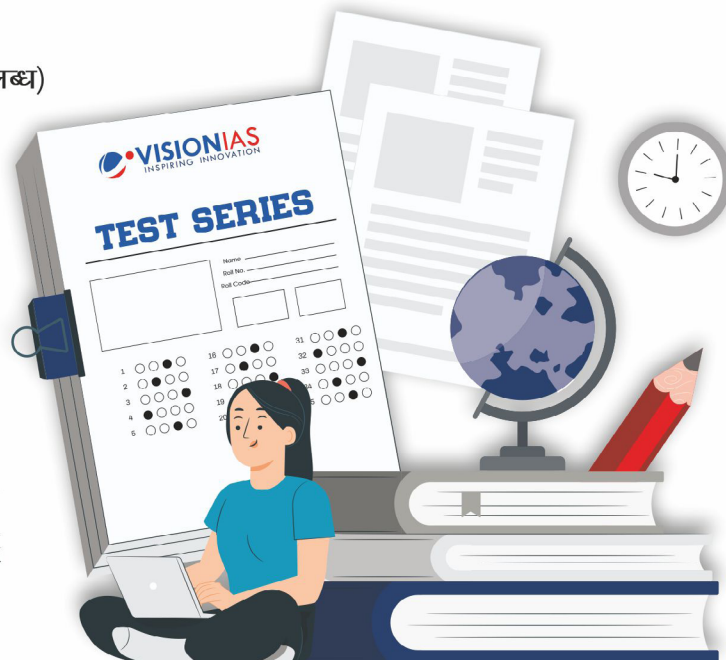 › Monthly Current Affairs

2026	ENGLISH MEDIUM 21 SEPTEMBER	हिन्दी माध्यम 21 सितम्बर

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CONTENTS

From the Editor's Desk

Dear Readers,

The **August edition of the Workbook** continues our effort to make your current affairs preparation structured, practice-oriented, and analytically enriching.

This edition brings together significant legislative and policy shifts—from the **Constitution (130th Amendment) Bill, 2025** seeking accountability in governance, to the **Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025** and the **National Sports Governance Act, 2025** aimed at reforming key sectors.

In the realm of international relations, the Workbook analyzes India's evolving strategy in the **Indian Ocean Region,** debates around a **fair and representative global order,** and the shifting role of **ASEAN centrality.** Developments like the **India–Philippines strategic partnership** and **FTA talks with the Eurasian Economic Union** highlight India's deepening global engagements.

The Economy section addresses pressing structural themes such as India's aspiration to become a **Product Nation,** tackling **regional imbalances,** and the **internationalization of the Rupee.** Alongside, critical issues like **Blue Economy, Gig Workers' welfare,** the **Income Tax Act 2025,** and reforms in the **Competition Commission of India** are covered in depth.

Security and technology-related developments—ranging from the **High-Powered Demography Mission** to counter illegal immigration, the **rise of private defence production,** and the launch of the **Sudarshan Chakra Mission**—emphasize India's efforts to secure its borders and boost indigenous capabilities. On the environmental front, the focus on **E-Mobility, Climate Adaptation,** and **Urban Resilience** underscores the importance of sustainable development.

How the Workbook is Organized?

1. **Summary of the Monthly Magazine –** Quick recall of essentials.

2. **Quick Facts Block –** Key data points consolidated.

3. **Activities Block:**

   MCQs – To sharpen recall.

   True/False Statements – For conceptual clarity.

   Mains Practice Questions – To develop structured writing.

   Ethics Case Studies – To test application in dilemmas.

4. **Answers and Explanations** – For self-evaluation.
5. **Progress Tracking Table** – To monitor consistency.

We encourage you to use this Workbook as an interactive tool, revising regularly and writing answers with discipline. Consistency, clarity of thought, and analytical depth are the keys to mastering current affairs for the Civil Services Examination.

Warm regards,
Team Current Affairs,
VisionIAS

> **Discipline is the bridge between goals and accomplishment.**
>
> **– Jim Rohn**

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5

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1.1. The Constitution (One Hundred and Thirtieth Amendment) Bill, 2025

Why in the News?

Union Home Minister introduced the **Constitution (130th Amendment) Bill, 2025 in Lok Sabha.**

More on the News

- Bill provides for **removal of PM, CM or Ministers in Centre, States and Delhi** if held in custody 30 consecutive days for serious offences.
  - ➡️ Proposes amendments to **Articles 75, 164, 239AA of the Constitution.**
- Similar provisions extended to Puducherry through the **Government of Union Territories (Amendment) Bill, 2025.**
- **J&K Reorganization (Amendment) Bill, 2025** applies the same to its CM/Ministers, empowering the LG.
- All three Bills referred to **Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) for examination.**

Key provisions of Constitution Amendment Bill, 2025

- **Grounds for Removal:** Union Minister, CM, or State Minister removed if arrested and detained for 30 consecutive days for an offence punishable with 5 or more years imprisonment. Applies to Prime Minister also.
- **Procedure for Removal:**
  - ➡️ **Union Ministers (except PM):** President removes Minister on PM's advice by 31st day; if no advice, Minister ceases office automatically.
  - ➡️ **State Ministers (except CM):** Governor acts on CM's advice similarly; auto removal if no advice.
  - ➡️ **Delhi Ministers (except CM):** President acts on Delhi CM's advice; auto removal applies.
  - ➡️ **PM/CMs (Union/State/Delhi):** Must resign by 31st day of custody; else cease office automatically from next day.
- **Reappointment:** Allowed after release from custody.

Arguments in Favor of the Bill	Arguments Against the Bill
• **Constitutional Morality:** SC in **Manoj Narula** said Ministers with serious charges should be avoided.	• **Political Misuse:** Agencies like **ED and CBI** may misuse arrest powers.
• **Public Trust:** The Bill shows **strong action against corruption.**	• **Innocent Until Proven:** Removal happens on **detention, not conviction**. This breaks legal principles.
• **Good Governance:** Stops "**governance from jail**" and improves accountability.	• **Inconsistent:** MPs **lose seat after conviction**, Ministers lose office after arrest only.
• **Bridges Legal Gap:** Covers period between **arrest and conviction.**	• **Revolving Door:** Ministers may **resign and return repeatedly, causing instability**
• **Fairness:** Govt employees suspended after **48 hrs in custody; Ministers should face same rules**.	• **Politicization:** Removal can be **misused by PM or CM to target rivals.**
• **Additional:** Promotes **fairness in parties** and balance against fake arrests.	• **No Safeguards:** No relief for **wrongful arrests; misuse of tough laws like UAPA** likely: Convictions are few

Existing legal framework and Judgments for disqualification after crimes

➲ **Representation of the People Act, 1951 (RPA):** Section 8(3) disqualifies legislators upon conviction for crimes with imprisonment of two years or more.

➲ **Lily Thomas (2013) judgment**: SC struck down Section 8(4), which shielded sitting members from disqualification by filing appeals.

➲ **Manoj Narula v. Union of India (2014):** Court said no legal bar on Ministers with criminal past but PM should avoid appointing such individuals, especially for serious offenses.

➲ **PIL of Public Interest Foundation (2018):** Courts can't add disqualification grounds; Parliament should legislate to make parties revoke membership and deny tickets to serious criminals.

➲ **Election Commission of India (2016):** Recommended amending RPA to bar persons charged with offences punishable by five or more years from contesting elections.

Way Forward

➲ **Interim Suspension:** Suspend Ministers during trials, not remove.

➲ **Party Role:** Parties should not pick candidates with criminal records.

➲ **Law Commission:** Disqualify on charge framing for offences ≤ 5 years after judicial check.

➲ **Bail Rule:** Bail should be default except heinous crimes.

➲ **Fast-track Trials:** Speed up serious cases against Ministers.

➲ **Independent Review:** E.g., Tribunal to check removals, prevent misuse.

1.2. The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025

Why in the News?

Parliament has passed the Promotion and Regulation of **Online Gaming Act, 2025, banning online money games and regulating other online games.**

More on the News

➲ The Act aims to create a **strong legal framework to regulate, promote, and encourage online gaming for innovation** and economic growth while ensuring a safe and responsible digital environment.

➲ Introduced as a **Finance Bill under Articles 117(1) and 117(3)** with the President's recommendations.

Why was the Act needed?

➲ **Addiction & Loss:** Online money games **cause addiction and huge financial loss**.
  ➡ Over 45 crore people lost ₹20,000 crores.

➲ **Mental Health:** WHO calls **gaming disorder a health problem** with loss of control.

➲ **Legal Gaps**: Gambling laws exist but **online games were mostly unregulated, with offshore issues**.

➲ **Security Risk**: Some platforms used for **terror funding and money laundering**.

➲ **E-sports Boost**: Act promotes safe **gaming and innovation in e-sports.**

Key Provisions of the Act

➲ **Online Games Definition**: Online Games are played on **digital devices via internet or similar technology**.

➲ **Categorization:**
  ➡ **E-Sport:** Competitive digital sports with tournaments, e.g., Indian player Ved "Beelzeboy" Bamb won Pokémon GO World Championship 2025.
  ➡ **Online Social Games:** Skill-based games for entertainment and learning, e.g., Wordle, Kahoot.
  ➡ **Online Money Games:** Games involving financial stakes, e.g., Dream11, Rummy, Poker, WinZO.

➲ **Applicability:** Applies across India and to online money gaming services **offered inside or operated from outside India.**

➲ **Prohibition of Online Money Games:** Completely banned, including **ads and financial transactions** related to them.
  ➡ Authorities can block illegal platforms under **IT Act, 2000.**

➲ **Promotion of E-Sports:** Recognized as a **legitimate sport; government to set guidelines** and develop infrastructure.

➲ **Promotion of Social & Educational Games**: Government can recognize and **register safe, age-appropriate social games with dedicated platforms.**

➲ **Online Gaming Authority**: **National regulator** to categorize, register games, identify money games, and handle grievances.

- **Offences & Penalties:**
  - Up to 3 years imprisonment **and ₹1 crore fine for** offering online money games.
  - Ads attract up to **2 years imprisonment and ₹50 lakh fine.**
- **Corporate Liability**: Companies and officers held responsible; protections for **diligent independent directors.**
- **Investigation Powers:** Government can authorize **searches, seizures, and arrests without warrant in certain cases.**

Other Notable Initiatives to Counter the Risks of Online Gaming

- **Section 69A, IT Act 2000:** Allows government to block illegal websites.
- **IT Rules 2021:** Set norms for online gaming platforms, including intermediary registration with Self-regulatory Bodies (SRBs).
- **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023**: Sections 111 & 112 penalize unauthorized betting/gambling.
- **IGST Act 2017:** Regulates illegal and offshore gaming platforms.
- **Consumer Protection Act 2019:** Bans misleading/surrogate ads; CCPA advised against celebrities endorsing betting platforms.

Conclusion

The Prohibition and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025 **protects citizens from harmful online money games** while promoting e-sports and social games. It aims to boost the creative **economy and ensure technology benefits society.**
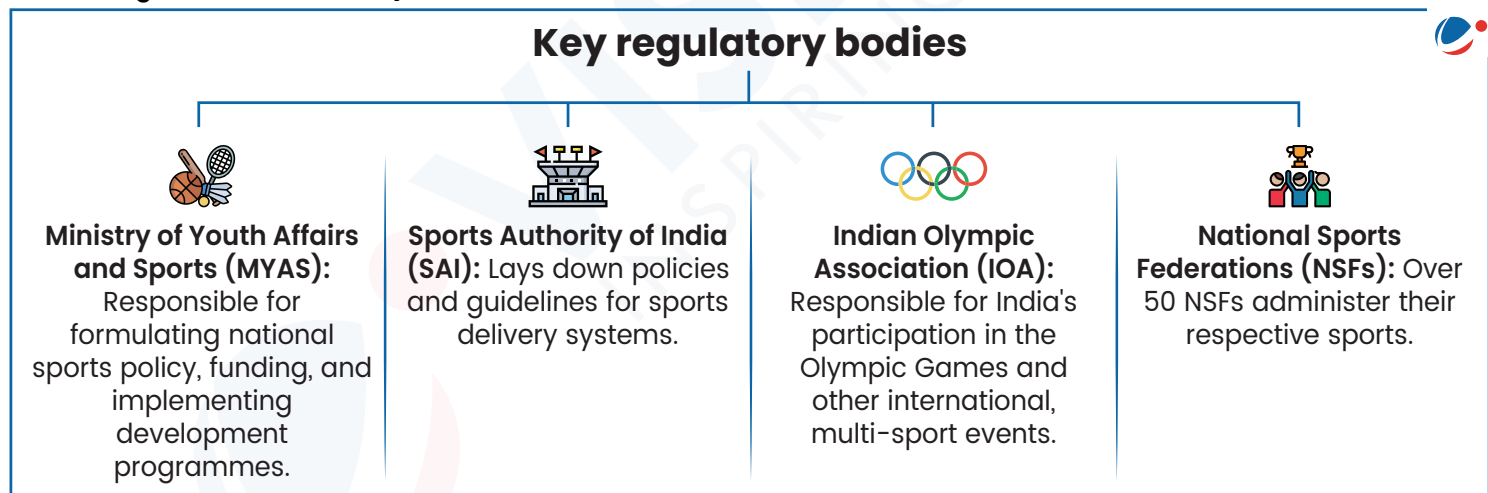
1.3. National Sports Governance Act, 2025

Why in the News?

The President recently gave assent to the **National Sports Governance Bill, 2025.**

Sports governance in India

- Sports regulation is under state jurisdiction according to **Entry 33 of the State List in the Seventh Schedule**.
- Existing policies include the **National Sports Policy (1984, revised 2001) and the Sports Broadcasting Signals (Mandatory Sharing with Prasar Bharati) Act, 2007.**

Key regulatory bodies

Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS): Responsible for formulating national sports policy, funding, and implementing development programmes.

Sports Authority of India (SAI): Lays down policies and guidelines for sports delivery systems.

Indian Olympic Association (IOA): Responsible for India's participation in the Olympic Games and other international, multi-sport events.

National Sports Federations (NSFs): Over 50 NSFs administer their respective sports.

Key highlights of the Act

- **National sports bodies:** Establishes National Olympic Committee, Paralympic Committee, and **Sports Federations affiliated with international bodies, with units at state/district levels,** governed by international charters.
- **National Sports Board (NSB):** Recognizes sports bodies and affiliates; only **recognized bodies get central funds.**
  - **NSB sets a Code of Ethics** and is a public authority under RTI.
  - Members appointed for expertise **in sports governance and law.**
- **National Sports Tribunal**: Handles sports-related disputes except those involving **international bodies or internal NSF issues.**
- **Election Oversight**: Central government forms a panel to oversee elections of national bodies; **sports bodies oversee affiliate elections.**
- **Central Government Powers:** Can exempt national bodies or **affiliates from the Act for public interest and promotion of sport.**

Need for a comprehensive sports Law in India

- **No uniform sports law**, causing **inconsistent and outdated regulations**.
  - ➜ The 2013 National Sports Development Bill was **not enacted.**
- **Politicians** with little sports knowledge dominate **NSFs; E.g., FIFA suspended** All India Football Federation **(AIFF) for external interference.**
- **Overlapping roles** of **SAI, IOA, and NSFs** cause confusion and delays.
- **Inadequate Fund Utilization**: Less than **40% of the 2022-23 sports budget** was used for athlete development.
- **Poor Implementation** of National Sports Policy (1984, revised 2001).
- **Olympic Bid**: The law aids **India's bid for 2036 Olympics** by aligning with **Olympic Charter**.

Conclusion

The National Sports Governance Act, 2025, **aims to build a transparent, accountable, and athlete-focused sports system, aligned with global best practices.**

> ### Related News
>
> - **National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Bill, 2025:** The Bill amends the National Anti-Doping Act, 2022, and was given Presidential assent.
> - **Aim:** Prohibits doping in sports and sets framework for testing, enforcement, and adjudication.
> - Aligns with UNESCO convention against doping.
> - **Establishes:**
>   - ➜ **National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA)** to enforce anti-doping rules.
>   - ➜ **National Board for Anti-Doping in Sports** to oversee NADA and advise government.
> - **Changes from earlier Act:**
>   - ➜ Appeal Panel now **constituted by central government**, not National Board.
>   - ➜ NADA members have operational independence per **WADA and UNESCO norms.**
>   - ➜ Only specified bodies can **appeal to CAS (earlier any person could).**
>   - ➜ **Testing labs must have mandatory** WADA accreditation (previously voluntary).
>   - ➜ Anti-doping violations adopt **World Anti-Doping Code's legal definitions and schedules in India.**

1.4. Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2025

Why in the News?

The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2025 **was recently introduced in Lok Sabha to decriminalize and rationalize offences, promoting trust-based governance for ease of living and business**.

More on the News

- **Builds on the Jan Vishwas Act, 2023**, which decriminalized 183 provisions across 42 Central Acts managed by 19 Ministries.
- The 2025 Bill expands reforms to cover **16 Central Acts under 10 Ministries.**
- Replaces harsh compliance **rules with rational, trust-based processes to simplify procedures, reduce judicial workload,** and foster a better environment for citizens and businesses.

Key Features of the Bill

- **First-time contraventions:** For **76 offences under 10 Acts**, first violations get only warnings or advisories, no punishment.
- **Decriminalization:** Removes imprisonment for minor, technical, procedural defaults; **e.g., Tea Act, 1953 and Legal Metrology Act, 2009 further decriminalized.**
- **Rationalized penalties**: Fines are proportionate with **higher penalties for repeat offences.**
- **Adjudication:** Officers can **impose penalties administratively** for **faster case resolution** and less court burden.
- **Automatic fine revision**: Fines increase by **10% every 3 years** to keep deterrence effective **without new laws.**

What Are Process Reforms?

- Process reforms are **"nuts and bolts" changes** to specific rules or procedures.
  - ➜ Unlike structural reforms, **which change the overall system, process reforms** improve how existing systems work.
- They are small, targeted changes **aimed at improving efficiency in specific sectors or policies**.
- **The Economic Survey 2020-21 supports simpler regulations** and smoother processes over complex rules and opacity.

Significance of Process Reforms

- ➲ Keep **India's growth steady** between big changes.
- ➲ **Remove daily hurdles** for citizens, businesses, and researchers.
- ➲ **Fixes delays** caused by old rules and paperwork.
- ➲ **Boost competitiveness**, e.g., telecom liberalization helped IT and BPO.
- ➲ **Cut corruption** by making systems clear and simple.
- ➲ Promote a culture of constant **problem-solving in government.**

Guiding Principles for Process Reforms

- ➲ **Simplify processes** with clear communication (e.g., National Single Window).
- ➲ **Define goals** and align efforts (e.g., PRAGATI).
- ➲ **Agile, tech-responsive design** in procedures (e.g., Quality-cum-Cost-Based tendering).
- ➲ **Culture of ongoing review & refinement** (e.g., Digital Public Infrastructure, India Stack).
- ➲ **Involve stakeholders** in decisions (e.g., Community Forest Management).

Case Studies of Successful Process Reforms

- ➲ **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT):** Digitized subsidies **reduced leakages and improved service delivery**.
- ➲ **Voluntary Company Liquidation**: Streamlined procedures cut liquidation time from over **4 years to among the fastest globally.**
- ➲ **Rationalization of Autonomous Bodies:** Merged or closed outdated bodies like **All India Handloom Board to reduce overlap.**
- ➲ **Government e-Marketplace (GeM):** Online platform increased **transparency and lowered procurement costs by 15-20%.**
- ➲ **Legal and Dispute Reforms:** Reduced court delays and costs, **including Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code measures.**
- ➲ **Legal Metrology Amendments:** Decriminalized minor offences to **reduce harassment and rent-seeking**.

Conclusion

As India grows into an innovation-driven economy, **reforms like Jan Vishwas Bill are milestones**, **not endpoints.** Embracing **technology, simplification, and citizen-focused governance** can foster transparency, responsiveness, and **adaptability in institutions.**

1.5. News in Shorts

1.5.1. Commercial, Prohibited Speeches Not Part of Fundamental Rights: SC

The court was hearing **a case against social media** comedians **for "abusing freedom of speech and expression".**

Key Judicial Observations

- ➲ **Freedom of speech (Art. 19(1)(a))** excludes commercial and prohibited speech.
    - ➡ Hate speech **incites hatred or violence** against groups based on inherent traits.
    - ➡ Commercial speech involves advertising with **economic intent.**
- ➲ **Influencers with followers** must act **responsibly.**
- ➲ **Penal actions** and compensation suggested under **IT Rules and Cinematograph Act.**
- ➲ Court directed government to **draft social media content regulation guidelines**.

Legal Framework for Online Content in India

- ➲ **IT Act, 2000 (Sec. 69A):** Govt. can block online content.
- ➲ **Cinematograph Act, 1952:** Bans content maligning or slandering persons/groups.

SC Judgement related to free speech

- ➲ **Amish Devgan v. Union of India (2020):** Differentiated **free speech from hate/prohibited speech** and emphasized influencers' responsibility.
- ➲ **Shreya Singhal v. Union of India (2015):** Held **legitimate expression cannot be restricted** without imminent harm.

1.5.2. Rules for OCI Card Tightened

Union Ministry of Home Affairs has issued the notification under **Section 7D of the Citizenship Act, 1955.**

Key Highlights of the Notification

- ➲ OCI registration can be revoked if:
    - ➡ The individual is sentenced to **at least 2 years in prison; or**
    - ➡ A charge sheet is filed against them for **offence with 7 or more years' imprisonment**.

About OCI Cards

- ➲ Introduced in 2005 as an amendment to **the Citizenship Act, 1955.**

➜ In 2015, the **PIO card scheme merged with OCI**; all PIO cardholders became OCI cardholders.

⟳ OCI is **not dual citizenship** and does not grant political rights.

⟳ **Cancellation grounds:** obtained by fraud, disaffection to the Constitution, or threats to sovereignty, security, foreign relations, or public interest.

⟳ **Benefits for OCI Cardholders:**

➜ **Multiple-entry, life-long visa** for India visits.

➜ **No registration needed** with Foreign Registration Officers regardless of stay length.

➜ Parity with **NRIs in economic, financial, and educational fields** except for agricultural or plantation property purchase.

Eligibility for OCI Registration

◈ Foreign nationals who were **citizens of India on or after 26 Jan 1950.**

◈ Those eligible to become **citizens of India on 26 Jan 1950.**

◈ Persons from **territories that became part of India** after 15 Aug 1947.

◈ **Children, grandchildren, or great-grandchildren** of such citizens.

◈ **Minor children** with one or both parents as Indian citizens.

◈ **Spouse of Indian/OCI citizen,** with registered marriage subsisting for at least 2 years.

◈ **Exception:** Citizens of Pakistan, Bangladesh, or other countries notified by the Government are not eligible.

1.5.3. Election to the Office of the Vice-President of India

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has announced the **election date for the 17th Vice-Presidential Election.**

⟳ **Constitutional Provisions related to Vice President**

⟳ **Term & Vacancy**: 5-year term; election must be held promptly if vacant.

⟳ **Electoral College**: Includes 782 Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha members (elected + nominated)

⟳ **Voting System**: Proportional Representation by Single Transferable Vote and secret ballot.

⟳ **Authority**: ECI conducts election under constitutional and legal powers.

Election Procedure of Vice President

⟳ **Nomination:** Needs 20 proposers/seconders and ₹15,000 deposit.

⟳ **Voting:** In Parliament using **ECI-supplied pens; first preference compulsory**.

⟳ **Supervision:** Returning Officer (Rajya Sabha Secretary General) and observers appointed.

Key Safeguards Followed in Elections

⟳ **No party whip** allowed.

⟳ **Breach of secrecy** or unauthorized pen invalidates vote.

⟳ **Bribery or undue influence** can challenge election legally

Eligibility for Vice-President

Must be an Indian citizen | At least 35 years old | Qualified for election to the Rajya Sabha.
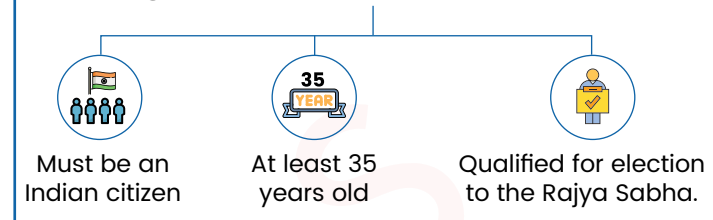
1.5.4. National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC)

The Union Cabinet has approved the **Central Sector Scheme** "**Grant in aid** to **National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC)**".

About the Grant in Aid to NCDC

⟳ **Scheme outlay: Rs. 2000 crore over four years** (2025-29), Rs. 500 crores annually.

➜ **NCDC is the executive agency for fund disbursement,** project monitoring, and loan recovery.

⟳ **Grant-in-aid:** Payments by one government to another as **assistance or donations.**

➜ **Guided by Articles 275 (Statutory Grants) and 282 (Discretionary Grants)** of the Constitution.

National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC)
New Delhi

Genesis: The NCDC was **established in 1963** by an Act of Parliament as a **statutory Corporation** under the **Ministry of Cooperation.**

Functions: The NCDC Act has been amended to **expand the corporation's area of operation,** allowing it to **assist different types of cooperatives and broaden its financial base.**

Management: The NCDC is managed by a **General Council,** which has 51 members who **shape its policies and programs. Day-to-day activities** are handled by a 12-member **Board of Management.**

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

2.1. Fair and Representative Global Order

Why in the News?

India's External Affairs Minister urged for a fair and representative global order at the first **BIMSTEC Traditional Music Festival.**

Why global order is not fair and representative?

- ➲ **Unequal Representation in Institutions:** P5 nations dominate UNSC with veto, sidelining others.
- ➲ **Marginalization of Global South:** Global North has **9× voting power** in IMF.
  - ➡ US holds **16.49% votes but only 4.22% of population.**
- ➲ **Ineffective Multilateralism:** Major powers bypass forums **(e.g., US exit from Paris Pact & WHO).**
- ➲ **Trade as Geopolitical Tool:** US tariffs **(25% on Indian goods), EU carbon tax** show imbalance.
- ➲ **Climate Change Inequities:** Developed nations caused **bulk emissions, but Global South suffers** most (e.g., 2024 Philippines heatwave).
- ➲ **Technology & Knowledge Divide:** 100 firms **(mainly US, China) drive 40% of global R&D**, centralising power.

Way forward for a Fair & Representative Global Order

- ➲ **Multilateral Reforms:** G4 nations (Brazil, Germany, India, Japan) **back each other's bids for UNSC** permanent seats.
- ➲ **Decolonising Multilateralism:** Voice of the **Global South Summit highlights India's role** in pushing equitable world order.
- ➲ **Implement Rio Declaration:** BRICS **(17th Summit) called for inclusive AI governance** and realignment of IMF quotas.
- ➲ **Bridging Digital & Tech Divide:** Promote open-source, **inclusive DPI.**
  - ➡ **India's Digital Public Infrastructure** showcased as a model for Global South.
- ➲ **Climate Justice:** Reinforce **CBDR principle,** updated for today's **climate and economic realities.**

Conclusion

A fair global order **demands inclusive institutions, equitable finance, North–South balance**, with India as a bridging power for **justice and effectiveness.**

2.2. India's Strategy in Indian Ocean

Why in the News?

Parliamentary Committee on External Affairs tabled report in Lok Sabha on '**Evaluation of India's Indian Ocean Strategy'.**

Why Indian Ocean matters?

- ➲ **3rd-largest ocean**, home to **1/3rd of global population.**
- ➲ **Vital trade hub:** 2/3rd of global oil shipments transit here.
- ➲ **India's lifeline:** 90% trade volume & nearly all oil imports move via IOR.
- ➲ **Strategic assets:** India holds 2.4 million sq. km EEZ in the region.

India's Strategy in the Indian Ocean

- ➲ **Policies:** 'Neighbourhood First', **SAGAR (Security & Growth for All in Region) and MAHASAGAR (2025) doctrine.**
- ➲ **Net Security Provider**: Counter-piracy ops, **anti-IUU fishing, maritime terrorism** control, EEZ surveillance, IFC-IOR information sharing.
- ➲ **Engagement with Littoral States:** Bilateral ties with **Mauritius, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Seychelles via development aid,** HADR, defence & capacity building.
- ➲ **Regional Leadership**: Active in **IORA, IOC and other multilateral forums**.
- ➲ **Infrastructure & Connectivity**: Port investments **(Chabahar, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Seychelles); Sagarmala 2.0 to boost maritime competitiveness.**
- ➲ **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief**: Reliable first responder (**e.g., Operation Sadbhav for Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam after Typhoon Yagi).**

MAHASAGAR focuses on

- ➲ **Maritime Leadership:** Promote India's leadership in **IOR as Net Security Provider & First Responder**.
- ➲ **Maritime Capabilities:** By expanding scope of **our engagement and other activities.**
- ➲ **Global South: Strengthen maritime security ties** with Global South beyond IOR.
- ➲ **Operational Effectiveness:** Enhance effectiveness via **joint training, best practices & advanced technologies.**
- ➲ **Maritime Security Framework:** Formulate **responsive and resilient maritime** security framework.

> ### Important Multilateral Platforms in the IORA
>
> - ➲ **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)**: 23-member regional grouping on economy, safety, environment.
> - ➲ **Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) (2008**): Naval cooperation among littoral states.
> - ➲ **Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) (2019)**: Open initiative for maritime management & security.
> - ➲ **QUAD**: Covers maritime security, HADR, connectivity, tech & supply chains.
> - ➲ **BIMSTEC**: India leads Security pillar (counterterrorism, disaster mgmt, energy).
> - ➲ **Indian Ocean Commission (IOC):** Works on economy, environment, maritime security; India = Observer.

Challenges and Threats to the Indian Strategy

- ➲ **Geopolitical:** China's port/infrastructure presence; island states hedging.
- ➲ **Maritime Security:** Piracy, terrorism, IUU fishing, trafficking, smuggling.
- ➲ **Infra Gaps:** Limited capacity in partners (Sri Lanka, Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles).

Way Forward

- ➲ **Comprehensive Plan**: Covering 35 littorals states with focus on security, infra, climate, defence.
- ➲ **Better Execution**: Inter-Ministerial Task Force for coordination.
- ➲ **Unified Strategy:** Integrate IOR and Indo-Pacific, leverage Quad, IORA, ASEAN.
- ➲ **Green MAHASAGAR:** Sustainability as well as Blue Economy.
- ➲ **Maritime Strength**: Use of AI/satellite in marine domain awareness; stronger Navy under Aatmanirbhar Bharat.
- ➲ **Cultural Diplomacy:** Expand cultural centres & heritage outreach.

Conclusion

India's IOR policy aims at **security, cooperation, prosperity, keeping the ocean free, open, inclusive, aligned with UNCLOS principles.**

2.3. Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Centrality

Why in the News?

ASEAN's centrality under strain due **to great-power rivalry, trade tensions, and shifting Indo-Pacific order, requiring reforms & deeper partnerships.**

About ASEAN

- ➲ **Genesis (1967):** Formed in Bangkok via **ASEAN Declaration.**
- ➲ **Aims: Economic & cultural progress**; peace, stability, rule of law; cooperation in trade, education, agriculture, industry.
- ➲ **Secretariat:** Jakarta, Indonesia.

- **Members:** 10 nations; **founders**: Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand.
- **ASEAN Summit:** Apex policy body **with Heads of State/Government**.
- **Charter (Art. 1.15):** Core aim is to uphold **ASEAN centrality** in regional partnerships.

Relevance of ASEAN Centrality in the Region

- **Security & Stability:** ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) enable **defence, maritime, security dialogue** with external powers.
- **Economic Integration**: Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) deepens **Asia-Pacific trade** networks under **ASEAN leadership**.
- **Norm-Building:** Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) evolved into key framework with signatories incl. **US, China, Russia.**

Threats to ASEAN Centrality

- **Great-Power Rivalry: US**–China tensions **(e.g., BRI vs Indo-Pacific Strategy) risk** weakening ASEAN unity.
- **Trade Strain:** US tariffs disrupt ASEAN-dependent **trade flows.**
- **Overlapping Architectures:** QUAD & AUKUS overshadow ASEAN-led security forums.
- **Internal Divisions:** Differing member stances on China **(Vietnam vs Cambodia/Laos).**
- **Credibility Crisis:** Weak on Myanmar "**Five-Point Consensus**," external powers filling vacuum.
- **Institutional Weakness:** Resource-poor Secretariat limits **ASEAN's impact.**

ASEAN map showing: LAOS, MYANMAR, VIETNAM, THAILAND, PHILIPPINES, CAMBODIA, MALAYSIA, BRUNEI DARUSSALAM, SINGAPORE, INDONESIA

Way-forward to Strengthen ASEAN Centrality

- **Upgrade via Vision 2045** and Strategic Plans (Political-Security, Economic 2026-30).
- **Cooperate with like-minded partners** (e.g., EU FTAs, Indo-Pacific presence).
- Formally **consults with QUAD** to connect minilateral and ASEAN processes.
- **Closer partnership with India** to boost trade, diversification, stability.

How can India deal with shift of ASEAN Centrality?

- **Synchronize efforts**: Align Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) with ASEAN's Outlook for the Indo-Pacific (AOIP), focusing on maritime security, disaster response, blue economy.
- **Explore synergies:** Use sub-regional groups like IORA, BIMSTEC, IMT-GT.
- **Review ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA):** Simplify ASEAN-India Trade Agreement for easier trade.
- **Implement Tourism Work Plan**: Deepen cooperation (2023-27) in tourism education, training, research.

Conclusion

ASEAN must **reassert centrality** with member **unity against external strategic pressures.**

2.4. News in Shorts

2.4.1. India-Philippines Strategic Partnership

The Philippines and India formally elevated their ties through **Plan of Action (2025-2029), marking 75 years of diplomatic ties (since 1949).**

- Strengthened by **India's Look East (1992) and Act East (2014) policies.**

India–Philippines Relations Overview

- **Bilateral Trade:** Bilateral trade exceeded $3.05 billion in FY2024-25.
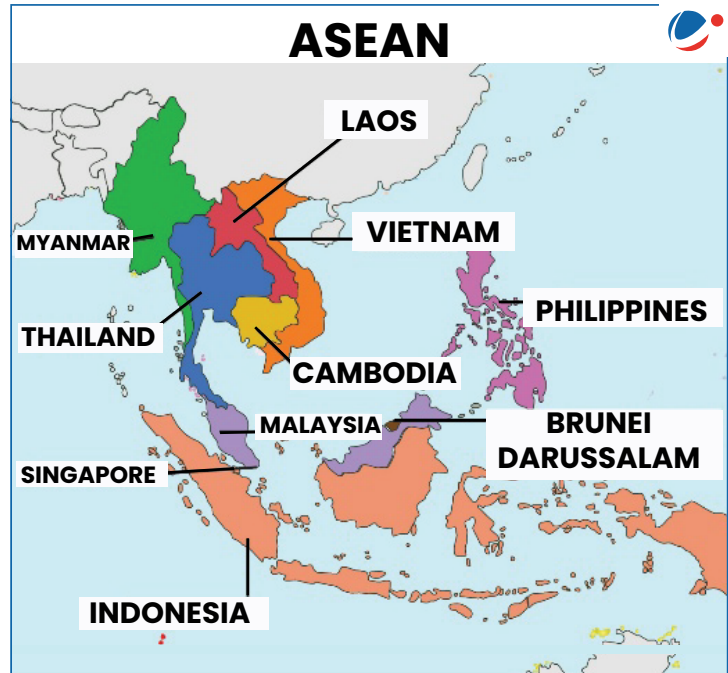
- **People-to-People Ties:** Diaspora (around 1.2 lakh Indians live in the Philippines).
- **Multilateral Platforms:** Regional security cooperation initiatives
- **Cybersecurity & Counterterrorism:** Collaboration against transnational security threats
- **Maritime:** Joint focus on maritime domain awareness
- **Science, Technology and Education:** Cooperation program promoting advanced technologies
- **Blue Economy:** Focus on sustainable ocean-based industries e.g., Shrimp.

Convergence of India-Philippines Relations

- **Defense ties growing**; $375m BrahMos missile deal.
- China's South **China Sea assertiveness threatens both, driving cooperation.**
  - → India backs **2016 arbitration ruling**, freedom of navigation.
- **Philippines key in India's Act East** and Indo-Pacific policies.

Conclusion

India-Philippines partnership **deepens with cyber, economic, maritime, defense ties, promoting a rules-based Indo-Pacific and regional security.**

2.4.2. UN-India Global Capacity-Building Initiative

India launched projects with the **UN under Global Capacity Building Initiative for Asia, Africa and Caribbean countries.**

About Global Capacity Building Initiative

- **Genesis:** Launched by India and the UN in **September 2023.**
- **Objective**: Share India's development **experience and expertise with Global South** through capacity-building and training, to accelerate **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).**
- **Implementation:** Via UN India **SDG Country Fund and Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme (ITEC).**

2.4.3. Eurasian Economic Union

India and the Eurasian Economic Union signed **Terms of Reference, formally starting FTA negotiations to build a long-term trade cooperation framework.**

Potential Benefits of FTA with EAEU

- **Economic Benefits:**
  - → **Trade expansion** unlocking potential; stronger India-EAEU partnership **(USD 69 billion in 2024, 7% rise).**
  - → **Market access** for Indian exporters amid US tariffs; **supports diversification.**
  - → **Enhances competitiveness**; benefits MSMEs.
  - → **Energy partnership**: Russia supplies 35-40% of India's oil imports.
- **Strategic Benefits**: Strengthens India's **multialignment policy with Russia-led bloc.**

About Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU)

- International **economic integration** organization.
- Created by **Treaty on EAEU (2014).**
- **Enables free movement** of goods, services, capital, labour.

Eurasian Economic Union

2.4.4. Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty

Russia ended its commitment to the **1987 INF Treaty, citing recent US military moves, including nuclear submarine repositioning** and Typhon missile deployment in the Philippines.

About INF Treaty

- Signed by **US and Soviet Union in 1987**, mandating destruction of **ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles (500–5,500 km).**
- First major treaty **reducing nuclear arsenals, eliminating a weapons class**, allowing on-site inspections.
- Weakened after **US withdrawal in 2019.**

Implications on nuclear arms control

- Breakdown of arms control frameworks, **eroding trust and stalling nuclear disarmament efforts.**
- **Accelerated nuclear modernization by major powers**; non-nuclear states reconsider commitments, increasing global instability.
- Revival of **Cold War-era missile crisis fears in Europe**.
- **Increased security risks** with rapid-response weapons, raising chances of accidental nuclear conflict.

Key Nuclear Arms Control Agreements

- **Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT):** Entered into force in 1970, it aims at preventing spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology.
- **Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT):** 2002 US–Russia bilateral agreement limiting strategic nuclear warheads.
- **New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START):** 2010 bilateral agreement between US and Russia, significantly limiting strategic arms.
- **Treaty on Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW):** Adopted at UN in 2017 and prohibits participating in any nuclear weapon activities.

2.4.5. Armenia–Azerbaijan Peace Agreement brokered by the United States

The deal aims to bring an **end to decades of conflict between the two South Caucasus countries.**

Key Provisions of the deal

- **Cessation of Hostilities**: Both Armenia and Azerbaijan agree to end conflict and establish diplomatic relations.
- **Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP):** Transit route linking Azerbaijan to its exclave Nakhchivan through Armenia, with US having exclusive development rights.
- **US Cooperation Deals:** Separate US agreements with both on energy, technology, and economy cooperation.

Background of the Conflict

Nagorno-Karabakh disputed mountainous region inside Azerbaijan but mainly ethnic Armenian population.

- **1980s**: Nagorno-Karabakh sought separation with Armenia's support.
- **1991**: Independent countries post-Soviet Union; dispute continued.
- **2023**: Azerbaijan regained full control; nearly 100,000 Armenians fled to Armenia.

India's Interest

- **Supports peace deal** as achievement in dialogue and diplomacy.
- Armenia is India's **Friendship and Cooperation** Treaty partner (since 1995).
- Azerbaijan lies on **International North-South Transport Corridor** connecting India with Russia via Central Asia.

Armenia-Azerbaijan

2.4.6. Alaska Summit

The President of USA and Russia met in Alaska **regarding Ceasefire in Russia-Ukraine war.**

About Alaska

- Non-contiguous U.S. state on the **northwest edge of North America.**
- Purchased from **Russia under the Alaska Treaty of 1867.**
- Maritime boundaries **include Beaufort Sea and Arctic Ocean (north), Gulf of Alaska and Pacific Ocean (south), Bering Sea (west), Chukchi Sea (northwest).**
- Known for the Northern Lights **(Aurora Borealis) visible across much of the state.**
- **Nearly one-third lies** within the Arctic Circle; about 85% underlain by permafrost.

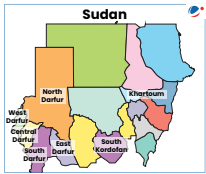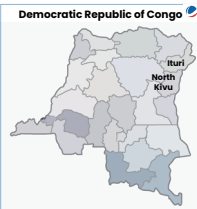## 2.4.7. Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD)

India has been elected as the **Chairman of the Executive Board of AIBD at 23rd General Conference in Thailand.**

About Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development

- **Genesis**: Founded in 1977 under the auspices of UNESCO, AIBD is a unique regional inter-governmental organization.
- **Secretariat**: Kuala Lumpur.
- Mandate: To achieve a vibrant and cohesive electronic media environment in the Asia Pacific.
- **Members:** 92 organizations from 45 countries.
  - India is a **founding member of AIBD, and Prasar Bharati India's public service broadcaster represents** the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting in the organization.

2.4.8. Conflict Areas in News

Area	Information	Map
Gaza (Khan Yonis, Rafah, Jabalia, Dier al-Balah)	**Reason** - The **UN declared famine in August 2025** due to Israel's blockade and restricted aid after Hamas attacks. - Half a million people at **starvation risk with worsening food insecurity across the strip.** **Key Features** - A small, **densely populated coastal strip** along the eastern Mediterranean with **2.2 million people.** - Borders Israel (north, east) and Egypt (southwest).	

Sudan (Darfur, Khartoum, South Kordofan, Blue Nile States)	**Reason** ➔ **Entered civil war in April 2023** due to conflict **between Sudan Army and RSF paramilitary group.** **Key Features** ➔ **Northeast African country**, third largest in Africa, **bordered by Egypt and the Red Sea.** ➔ Nile River (White and Blue Nile) flows through it.	Sudan map
Ukraine (Kyiv, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Cherkasy, Chernihiv, Kharkiv)	**Reason** ➔ **Facing severe humanitarian crisis** amid continued Russian missile and drone attacks. **Key Features** ➔ Eastern European country bordered by **Russia and Black Sea**. ➔ **Dnieper River** runs through Kyiv; mountainous regions in west and south.	Ukraine map

Democratic Republic of Congo (North Kivu, Ituri province)	**Reason** ➔ Enduring repeated wars **due to ethnic conflict, weak governance, and mineral wealth competition.** **Key Features** ➔ **Central African country, 2nd largest in Africa,** rich in minerals like cobalt, copper, gold. ➔ Contains Africa's second-**longest river basin (Congo River) and second-largest tropical rainforest.**	Democratic Republic of Congo map

ECONOMICS

3.1. Product Nation

Why in the News?

Standing Committee on Finance advised ways to tackle global trade uncertainties and increasing protectionism**.**

More on the News

➲ Global conflicts and US tariffs expose India's trade vulnerability, but experts see a chance to shift from services to products, aided by reforms like GST rationalization.

What is a Product Nation?

➲ **Definition:** A product nation is a country that **produces and exports** of **high-value goods**.
➲ **Purpose:** Sh**ifts from being only a consumer or assembler to becoming a creator of globally competitive goods.** E.g., **higher value lies in** R&D, design, branding, and distribution rather than pure manufacturing. E.g., **Apple ($3T market cap) vs. Foxconn ($85B).**

Challenges in Becoming a Product Nation

➲ **Innovation & R&D Gaps:** India spends **0.65% of its GDP on R&D**.
➲ **Import Dependence:** E.g., **India imports 65-70% of its semiconductor** needs.
➲ **Structural Constraints: Weak infrastructure** and a **shortage of skilled labor**.
➲ **Employment Generation, Low Private Investment,** Delays in approvals**, complex compliance**, etc.
➲ **Climate & Sustainability Risks:** Coal generates more **than 70% of India's total electricity.**

India's Transformative Initiatives: National Critical Minerals Mission, Indigenous human spaceflight (Gaganyaan), MSMEs in global supply chains, Viksit Bharat Rojgar Yojana, PM Dhan Dhanya Krishi Yojana, etc.

Way Forward: Strengthen Manufacturing, Infrastructure & Connectivity Push, Invest in Human Capital, Foster Product Development Platforms.

3.2. Regional Imbalances in India

Why in the News?

Standing Committee on Finance Report recommended **to evenly distribute industries across States to reduce regional imbalances in India.**

More on the News

➲ Regional imbalances refer to the **differences in economic development and uneven economic growth** in different geographical regions.
➲ **Industries are a State subject** but **Union list has Industries** for defence or for the prosecution of war or be expedient in the public interest.

Reasons for Regional Imbalances in India

➲ **Historical Factors**: British concentration of development in areas like West Bengal and Maharashtra.

- ➲ **Geographical Factors**: Difficult terrain (e.g., Himalayan and North-Eastern states).
- ➲ **Political factors**: E.g., Relocation of Tata Nano project from West Bengal to Gujarat due to protests.
- ➲ **Policy Disparities**: The Green Revolution benefited a few states like Punjab and Haryana etc.
- ➲ **Lack of Growth of Ancillary Industries**
- ➲ **Location Specific**: E.g., Commercial hubs in National Capital region (Gurugram, Noida).
- ➲ **Infrastructure Deficit**: Poor transportation, banking services etc. limits growth. E.g. North East.

Consequences of Regional Imbalances in India

- ➲ **Security**: E.g., Insurgency in North-east and left-wing extremism in large parts of central and eastern states.
- ➲ **Political fragmentation:** E.g. Demand for separate Vidharbha State in Maharashtra, Bodoland in Assam, etc.
- ➲ **Economic:** Difference in Per Capita Income, Prosperous areas attracts more investments.
- ➲ **Environmental**: Air, water, and noise pollution.
- ➲ **Social**: Frustration among youth and vulnerable sections like SC, ST, OBCs, women, etc.
- ➲ **Disparity in Human Development**, Health Inadequacy etc.
- ➲ **Other**: Housing & Water Problem in Metropolitan cities like Mumbai, New Delhi, Chennai and Hyderabad.

Initiatives taken by the Government: Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP): Transforming 112 most under-developed districts; Aspirational Block Programme (ABP): Developing underdeveloped blocks; PM-DevINE (Prime Minister's Development Initiative for Northeast Region); Special Package Scheme: For Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and J&K; Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY).

Way Forward

- ➲ Promoting New Financial Institutions in Backwards Regions, New Regional Boards, Growth Corridors, Performance-Based Funding, Additional funds for Infrastructure, Strengthening of Good and Local Governance in backward states.
- ➲ **Others**: Deregulation, R&D and innovation, and improving skill levels of the workforce.

3.3. Internationalization of Rupee

Why in the News?

RBI removes prior approval requirements for banks to open **Special Rupee Vostro Accounts (SRVAs).**

More on the News

- ➲ Special Rupee Vostro Account (SRVA) enables exporters and importers to **invoice and settle trade in Indian Rupees (i.e. Internationalization of Indian Rupee).**
- ➲ **Vostro Account:** A foreign bank's account held in a domestic bank in the local currency.
- ➲ Nostro Account: Domestic bank's account in a foreign bank in the currency of the overseas country.

What is Internationalization of Rupee?

- ➲ Internationalization of Rupee refers to a process that involves **increasing use of the rupee in cross-border transactions.**

What is an International currency?

- ➲ It is a currency used for transactions between countries and beyond the borders of the issuing nation.
- ➲ It performs the **three functions of money (As a medium of exchange, a unit of account, and a store of value).** E.g., US dollar, the Euro, Japanese yen, Chinese renminbi/Yuan and the pound sterling.
- ➲ **Determinants of Internationalization of Currency:** Stability, Wider use, Capital account openness, Large Economic size and trade network.

Benefits of Internationalization of Rupee

- ➲ **Lower Currency Risk & FX Reserve Needs**, Global Standing & Bargaining Power.
- ➲ **Trade & Policy Flexibility:** Soften the impact of sanctions, diversify partners.
- ➲ **Financial Market Development:** deepens Indian bond and equity markets, attracts investment.

Challenges in Internationalization of Rupee

- ➲ **Increased Exchange Rate Volatility,** Reduced Monetary Policy Autonomy, Higher Capital Flight Risk
- ➲ Greater External Shock Vulnerability, Competition with other currencies

- **Ensuring Liquidity and Convertibility:** In India, **full current account convertibility is allowed**, whereas **on capital accounts only partial convertibility is allowed**.

Steps Taken for Rupee Internationalization

- **RBI Strategic Action Plan:** Roadmap for 2024-25 to promote INR usage globally.
- **SPECTRA Project:** Platform for ECBs and trade credit reporting and approval.
- **Indian Payment Infrastructure:** UPI linked with Bhutan, France, Mauritius, Nepal, UAE, Singapore.
- **Asian Clearing Union (ACU):** Proposal to include INR as a settlement currency.
- **GIFT City Development:** Supports offshore financial activities and global usage of INR.

Way Forward

- **Short-Term Measures**: Promote Rupee accounts for non-residents; integrate payment systems.
- **Medium-Term Measures**: Liberalize Masala bonds framework; expand Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS).
- **Long-Term Measures**: Aim for INR inclusion in IMF's Special Drawing Rights (SDR) basket.
- **Specific Reforms**: Enhance rupee convertibility, develop robust bond markets, encourage trade in INR.
- **Harmonization of KYC**: RBI and SEBI to simplify foreign investor access to INR assets.

3.3.1. De-dollarization

Why in the News?

RBI's push for internationalization of INR aims to reduce dependence on foreign currencies resulting in global de-dollarization.

What is De-dollarization?

- It **aims to reverse dollarization** (historical domination of US dollar in global market) causing a significant reduction of its use in world trade, reserves and financial transactions.

Key reasons for De-dollarization

- **Asymmetry of shrinking US economic weight and growing dominant role of the dollar**
- **Weakening credibility of Dollar**: The US government's high debt burden
- **Spillover effects of US monetary policy**: Actions by the Federal Reserve, such as hiking interest rates (2023)
- **Weaponization of US dollar and payment clearance systems**
- **Aspiration for a new and more democratic international economic order**
- **Positive developments outside U.S.:** Enhanced credibility of alternative currencies, like China.

Challenges with De-dollarization

- **Transition Costs:** updating financial systems, adjusting contracts, and renegotiating trade agreements.
- **Market Volatility**, **Geopolitical Tensions.**
- **Reserve Diversification Challenges:** currency depreciation or commodity price swings.

Recent Initiatives for De-dollarisation

- **mBridge Project**: Cross-border CBDC payment system backed by China, Thailand etc.
- **BRICS Pay**: Digital platform for faster, cheaper cross-border trade in local currencies.; **China's Digital Yuan.**

3.4. Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act

Why in the News?

Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG's) report highlighted fiscal inconsistencies and transparency issues in the government's compliance with the FRBM Act.

About FRBM Act, 2003

- **The FRBM Act, 2003 ensures fiscal discipline, long-term stability, and mandates annual CAG compliance review.**
- FRBM Act mandates following to be laid before Parliament along with the Budget: **Macro-economic Framework Statement, Medium Term Fiscal Policy Statement, Fiscal Policy Strategy Statement.**

Key Findings of the CAG Report

- **Debt-to-GDP** peaked at 61.38% (FY21), declined to 57% (FY24).
- **Debt sustainability** indicators turned positive in FY23–24.
- **Interest payments** rose to 35.35% of revenue receipts (FY23).
- **Guarantee limits** stayed within 0.5% of GDP.
- **Unrealized tax revenues** surged to ₹21.3T, mostly undisputed.
- **Deficit figures** showed discrepancies, raising credibility concerns.

3.5. Blue Economy

Why in the News?

The Ministry of Earth Sciences released a white paper titled, **"Transforming India's Blue Economy: Innovation and Sustainable Growth**".

Blue Economy in India

- **Definition**: **Blue economy** refers to **exploring and optimizing** the potential of oceans and seas under India's legal jurisdiction **for socio-economic development, environmental sustainability, and national security.**
- **Potential**: India's **coastline** (11098 km) and large **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of 2.4 million sq. km**.
- **Current Status**: India's blue economy contributes **4% of its GDP**, Handles **95% of its trade by volume**; **12 major (Vadhavan Port in Maharashtra will be 13ᵗʰ major port) and 200 minor ports; by 2035**, India's **coastal shipping modal share** is expected to grow from **6% to 33%.**

Challenges related to Blue Economy in India

- **Environmental:** Climate change, overfishing, marine pollution, and unplanned coastal tourism.
- **Policy & Governance:** Weak enforcement of global commitments, outdated frameworks for deep-sea mining, renewables, and biotech.
- **Technology & Infrastructure:** Gaps in fisheries cold chain, low commercialization of marine biotech, and limited deep-sea exploration tech.
- **Finance & Investment:** Low private investment, weak start-up ecosystem, and insurance gaps.
- **Social & Equity:** Skill shortages in ports/biotech/deep-sea operations and poor inclusion of marginalized groups.

Indian Maritime Initiatives

- **Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund** (FIDF).
- **Deep Ocean Mission**: Develops technologies for deep ocean exploration.
- **Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification, 2019**: Protects coastal areas and marine waters.
- **PM Matsya Sampada Yojana**: Promotes sustainable fisheries and aquaculture.
- **Blue Revolution**: Increases fish production and productivity.
- **Maritime India Vision**: Provides a comprehensive maritime sector framework.

Successful Case Studies related to Blue Economy of India

- **Kochi's Smart Port Transformation** through Digital Twin Integration (Virtual Port)
- **Alang, Gujarat: Transforming Shipbreaking** into a Circular Economy Model

Conclusion

Targeted investments in green technologies, resilient infrastructure, and skill development, Sustainable resource management and inclusive participation, innovative financing models like blue bonds, carbon credit markets, and public-private partnerships will mobilize capital.

3.6. Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2025

Why in the News?

Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2025 was passed by Parliament.

More on the News

➲ The act amends **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957.**
➲ **The Act was last amended in 2023 with provisions:** Introduction of **a new list of 24 critical and strategic minerals**, empowering **central government** to auction mineral concessions.

Why Critical/Strategic minerals are increasingly becoming important for India?

➲ **Chinese control on Supply chain:** ~60-70% of rare earth production.
➲ **Clean Energy Transition and Climate Goals:** E.g., **Silicon, Tellurium, Indium,** used in photovoltaic (PV) cells.
➲ **Electric Mobility:** E.g., Lithium, Nickel & Cobalt are key materials used in lithium-ion batteries.
➲ **National Security and Defence Capabilities.**
➲ **Securing Digital Sovereignty:** E.g., Silicon forms the basis of microchips.
➲ **Accelerating SDG gains:** E.g., Chile used copper revenues to support **poverty reduction (SDG 1) & improved health services (SDG 3).**

Key Amendments

➲ **National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust (NMEDT):** Replaces earlier National Mineral Exploration Trust (NMET) with widened scope and territorial domain.
➲ **Inclusion of other minerals in a mining lease**: No additional amount needs to be paid for inclusion of critical and strategic minerals, and other specified minerals; **Removal of limit on sale for captive mines.**
➲ **Inclusion of contiguous area**: Allows for one-time extension of area under a mining lease.
➲ **Establishment of Mineral Exchanges**: Establishes authority to register and regulate mineral exchanges, Empowers Central government to frame rules, Promote investment in mining sector.

3.7. Gig Workers

Why in the News?

Karnataka's State Legislative Assembly passed the **Karnataka Platform-Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Bill, 2025 after Rajasthan and Bihar** containing provisions like **Welfare Board, Fund etc.**

About Gig workers

➲ **Definition: The Code on Social Security, 2020,** defines a gig worker as a person who works outside a traditional employer-employee relationship.
➲ **Types**: **Platform**: Work on online apps or digital platforms. E.g., Ola, Uber, Zomato, etc.; and **Non-platform:** casual wage workers and own account workers in conventional sectors working part-time or full time.
➲ **Reasons for growth:** Demographic dividend, Rapid urbanization, Adoption of smartphones and internet**.**

Significance of the Gig Economy

➲ **For government: Utilise demographic dividend, Economic growth** worth $250 billion in transactions.
➲ **For society:** Empowering the vulnerable section and Micro-Entrepreneurship.
➲ **For workers:** Flexible Employment and Skill development.
➲ **For consumers:** Access to the Global Market and Greater convenience.

Challenges for Gig Workers

➲ **Lack of social security**: More than 82.5 % of gig workers are **informal** employees (NITI Aayog).
➲ **Health and Safety Concerns**, **High Working hours**: 47% of the workers work for more than 12 hours a day
➲ **Income uncertainty**, **Algorithmic Asymmetry** leads to **Information Access**

Steps taken for the Gig Workers in India

➲ Code on Social Security, 2020, Code on Wages, 2019, Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), etc.

3.8. Income Tax Act 2025

Why in the News?

The President has given her assent to the **Income Tax Act 2025 which replaces the Income-Tax Act, 1961**.

Key Highlight of the Act

➲ **Comes into force** from 1st April 2026; shorter and simpler language.

- **Core tax stability:** Rates, regimes, offences, and most definitions unchanged.
- Government **empowered to frame new schemes** for efficiency and transparency.
- **Undisclosed income expanded** to cover virtual digital assets.
- **Tax authorities allowed access** to virtual digital spaces during searches.
- **Dispute resolution panel introduced** for transfer pricing, non-residents, and foreign companies.
- **Pending proceedings to continue** under old law.
- Government may enter **tax treaties to avoid** double taxation.

Related News: President has given her **assent to Taxation Laws (Amendment) Act, 2025** which modify existing tax laws, primarily Income-tax Act, 1961, and Finance Act, 2025.

- **Key features of the Act**: Exemption for the Unified Pension System (UPS), Tax Benefit to Public Investment Funds (PIF) of Saudi Arabia & subsidiaries, Block Assessment in Search Cases.

3.9. Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)

Why in the News?

Parliamentary standing committee on finance recommended improving ESG framework in India.

What is ESG Framework?

- ESG (environmental, social, and governance) is a framework for evaluating a company's sustainability and ethical practices across environmental impact, social responsibility, and corporate governance.

Significance of ESG Framework

- **Global Alignment**: Supports SDGs and Paris Agreement goals.
- **Financial Access**: Attracts ESG-focused investors and enables green financing.
- **Operational Efficiency**: Lowers costs via sustainable practices like renewable energy.
- **Competitive Advantage**: Promotes innovation and resilience while reducing environmental/social impact.
- **Brand Value**: Enhances societal impact and stakeholder trust.

Challenges of ESG Reporting in India (Highlighted by the Parliamentary Standing Committee)

- **Persistent Risk of Greenwashing:** False or misleading claims about their ESG performance
- Inconsistent Implementation across sectors
- Difficulties faced by small businesses in adopting ESG practices
- **Other Challenges:** Lack of Awareness and Education, Integration with Business Strategy, etc.

Other Initiatives to promote ESG in India

- **Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting (BRSR):** SEBI framework for top 1,000 listed companies to report sustainability practices.
- **BRSR Core**: Requires disclosure of detailed value chain information.
- **National Guidelines on Responsible Business Conduct (NGRBCs):** Voluntary 2019 guidelines promoting ethical and sustainable business conduct.
- **CSR**: Companies meeting thresholds must spend 2% of average net profit on CSR activities under Companies Act, 2013.

Way Forward to make ESG Effective

- **Parliamentary Standing Committee:** Dedicated ESG Oversight Body, Amendment to Companies Act, 2013, Independent ESG Committees.
- **Other:** Set clear ESG goals, Invest in ESG Training and Capacity Building, Partner with ESG experts.

3.10. Competition Commission of India

Why in the News?

Standing Committee on Finance tabled a report titled **Evolving Role of Competition Commission of India in the Economy, particularly the Digital Landscape**, before parliament.

Competition Commission of India

- **Established**: 2003 under Competition Act, 2002; operational from 2009.
- **Ministry**: Falls under Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA).
- **Composition**: Chairperson and 6 members appointed by Central Government.
- **Appellate Authority**: NCLAT under Companies Act, 2013 for Competition Act matters.

Role of CCI

- **Eliminate practices having adverse effect on competition**
- **Protect the interests of consumers**
- **Advise the government on competition issues**
- **Inquire, investigate, pass orders and impose penalty on anti-competitive practices**
- **Regulate Mergers**
- **Adapting to evolving challenges: E.g., Digital Markets Division (DMD)** constituted to cope up with challenges posed by digitization to fair competition

Evolving Challenges before CCI

- **Digitization**: Tech firms as gatekeepers, network effects (e.g., WhatsApp data policy), data advantage by big platforms (e.g., Amazon), ecosystem dominance (e.g., Apple), etc.
- **Policy Gaps:** National Competition Policy (2011) yet to be enforced; concerns over Digital Competition Bill (broad thresholds, overlap with DPDP Act).
- **Cross-Jurisdictional Issues**: Need for collaboration with global regulators in digital markets.
- **Resource & Capacity Gaps**: Only 113/195 posts filled; lack of technical expertise like AI.
- **Enforcement Effectiveness**: Many CCI penalties stayed or dismissed by appellate courts.
- **MSMEs**: ₹2,000 crore deal value threshold allows large firms to acquire MSMEs without scrutiny.

Recent Initiatives to Streamline Competition

- **Competition (Amendment) Act, 2023**: M&As above ₹2,000 crore notified, voluntary settlement mechanism, appeals require 25% penalty deposit.
- **Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023**: Regulates personal data and digital firm practices.

Way Forward (recommendations of the committee)

- **Digital Competition Regulation**: Conduct market studies and implement National Competition Policy.
- **Best Practices**: Learn from EU Digital Markets Act to ensure fair gatekeeper behavior.
- **Lower DVT for MSMEs**: Enable acquisitions oversight, proactive CCI action, data access for MSMEs.
- **Institutional Capacity**: Increase CCI strength, invest in training, and foster international collaboration.
- **Refine Digital Competition Bill**: Address broad thresholds and other concerns.

3.11. Indian Ports Act, 2025

Why in the News?

The President of India has given her assent to the Indian Ports Act, 2025 which replaces the Indian Ports Act, 1908.

About Indian Ports Act 2025

- It seeks to **consolidate the law relating to ports, promote integrated port development**, facilitate ease of doing business and ensure optimum utilisation of India's coastline.

Key Features of the Act

- **Maritime State Development Council (MSDC):** Statutory body advising on port growth, connectivity, and competition; chaired by Union Minister of Ports.
- **State Maritime Boards (SMB):** Administer non-major ports in respective states.
- **Dispute Resolution**: State-level committees adjudicate port disputes.
- **Port Tariffs**: Major ports set by Board of Major Port Authority; others by SMB or concessionaires.
- **Port Officer**: Conservator appointed to manage berthing, mooring, and vessel movements.
- **Mega Ports**: Central Government can classify ports as mega ports without changing their original status.

- **Safety & Disaster Management:** Requires emergency preparedness and response plans.
- **Environmental Compliance**: Adherence to MARPOL and BWM Conventions.
- **Penalties & Digitalization**: Introduces electronic integration of port data.
- **Ownership Changes**: Prior Central Government clearance required for substantial ownership changes.
- **Exclusions:** Act excludes military, non-commercial government, Navy/Coast Guard, and foreign war vessels.

Ports in India

- **Port Network**: 12 major ports (13th under construction at Vadhavan) and ~200 non-major ports.
  - → Major ports: Central Government-owned, Non-major ports: Managed by State.
- **Maritime Trade**: Handles 95% of volume and 70% of trade value; major ports 53%, non-major 47%.
- **Productivity Improvements** (FY15–FY25): Turnaround Time reduced 48% (96 → 49.5 hrs), Idle time dropped 29% (23.1% → 16.3%).

Development Initiatives

- Sagarmala (2015) for port-led development; Maritime India Vision 2030 to enhance sector performance; Major Ports Authority Act, 2021 for regulation and planning; 100% FDI allowed in port construction and maintenance under automatic route.

3.11.1. 10 Years of Sagarmala Programme

Why in the News?

Sagarmala Programme has achieved 118% growth in coastal shipping over the last decade.

About Sagarmala Programme

- **Ministry & Launch**: 2015, Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways (MoPSW).
- **Aim**: Boost economic development via India's 11,098 km coastline and 14,500 km navigable waterways.
- **Key Objectives**: Reduce logistics cost, enhance domestic waterways, create jobs, and develop maritime skills.
- **Funding**: PPP, MoPSW resources, grants for social-impact projects, and equity via SPVs.
- **Sagarmala 2.0 (2025)**: Focus on shipbuilding, repair, recycling, and port modernization.
- **Components and Achievement:**
  - → **Port Modernization & New Port Development:** 9 Indian ports in global top 100.
  - → **Port Connectivity Enhancement:** Over 40 lakh passengers benefited.
  - → **Port-Linked Industrialization.**
  - → **Coastal Community Development:** Projects worth ₹5.79 lakh crore identified; ₹1.41 lakh crore completed.
  - → **Coastal Shipping & Inland Waterways Promotion:** cargo movement surged 700%.

Various initiatives taken under Sagarmala Programme

- Sagarmala Startup Innovation Initiative (S2I2).
- Center of Excellence in Maritime and Ship Building (CEMS).
- Coastal Berth Scheme.

3.12. Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)

Why in the News?

Parliamentary Standing Committee in its report has flagged slow progress of work under PMGSY in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas.

About PMGSY

- **Ministry & Launch**: Ministry of Rural Development; launched December 2000 as Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
- **Objective**: Provide all-weather road connectivity to unconnected rural habitations for poverty alleviation.
- **Habitation Criteria**: Population 500+ in plains, 250+ in North-Eastern/Hill states, 100+ in LWE-affected districts (Census 2011).

Salient Features of PMGSY

- **Institutional Arrangements**: NRIDA provides technical support; SRRDAs manage state-level implementation.
- **Decentralized Planning**: Involves Panchayati Raj Institutions, MLAs, and MPs.
- **Monitoring & Grievance Redressal**:
  - OMMAS: Web-based system for transparency and accountability.
  - eMARG: Geo-tagged verification of road maintenance and contractor performance.
  - Meri Sadak App: Addresses slow, abandoned, or poor-quality work.
- **Green Technologies & New Materials**: Fly ash, lime, polymers, Portland Cement Concrete, Cold Mix Asphalt, waste plastic, coir geo-textiles, iron/copper/steel slag, and bioengineering (jute/bamboo).

Recommendations of Committee

- Form a committee to assess low-bid impact on road quality.
- Retain difference between minimum and quoted bid as security until quality compliance.
- DoRD to enforce strict quality norms and improve monitoring/accountability.
- Shortlist/blacklist erring contractors and ensure roads reach actual unconnected habitations.
- Strengthen coordination and monitoring mechanisms within DoRD.
- Address challenges like insurgency, tough terrain, law-and-order, and forest clearances.
- Implement innovative, area-specific solutions for timely completion.

3.13. 100th birth Anniversary of MS Swaminathan

Why in the News?

Prime Minister addressed the M.S. Swaminathan Centenary International Conference in New Delhi.

Key Contribution of MS Swaminathan

- **Green Revolution Architect**: Introduced high-yield dwarf wheat and Indica rice varieties; developed Pusa Basmati (1989).
- **Evergreen Revolution**: Advocated sustainable productivity avoiding chemical overuse and ecological harm.
  - **Evergreen Revolution** is pro-nature and pro-poor, linking livelihood security with ecological security.
    - Key components include Ecoagriculture, Biovillages, Village Knowledge Centres, and Ethics and Equities in economic, social, and gender divides.
- **Ecological Practices**: Promoted rainwater conservation, renewable energy, climate-resilient crops, and millets.
- **Biodiversity & Legislation**: Influenced Protection of Plant Varieties & Farmers' Rights Act (2001) and Biological Diversity Act (2002).
- **Biohappiness Concept:** Linking biodiversity conservation to human well-being and nutrition.
- **Women in Agriculture**: Introduced Women Farmers' Entitlements Bill (2011) to empower women farmers.
- **Nutritional Security**: Shifted focus from food to nutrition security; promoted bio-fortified crops.
- **National Agricultural Leadership**: recommended MSP ≥50% above cost.

3.14. News in Shorts

3.14.1. Sovereign Credit Ratings

S&P upgraded India's **long-term Sovereign Credit Rating to 'BBB' from 'BBB-'** and its short-term rating to 'A-2' from 'A-3', with a **Stable Outlook**.

About Sovereign Credit Ratings (SCR)

- It is **independent evaluation of a country's creditworthiness** by agencies like S&P, Fitch, Moody's.
- **Rating Grades**: Investment grade (BBB- to AAA) vs. speculative grade; higher grades reduce default risk.
- **Significance**: Facilitates global capital access, foreign investment, and lowers borrowing costs.

- **Issues:** Potential biases, conflicts of interest, and rating ceilings limiting domestic corporate ratings.

3.14.2. GIFT City-like Financial Centers

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance has recommended for **development of more GIFT City-like Financial Centers.**

About GIFT City IFSC (Gandhinagar, Gujarat)

- **Establishment**: India's first IFSC at GIFT City, Gujarat; SEZ since 2015; non-resident zone under FEMA.

- **Functions**: Provides onshore/offshore financial services in foreign currency; favorable tax structure; trusted regulatory environment; ease of doing business; promotes inbound/outbound investment.
- **Regulator**: IFSCA (est. 2020 under IFSCA Act, 2019) oversees financial products, services, and institutions.
- **Current Status**: Ranked 46th in Global Financial Centres Index (up 5 ranks) and 45th in FinTech rankings.

3.14.3. India's Retail Inflation

- India's retail inflation moderated to 8 year low of 1.55% in July, 2025 due to **Favourable base effect, Decline in inflation i**n items like Pulses and Products, etc. Measured by the **All India Consumer Price Index (CPI).**

About CPI

- **Meaning**: Measures change in general price level of goods and services acquired by households.
- **Significance**: Key inflation indicator, used for inflation targeting, national account deflators, and DA indexing.
- **Publisher**: Central Statistical Office (CSO), released on 12th of each month.
- **Components**: CPI for Industrial Workers (IW), Agricultural Labourers (AL), Rural Labourers (RL), Urban Non-Manual Employees (UNME).
- **Base Year**: 2012.
- **Comparison with WPI**: CPI emphasizes food; WPI emphasizes fuel; both differ in weighting patterns.

3.14.4. RBI's FREE-AI Vision for Financial Sector

RBI committee unveiled Framework for Responsible and Ethical Enablement of Artificial Intelligence (FREE-AI).

About FREE-AI Vision

- **Aim:** Ensure safe, fair, and accountable AI adoption in India's financial sector.
- **7 Sutras**: Foundational principles guiding AI adoption: Trust,People first, Fairness and equity, Accountability etc.
- **Dual Approach**:
  - **Fostering Innovation**: Shared infrastructure, AI Innovation Sandbox, AI policy guidance, institutional capacity building, and relaxed compliance for low-risk AI.
  - **Mitigating Risk:** Board-approved AI policies, integration into product approvals and audits, strengthened cybersecurity, AI lifecycle governance, consumer awareness.
- **Importance**:
  - AI investments in financial sector projected at ₹8 lakh crore by 2027; GenAI alone ₹1.02 lakh crore by 2033.
  - Risks include data privacy, algorithmic bias, market manipulation, cybersecurity, and governance failures that could threaten market integrity and consumer trust.

3.14.5. Small Finance Bank Universal License

RBI granted in-principle approval for AU Small Finance Bank to transition from SFB to universal bank.

- **Universal Banking Licence**: Allows offering commercial and investment banking services under one entity.
- **Historical Context**: Last universal banking licences granted in 2014 to Bandhan Bank and IDFC Bank (now IDFC First Bank).

About Small Finance Bank (SFB)

- **Genesis**: Announced in the Union budget of 2014-15.
- **Objective**: Financial Inclusion.
- **Registration**: Registered as a public limited company under the Companies Act, 2013.
- **Licensing**: Licensed and governed under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
- **Capital Requirement**: 200 crore (except for some SFBs).
- **Eligible promoters**: Resident individuals/professionals with 10 years of experience in banking and finance.

3.14.6. RBI tightens Co-lending norms

RBI issued revised **directions for Co-lending Arrangements (CLA)**.

- CLAs allow Regulated Entities (REs) like banks and NBFCs to jointly lend to borrowers, complying with prudential regulations.

Key Highlights of the Revised Directions

- **Minimum Share**: Each RE must retain at least 10% of the loan.
- **Priority Sector Lending (PSL):** Each lender can claim PSL benefits for its portion if the loan qualifies.
- **Uniform Asset Classification**: If one lender classifies a loan as NPA, others must follow.
- **Blended Interest Rate**: Borrowers are charged a weighted average rate based on each RE's contribution.

3.14.7. Safety in the Civil Aviation Sector

Parliamentary Standing Committee released Report on Review of Safety in the Civil Aviation Sector.

Key Issues as per Report

- **DGCA Staff Shortage, Persistent ATCO shortages** and high workload, **large backlog of unresolved safety findings, Persistent incidents** due to inadequate root-cause analysis, High taxation on imported parts and infrastructural limitations, **Fear of penalties** may deter reporting, undermining safety oversight.

Recommendations as per Report

- **Regulatory Autonomy & Capacity**: Grant DGCA full administrative and financial autonomy; establish specialized recruitment outside UPSC.

- **ATCO Fatigue & Staffing**: Implement Fatigue Risk Management System, conduct staffing audit, and expand training capacity.
- **Surveillance & Enforcement**: Introduce time-bound deficiency closure and stronger enforcement.
- **Operational Risk Management**: Conduct root-cause analyses and implement targeted remedial programs.
- **Domestic MRO Development**: Promote domestic MROs via tax rationalization, fiscal/infrastructural incentives.
- **Just Culture & Whistleblower Protection**: Establish comprehensive whistleblower protection framework.

3.14.8. Steel Scrap Recycling Policy (SSRP)

Standing Committee on Coal, Mines and Steel recently released Report on Steel Scrap Recycling Policy (SSRP).

Key Issues in Steel Scrap Sector as per Report

- No comprehensive database on steel scrap sector, No designated Nodal Ministry for steel scrap matters, Absence of formal scrap markets, Steel scrap recycling sector lacks industry status, Insufficient skill development and certification for scrap workforce, Obsolete technology used in scrap processing centres.

Recommendations for Steel Scrap Sector

- **Develop a robust steel scrap database** and dedicated portal with updated data, policies, and international comparisons.
- **Ministry of Steel to act as the nodal agency**: Collect and share state-wise, sector-wise, import/export data.
- **Formalize the informal scrap sector**; organize kabadiwalas and dismantlers into cooperatives.
- **Grant industry status to scrap recycling sector** to attract investment, create jobs, and promote skill development.
- **NSDC to launch certification courses**; train workforce and entrepreneurs for future needs.
- **Incentivize adoption of modern technologies**: AI sensors, blockchain for traceability, digital platforms connecting aggregators with steel mills.
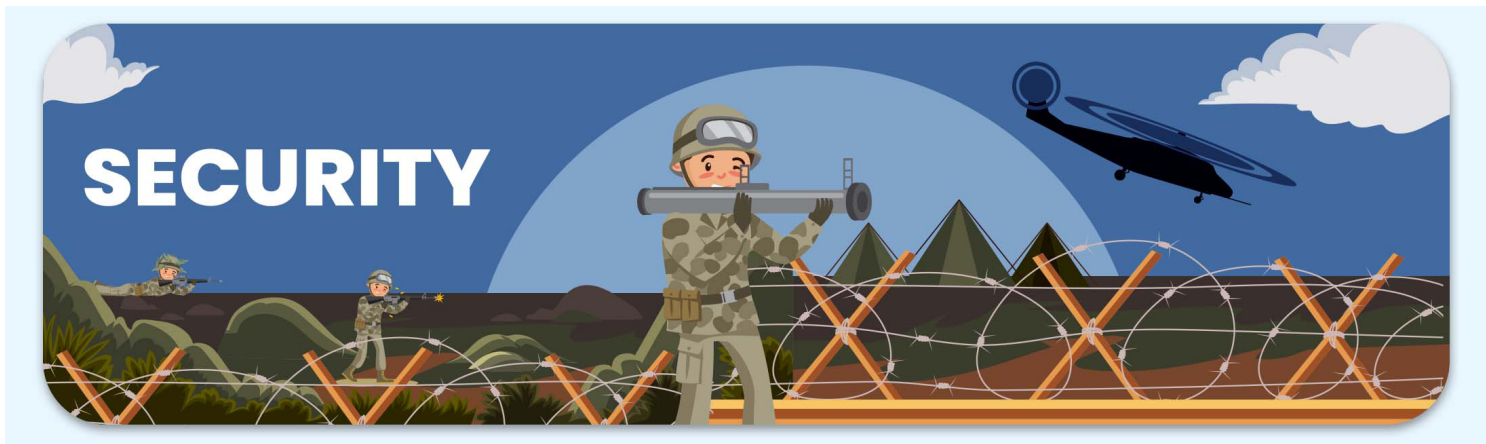
4.1. High-Powered Demography Mission

Why in the News?
PM announced a **High-Powered Demography Mission** on Independence Day **to tackle illegal immigration.**

More on the News
- **Illegal immigrants enter** without valid travel documents secretly.
- **No official count** exists for illegal immigrants in India.
  - In 2016, government estimated around **20 million illegal Bangladeshi migrants in India.**

Factors Facilitating Illegal Immigration/Infiltration into India
- **Geographical:** Porous and riverine borders (Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar); dense forests and hills, etc.
- **Socio-Economic:** Poverty, unemployment, religious persecution, etc. in neighbouring countries.
- **Political/Administrative:** Corruption (Easy access to forged IDs), political patronage (vote-bank politics), etc.
- **Historical/Cultural:** Partition (1947) & 1971 war migrations; shared culture make detection difficult.
- **Security/Strategic:** Infiltration by militants (Pakistan-backed), smuggling networks, poor surveillance infrastructure.

Key concerns associated with Illegal Immigration and Infiltration
- **National Security:** Extremist groups **may recruit vulnerable illegal immigrants** like **Rohingyas.** Borders face smuggling and trafficking threats.
- **Demographic Impact:** Illegal immigration **causes ethnic and religious tensions**, especially in states like Assam.
- **Socio-Economic Strain:** Overloads public services, **displaces local workers with cheaper labor, and leads to land encroachment.**

Initiatives taken to Curb Illegal Immigration/ Infiltration in India
- **Legislative and Policy Measures: Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025** empowers detection, detention, deportation; **NRC updated in Assam; CAA, 2019 also relevant.**
- **Border Management Initiatives:** Fencing, floodlights on **India-Bangladesh and India-Pakistan borders**; smart tech like drones, sensors under CIBMS.
- **Institutional Measures:** Foreigners Tribunals decide illegal immigration cases under **Foreigners Act, 1946.**

Way Forward: Measures to curb Illegal Infiltration/Immigration
- **Security & Intelligence: Strengthen Integrated Intelligence** Grid with IB, BSF, police coordination.
- **Border Management: Specialized floating outposts** and UAV monitoring in river areas.
- **National Refugee Law: Needed to separate refugees from illegal economic migrants**; India not party to 1951 UN Refugee Convention.
- **Bilateral Repatriation:** Agreements **to return illegal nationals**.
- **Other Measures:** Involve UNHCR support, fast-track National ID cards, and **maintain biometric records of illegal immigrants/refugees.**

Conclusion
The High-Powered Demography Mission **aims to counter illegal infiltration through stronger border fencing, faster tribunal decisions, bilateral repatriation agreements**, and robust national ID systems.

4.2. Increased Private sector share in Defence Production

Why in the News?

According to the data **Private sector share in defence production hit a record 23% in FY 2024-25, marking the third consecutive year of growth.**

Reasons behind increased share of Private sector in Defence Production

- ➲ **Institutional Reforms:** Creation of **CDS and Department of Military Affairs to enhance armed forces synergy** and promote indigenous equipment.
- ➲ **Policy & Regulatory Reforms:** DAP-2020 prioritizes domestic procurement; **liberalized FDI policy allows up to 74% FDI automatically**; Positive Indigenization Lists restrict imports; Make in India campaign encourages private sector.
- ➲ **Industrial Infrastructure & Budget Support:** Defence Industrial **Corridors in UP and Tamil Nadu**; 75% of FY 2025-26 defence modernization **budget earmarked for Indian firms.**
- ➲ **Innovation & Ease of Doing Business: iDEX & ADITI provide grants** to startups/MSMEs for advanced tech; license validity extended, **defense items de-licensed, and digital export approvals simplify processes.**

Significance of Indigenous Defence Production

- ➲ **Strategic Security**: Less supply-chain risk in conflict.
- ➲ **Operational Readiness**: Faster modernization.
- ➲ **Technological:** Fewer hidden risks, civilian spillovers.
- ➲ **Diplomacy:** Soft power via arms exports.
- ➲ **Economic:** Lower imports, more jobs.

Challenges in India's Defence Production

- ➲ **Production Lags:** Missed export targets; lost contracts like HAL's **Malaysian LCA and Garden Reach Shipbuilders in the Philippines.**
- ➲ **Industrial Issues**: **Heavy import reliance on raw materials**, electronics; limited production capacity.
- ➲ **Import Dependence**: **Delays in deliveries** like S-400 due to global conflicts.
- ➲ **Technological Gaps:** OEMs restrict technology transfer; **limited depth in AI, cyber, hypersonics**, stealth tech.
- ➲ **Funding Shortfalls**: Defence budget **below 3%,** over half spent on personnel, leaving less for modernization and R&D.
- ➲ **Continued Foreign Tech Reliance**: Despite "**Make in India."**

Way Forward

- ➲ Increase defence R&D investment to at least **2% of GDP, matching global standards.**
- ➲ Encourage **joint ventures with foreign OEMs** for tech sharing, co-development, and manufacturing.
- ➲ Specialized **defence education, vocational, and technical training** aligned with industry and R&D needs.
- ➲ Encourage DPSUs and private firms to bid **jointly for foreign contracts.**
- ➲ **Provide ongoing support** to small enterprises to integrate into **defence supply chains**.
- ➲ Empower PMO-led **Defence Technology Council, reorient DRDO to focus on R&D**, and increase private sector and academia involvement.

Conclusion

India aims to **become a leader in defence innovation by leveraging its demographic dividend, global partnerships, and a vibrant startup ecosystem to advance AI,** space, and cyber warfare technologies.

4.3. Sudarshan Chakra Mission

Why in the News?

Prime Minister launched Mission **Sudarshan Chakra on 79th Independence Day.**

More on the news

- ➲ The mission aims to develop an **Air Defence system to neutralize enemy infiltrations** and boost India's offensive capabilities.

- The Indian Air Force is pressing for rapid progress on **Project Kusha**, an indigenous initiative led by **DRDO and Bharat Electronics Limited.**
  - **It is an Indigenous long-range surface-to-air missile (LR-SAM) system.**

About Sudarshan Chakra Mission

- **Objectives:** Strengthen India's **deterrence and offensive capabilities by expanding and modernizing** the national security shield.
  - Part of India's **Multi-Layered Missile Defence System.**
- **Features:**
  - **Completion timeline:** 2035.
  - Provides comprehensive protection for **strategic, civilian, and religious sites.**
  - **Covers all public places** with a nationwide shield across air, land, and sea.
  - **Integrates advanced surveillance, cyber protection**, and physical safeguards for precise targeted action.
  - **Fully indigenous technology**, developed and manufactured in India.
  - **Ensures air superiority** and ground troop protection.
  - **Creates strong deterrence** against enemy aggression.
  - **Promotes self-reliance** in defence modernization.

Conclusion

Sudarshan Chakra Mission reflects **India's cultural heritage and technological strength, ensuring sovereignty protection.**

Related News

- DRDO conducts maiden tests of **Integrated Air Defence Weapon System (IADWS), offering layered protection via surveillance, threat ID, and air defence.**

About IADWS

- **Key Components:**
  - **Indigenous Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missiles (QRSAM):** DRDO-made, 5–30 km range, mobile, protects armoured columns in motion.
  - **Advanced Very Short-Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS) missiles**: RCI-made MANPADS, counters low-altitude aerial threats.
  - **Laser-DEW**: CHESS-made, **engages targets** at light speed **with laser beams.**
- **Command Centre**: Integrated control via **Centralised Command Centre by DRDL.**

4.4. News in Shorts

4.4.1. Agni-5

India successfully test-fired **Agni-5 IRBM under the Strategic Forces Command (SFC), which manages the nation's nuclear arsenal.**

About Agni-5

- **Nuclear-capable Surface-to-Surface** Ballistic Missile with three-stage solid fuel engine.
- **Range:** 5,000+ km.
- **Developer**: DRDO under IGMDP **(Agni, Prithvi, Trishul, Nag, Akash).**
- **Significance**: Gives India MIRV-capable IRBM status **like US, Russia, China, France.**

Surface-to-Surface Ballistic Missile (SSBM)

🚀 Rocket-powered initially, then follows an **unpowered ballistic trajectory.**

☢️ Can carry **nuclear or conventional warheads.**

🚀 **Range types:** Short (<1,000 km), Medium (1,000–3,000 km), Intermediate (3,000–5,500 km), Long/Intercontinental (>5,500 km).

4.4.2. Exercises in News

- **SLINEX-25**: **INS Rana and INS Jyoti** reached Colombo for the **12th India–Sri Lanka naval exercise, begun in 2005.**

ENVIRONMENT

5.1. E-Mobility

Why in the News?

NITI Aayog released "**Unlocking a 200 Billion Dollar Opportunity: Electric Vehicles (EVs) in India**" report with first **India Electric Mobility Index (IEMI).**

About IEMI

- **Launch:** NITI Aayog with World Resources Institute India to benchmark state e-mobility progress.
- **Indicators:** 16 metrics under Transport Electrification, Charging Infrastructure, EV R&D.
- **Categories:** Achievers (100), Front Runners (65-99), Performers (50-64), Aspirants (0-49); Delhi tops (77), followed by Maharashtra (68).

About Electric Vehicles (EVs)

- **Types:** Battery EVs, Hybrid EVs, Fuel Cell EVs, Plug-in Hybrid EV, etc.
- **Status: 2.08 million** EV sales in 2024, **7.6%** EV penetration in 2024.

Benefits of EVs over Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) Vehicles

- **Zero Tailpipe Emissions:** ~3x less CO_2 emissions.
- **Energy Efficiency:** ~60% conversion of electricity into wheel power vs ~20% in petrol vehicles.
- **Reduced Oil Imports:** 2030 target can save ~1.1 lakh crore annually.
- **User Convenience:** Charging at home, battery swapping, Noise reduction, lower running & maintenance costs.

Challenges

- **Financing:** High capital cost, High EMI burden.
- **Vehicle-Centric:** Heavy & costly batteries, low resale value.
- **Charging Infrastructure:** High public charging costs, land issues, lack of collaboration, no integrated app.
- **Awareness:** Confusion incentives, Misconceptions.
- **Data/ Regulation:** Inaccurate EV data, no battery IDs, inverted GST.

Steps taken by India to boost EV adoption

- **PM E-DRIVE Scheme**: Supports e-vehicles, charging infrastructure.
- **EV Manufacturing Scheme**: Attracts global manufacturers.
- **PM e-Bus Sewa:** 38,000+ e-buses with payment security.
- **PLI Scheme:** Auto components, 50 GWh battery production.
- **GST on EVs:** Reduced from 12% to 5%.
- **EVolutionS program**: DST program for startups.

Way Forward

- **Mandates:** ZEV targets, higher ICE taxes, 100% EV adoption in 5 cities in 5 years, etc.

- **Financing:** Pooled low-interest loans.
- **Charging:** 20 key corridors, nodal agencies, map hub locations, battery research, etc.
- **Costs:** Leasing, battery passports etc.
- **Awareness:** National EV awareness program, Unified National EV App, etc.

Best Practices
- **China:** "**10 Cities, 1000 Vehicles**" program.
- **Singapore: EVElectric Charging Pte Ltd (EVe)**, for charging stations.
- **Europe: ChargeMap** app provides real-time charging station data.
- **UK: APC, Faraday Battery Challenge** for commercialization.

5.2. India's Resolution on Wise-use of Wetlands

Why in the News?

India's **'Promoting Sustainable Lifestyles for Wetlands'** resolution adopted at **Ramsar COP 15, Zimbabwe**.

More on the News

- **Alignment**: Supports Mission LiFE, launched at COP26 (2021), promoting nature-friendly lifestyles.

About Ramsar Convention

Adopted: 1971 in Ramsar, Iran and came into force in 1975

About: Intergovernmental treaty for conservation and wise use of wetlands

Ramsar Sites: Over 2,500 globally with designation requiring meeting at least one of nine criteria.

India: 91 Ramsar Sites which is the highest in Asia

About Wise Use of Wetland

- **Principle**: Core of Ramsar Convention, **maintains ecological character** via ecosystem-based sustainable development.
- **Mandate**: Countries must promote wise use through plans, laws, actions, and education.
- **India's Approach**: **NPCA, IMPs, 2024 'Wetland Wise Use' framework, 'Mission Sahbhagita' and 'Save Wetlands' Campaign.**

Other Outcomes of COP15

Outcome/Initiative	Description
Victoria Falls Declaration	Recognizes wetlands' ecological, social, economic roles; links to biodiversity, climate, SDGs.
IBRRI Strategic Plan 2025–2030	Halts wetland loss in Indo-Burma region (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam).
BRIDGE Programme	Grants on gender mainstreaming and women leadership.
Freshwater Challenge	Boost convention implementation.
GWEP Endorsement	Enhances waterbird monitoring and wetland conservation.

5.3. Cloudbursts in Himalayan Regions
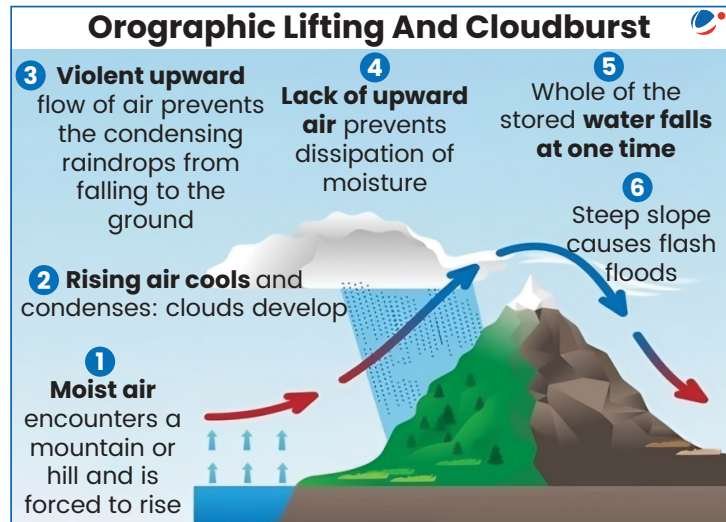
Why in the news?

Recent cloudbursts events affected **Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu & Kashmir.**

About Cloudburst

- **Definition**: Extreme rainfall (>10 cm/hour, as per IMD), often with hail/thunder, causing floods.
- **Examples**: Kishtwar (2025), Chamoli (2025), Himachal (2020).
- **Occurrence**: Common in mountains via orographic lift; also in plains.
- **Consequences**: Flash floods, landslides, loss of life, infrastructure damage, biodiversity loss.

Challenges

- **Climate Change:** Warmer air holds 7% more moisture per 1°C rise, increasing intensity.
- **Forecasting:** Local, short-lived; satellites imprecise, Doppler radars costly with 3-hour warning.
- **Anthropogenic**: Deforestation, wetland loss, and unplanned development worsen floods.

Orographic Lifting And Cloudburst

3 Violent upward flow of air prevents the condensing raindrops from falling to the ground

4 Lack of upward air prevents dissipation of moisture

5 Whole of the stored **water falls at one time**

6 Steep slope causes flash floods

2 Rising air cools and condenses: clouds develop

1 Moist air encounters a mountain or hill and is forced to rise

Way Forward: Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Strategy {National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP) 2019}

- **Landslide Hazard Zonation LHZ:** Map landslide-prone areas using remote sensing and local data.
- **Coordination:** Central-state collaboration for warnings, policy updates.
- **Structural:** Bioengineering, improved drainage, etc.
- **Non-Structural Measures:** Multi-hazard insurance, risk-sensitive planning, and safety by- laws.
- **Capacity:** Strengthen **ULBs/PRIs, promote insurance**, etc.
- **Climate Risk:** Support local adaptation.

Conclusion

Cloudbursts highlight the need for proactive resilience in the Himalayas, using technology, local knowledge, and governance for sustainable disaster management.

5.4. News in Shorts

5.4.1. India's Water Management

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Water Resources socio-economic losses from floods and water scarcity despite tech and investment advances.

Key Themes and recommendations

Themes	Current Status/ Issues	Recommendations
Flood Forecasting	Central Water Commission (CWC) manages 340 sites (22 states, 2 UTs), to reach 375 by 2026.	Upgrade system for climate change challenges.

Interlinking of Rivers Program	30 projects identified; state consensus lacking.	Study benefits, raise awareness, expedite implementation.
Dam Safety	459 of 6,000+ dams have EAPs; Dam Safety Act, 2021 mandates completion by 2026.	**National Dam Safety Authority** to engage dam owners.
Rainwater Harvesting	Jal Shakti Abhiyan adds 11.36 BCM groundwater (2017-2024).	Provide **financial grants to States/ UTs.**
Proactive approaches	**Draft National Water Policy** under consideration.	Manage cross-border flooding; include MPs/MLAs in Ganga Mission.

5.4.2. Global Outlook Council on Water Investments

South Africa President announce launch of GOCWI.

About GOCWI

- Launch: **G20 Presidential Legacy Initiative**, key part of **GWP's** Transformation Agenda.
  - ➔ **Global Water Potential (GWP):** Multi-stakeholder network for **equitable, sustainable water management**.
- **Role**: High-level platform to boost global water investment momentum.

5.4.3. Pollution Control Boards

SC overturned Delhi High court, ruling PCBs can impose environmental compensation (EC), not just courts.

- EC is a **policy instrument for the protection of the environment** which works on the Polluter Pay Principal.

Key Highlights

- **Statutory Mandate:** PCBs can levy EC under Section 33A (Water Act, 1974) and Section 31A (Air Act, 1981).
- **Polluter Pays principle**: EC applies only when environmental harm is proven (e.g., Indian Council case).
  - ➔ **Indian Council for Enviro-Legal Action v. UoI:** SC held Polluter Pays principle.
- **Action:** PCBs can penalize, restore damage, or both (Vellore Citizens' case, 1996 supports compensatory/ remedial liability).
  - ➔ **Vellore Citizens' Welfare Forum v. Union of India** (1996): Liability for environmental damage includes both a compensatory and remedial aspect.
- **Preventive measures**: Regulators can act proactively.

Pollution Control Boards (PCBs) in India

- **Central PCB (CPCB)**: Statutory body under **MoEFCC,** formed under Water Act, 1974, also oversees Air Act, 1981; advises Central Government.
- **State PCBs (SPCBs)**: Formed under same acts, support CPCB in state-level environmental enforcement.

5.4.4. UNDP Equator Initiative Award

Bibi Fatima Women's SHG winners of the 'Equator Initiative Award'.

About Award

- **Presentation**: Biennial award by UNDP's Equator Initiative.
- **Purpose**: Supports Indigenous Peoples and local communities in land restoration, biodiversity, and livelihoods.
- **Recognition**: Known as the Nobel Prize for Biodiversity Conservation.

About Bibi Fatima SHG

- Introduced **millet-based mixed cropping** on rainfed farms, promoted **climate-resilient farming systems**, etc.

5.4.5. Awaza Programme of Action (2024-2034) (APoA)

UN **Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDC3)** in **Awaza, Turkmenistan** to implement newly adopted APoA.

About APoA

- **Adoption**: Consensus at UNGA, December 2024, addressing LLDC development challenges.
- Offers a **comprehensive framework to tackle persistent development challenges faced by LLDCs.**
- **Key Deliverables:** Regional Agricultural Research Hubs (food security), Infrastructure Finance Facility (funding), UNFCCC Negotiating Body (trade, climate resilience).

5.4.6. Sundarbans Tiger Reserve

NBWL approved West Bengal's proposal, making STR India's second-largest tiger reserve after **Nagarjunasagar-Srisailam**, rising from 7th among 58 reserves.

Procedure to declare or alter Tiger reserve

- **Notification**: State Governments notify under Section 38V, Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, on NTCA advice.
  - ➔ **Steps**: State proposal, NTCA in-principle approval, detailed proposal, NTCA recommendation, State notification.
- **Alteration:** Section 38W(1) requires NTCA recommendation and NBWL approval, based on State proposals.

Sundarbans Tiger Reserve (STR)

- 📍 **Location:** Coastal districts of West Bengal
- 🌳 **Only mangrove forest** (with Bangladesh) housing a significant tiger population
- 🚩 **Borders:** Bangladesh (east), Bay of Bengal (south), River Matla (west), Rivers Bidya & Gomdi (north-west)
- 🏅 **Recognition:** National Park area is a **natural UNESCO World Heritage Site** and part of the **Sundarban Biosphere Reserve**

5.4.7. 'Matri Van' Initiative

Matri Van Initiative launched in **Gurugram** to develop **urban forest** in **Aravalli hills**.

- Part of **'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' programme.**
- **Aims:** Boost ecological preservation and community involvement for urban sustainability.
- **Restoration**: Removes invasive species, plants native trees, restores Aravalli biodiversity.

5.4.8. Etalin hydroelectric project

An expert panel of the **Union Environment Ministry has recommended environmental clearance for the Etalin hydroelectric project.**

About Etalin hydroelectric project

- **Location:** Dibang valley, Arunachal Pradesh, Eastern Himalaya **Biodiversity Hotspot.**
- **Rivers:** Dri and Tangon rivers, merging to form the Dibang River.

5.4.9. Volcanic Eruptions in News

- **Mount Lewotobi**: Stratovolcanoes in Indonesia.
- **Mount Kilauea: Halemaumau Crater**, part of Hawaii Volcanoes National Park

5.4.10. Drake Passage

Magnitude 7.5 earthquake has struck drake passage near Argentina and Chile.

About Drake Passage

- **Location:** Between Cape Horn and South Shetland Islands.
- **Name:** After **Sir Francis Drake**, famous English navigator and circumnavigator.
- **Ocean Current:** Water majorly flows from **west to east** and forms part of **Antarctic Circumpolar Current.**
- **Historic Trade Route:** Key passage for trade.
- **Sailing Challenge:** Known for **stormy seas and icy conditions**.

ESSAY
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12 OCT, 2 PM

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SOCIAL ISSUES

6.1. Urban Migration

Why in the News?

IIT Indore research shows **rural-to-urban migration** reshaping city life, work conditions.

What is Migration?

- **Definition: Movement of people** from their usual residence to a new place, either across borders or within a state (**International Organisation for Migration**)**.**
- **Circular Migration: Repetitive migration** where low-income groups move for seasonal/short-term work and return to their origin after employment ends.
- **Census Definition of Migrant (India):** A migrant is identified by
    - **Place of Birth (POB):** If birthplace differs from place of enumeration.
    - **Place of Last Residence (PoLR):** If last residence differs from place of enumeration.

Status of Migration in India

- **Urban Migration (MoSPI)**
    - **Migration Types:** Rural-to-urban (18.9%), urban-to-urban (15.9%), rural-to-rural (55%), urban-to-rural (10%).
    - **Urban Growth:** By 2030, over 40% of India's population will live in urban areas (Economic Survey 2023-24).
- **Share of Migrants**
    - **Population Share:** Migrants are 28.88% (40.2 crore) of the population (2023), down from 37.64% (45.57 crore) in 2011.
    - **Key States:** Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, and West Bengal account for ~48% of outbound migrants; Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, and Tamil Nadu receive a similar share of inbound migrants.
    - **Inbound migration:** Rises fastest in West Bengal, Rajasthan, and Karnataka; declines in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh (EAC-PM).

Factors Driving Urban Migration

- **According to the Census 2011:** Marriage, Moved with household, Work, Moved after birth, Education, other.

Factors influencing Migration

	Push Factors	Pull Factors
Social & Political	➲ **Persecution, War,** Political instability.	➲ **Peace, stability,** liberal asylum policies.
Demographic & Economic	➲ **Unemployment**, **Economic decline,** low wages.	➲ **Higher wages, better jobs**, educational, healthcare.
Environmental & Climate	➲ **Natural disasters**, **Climate change impacts** (droughts, rising seas).	➲ Pleasant climate, **safer environmental conditions.**

Consequences of Urban Migration

➲ **Economic:**
➡ **Growth:** Skilled and seasonal migrants contribute ~10% to GDP (UNDP).
➡ **Living Standards:** Remittances improve housing, education, and business.
➡ **Challenges:** Informal sector dominance (90% of India's workforce), low wages, no social security. E.g., Covid-19 exodus of 11.4 million migrants.

➲ **Demographic:** Alters population balance, skews sex ratios. **E.g., Kottayam's sex ratio** (1040) lower than Kerala's (1084).

➲ **Social & Psychological:** Brings modernization but faces discrimination, language barriers, and ghettoization. E.g., 2008 Maharashtra attacks. Housing strain, e.g., Pune's 564 slums (30-40% population).

Government Initiatives

➲ **Ayushman Bharat PMJAY:** Health coverage for vulnerable migrants.
➲ **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY):** Free food grains, cash transfers for poor migrants.
➲ **One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC):** Portable ration cards for food security.
➲ **e-Shram Portal:** Database for unorganised workers' welfare.
➲ **PM SVANidhi:** Collateral-free loans for street vendors.
➲ **Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana (PMSYM):** Pension for unorganised workers, including migrants.

Way Forward

➲ **Working Group on Migration (2015):** Enact legal safeguards for migrants' rights, remove domicile barriers for jobs/ services, etc.
➲ **Expand Kerala Migration Survey: Nationwide** adoption for better migration governance.

6.2. Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan

Why in the News?

➲ The **Ministry of Tribal Affairs** launched Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan.

Flagship Tribal Initiatives

➲ **Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM JANMAN) (2023):** Socio-economic development for 75 PVTG communities in 18 states and one UT.
➲ **Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (2024):** Comprehensive tribal development addressing infrastructure, healthcare, education, and livelihoods.
➲ **National Sickle Cell Elimination Mission (2023):** Tackles sickle cell disease, focusing on tribal populations.
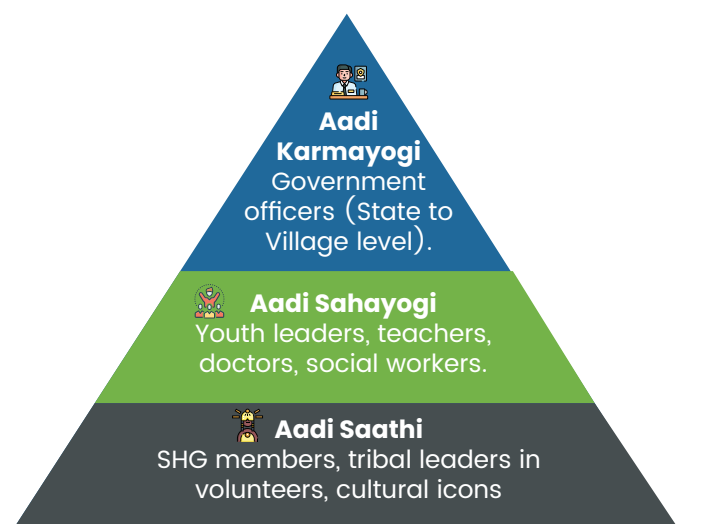➲ **Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS):** Quality education for ST children in remote areas.

About Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan

➲ **Overview:** Tribal grassroots leadership program to empower communities, enhance governance, and create local leaders across India.
➲ **Target:** Develop **20 lakh cadre for over 1 lakh tribal villages** reaching **10.5 crore tribal citizens.**
➲ **Vision:** Tribal Seva Path for responsive governance and last-mile service delivery.
➲ **Key Objectives:** Promote transparent governance, participatory planning, etc.
➲ **Part Of:** **Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh** for **Bhagwan Birsa Munda's 150th birthday**.

Key Features

➲ **Structure:** Multi-tiered leadership from habitation to State.
➲ **Convergence:** Tribal Welfare, Rural Development, Women & Child, Jal Shakti, Education, Forest.
➲ **Strategy:** Governance workshops (RPLs at Bengaluru, Bhopal, etc.), Village Vision 2030, mentorship (retired officials, tribal elders), **Aadi Karmayogi Digital Platform.**

Three Pillars of Leadership

Aadi Karmayogi — Government officers (State to Village level).

Aadi Sahayogi — Youth leaders, teachers, doctors, social workers.

Aadi Saathi — SHG members, tribal leaders in volunteers, cultural icons

Benefits/Outcomes

➲ **Services:** 100% saturation (roads, housing, water, electricity, Ayushman Bharat).
➲ **Infrastructure:** 1 lakh Adi Sewa Kendras, 100+ student chapters (IITs, NITs, IIMs), Single Window Governance Centres per village.

Importance

➲ **Delivery:** Fivefold DAPST budget rise but weak outcomes due to gaps.
➲ **Poverty:** 40.6% STs below poverty line vs. 20.5% non-tribal (Tribal Health report).
➲ **Culture:** Preserves languages, arts; e.g., TRIFED's GI tagging.
➲ **Ecology:** Leverages traditional practices; e.g., Dongria Kondh millet farming.
➲ **Democray:** Gram Sabha-selected cadre ensures trust and sensitivity.

Conclusion

A tribal cadre can bridge gaps, reduce poverty, empower Gram Sabhas, and preserve culture/ecology for inclusive nation-building.

6.3. News in Shorts

6.3.1. Multidisciplinary Education and Research improvement in Technical Education (MERITE) Scheme

Union Cabinet approved Budgetary Support for **MERITE Scheme.**

About MERITE Scheme

➲ **Type:** Central Sector Scheme
➲ **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Education
➲ **Objective:** Enhance quality, equity, and governance in technical education across all States/UTs, aligned with NEP 2020.
➲ **Budget:** Rs.4200 crore (2025-30), including Rs.2100 crore loan from World Bank.
➲ **Beneficiaries: 275 technical institutions** (175 engineering, 100 polytechnics).

6.3.2. Kerala Becomes India's First 100% Digitally Literate State

Achievement stems from **Digi Keralam programme**, aims to extend digital revolution and e-services to all residents.

➲ **Foundation**: Builds on Akshaya project, making Malappuram India's first e-literate district.

Digital Literacy

➲ **Definition**: Ability to use digital technologies for meaningful actions in daily life.
➲ **Household**: At least one member (5+ years) can operate a computer and use the internet.

Positive Impacts

➲ **Efficiency:** Enhances government services (e.g., Kisan Call Centres, CSCs).
➲ **Connectivity:** Offers global access for information, social life, and decision-making.
➲ **Democracy:** Boosts citizen engagement in governance.
➲ **Inclusion:** Accelerates DBT, UPI, and financial schemes.
➲ **Skills:** Imparts ICT skills, boosting livelihoods.

Concerns related to Digital Literacy in India: Ethical Use of the Internet**,** Protection of Personal Data**,** Threats of Cyber Security.

Kerala's achievement as first digitally-literate state, a model for inclusive digital transformation.

6.3.3. Registrar General of India (RGI)

RGI asked States to take steps towards **achieving universal registration of births and deaths.**

About RGI

➲ Appointed under the **Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969**.
➲ **Ministry:** Ministry of Home Affairs.
➲ **Key Responsibilities**
   ➜ **Housing & Population Census** (Census Act)
   ➜ **Civil Registration System (CRS)** for the compulsory registration of births and deaths.
   ➜ **Others**: Sample Registration System, National Population Register, Mother Tongue Survey, etc.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

7.1. Space Programme of India

Why in the News?

Lok Sabha discussed **Critical Role of the Space Programme for Viksit Bharat by 2047**.

More on the News

- ➲ **Highlight: Subhanshu Shukla's** ISS trip (Axiom-4 Mission) symbolizes India as Vishwabandhu Bharat.
- ➲ **Profile:** India's **first** ISS astronaut, **second Indian in space** after Rakesh Sharma (1984).

Critical Role of Space Programme/Technology

Sector/Sphere	Challenges	Space-based Solutions
Agriculture	Erratic monsoons, low productivity	**INSAT-3D/3DR**; **Resourcesat** , etc.
Infrastructure	Planning delays	**PM Gati Shakti** uses ISRO imagery, etc.
Disaster Management	Vulnerability to disasters	**ISRO's DMS** for real-time monitoring.
Security	Border gaps	**GSAT-7 & RISAT**, **Mission Shakti**
Autonomy	GPS dependence	**NavIC** for indigenous navigation
Environment	Deforestation, etc	**NISAR** will study land & ice, etc
Healthcare	Remote areas	**Telemedicine Project**
Education	Rural-urban divide	**EDUSAT** for distance learning.
Transparency	Welfare leakages	**Geo-tagging of MGNREGA assets**
Water Management	Groundwater depletion.	**Bhuvan–SRISHTI Geoportal**

How progress in Space Sector makes India Vishwabandhu?

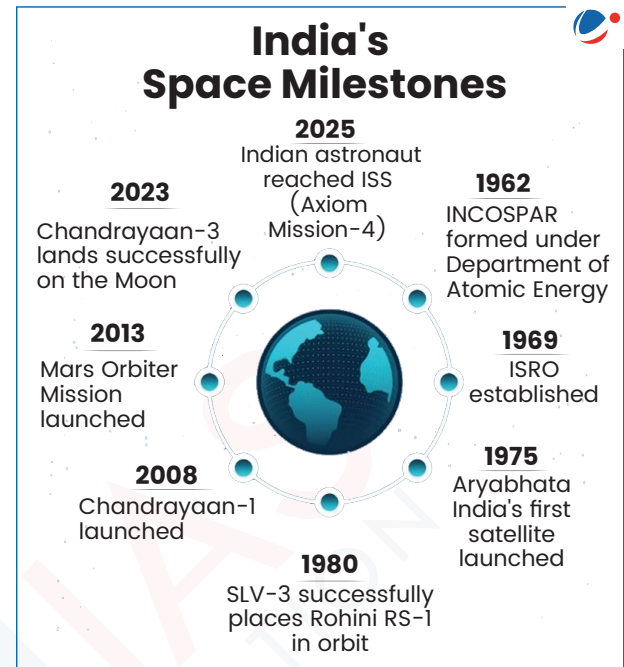- ➲ **Collaboration:** NISAR as global scientific handshake.

- ⮕ **Leadership:** South Asia Satellite (GSAT-9) and NavIC for neighbors.
- ⮕ **Sharing:** Chandrayaan-3 data on PRADAN; UNNATI training.
- ⮕ **Cost-Effectiveness:** Economical MOM; 400+ satellites launched.
- ⮕ **Sustainability:** Debris-Free Space Missions by 2030.
- ⮕ **Aid:** COSPAS–SARSAT membership.

Policy Intervention

- ⮕ **India Space Policy 2023:** Promotes private sector in space economy.
- ⮕ **FDI/Startup Ecosystem:** 100% FDI in space components; over 300 startups.
- ⮕ **Framework:** NewSpace India Limited (NSIL) (commercial arm), IN-SPACe (facilitator).

Conclusion

Space programme drives growth, cooperation, and sustainability; targets BAS by 2035 and lunar mission by 2040 for Viksit Bharat@2047.

India's Space Milestones

- **2025** Indian astronaut reached ISS (Axiom Mission-4)
- **2023** Chandrayaan-3 lands successfully on the Moon
- **2013** Mars Orbiter Mission launched
- **2008** Chandrayaan-1 launched
- **1980** SLV-3 successfully places Rohini RS-1 in orbit
- **1962** INCOSPAR formed under Department of Atomic Energy
- **1969** ISRO established
- **1975** Aryabhata India's first satellite launched

7.2. India's First Commercial Earth Observation (EO) Satellite Constellation

Why in the News?

PixxelSpace India-led Consortium won IN-SPACe proposal for India's first fully indigenous commercial **Earth Observation Satellite System** (EOSS).

More on the News

- ⮕ **Consortium:** Comprises Piersight Space, Satsure Analytics and Dhruva Space.
- ⮕ **EO-PPP model**: Private sector designs/operates EOSS; government provides support.
- ⮕ **Funding:** ₹1,200 crore private investment, rejecting ₹350 crore government aid.

About EOSS

- ⮕ **Structure**: 12 advanced EO satellites over 5 years.
- ⮕ **Sensors**: Panchromatic, multispectral, hyperspectral, SAR.
- ⮕ **Applications**: Climate monitoring, disaster management, agriculture, security, geospatial intelligence.

About Earth Observation (EO) Satellites

- ⮕ Also called as Earth remote sensing satellites, they are designed to collect information about activities on Earth, both natural and artificial, including physical, chemical, biological and human systems.
- ⮕ **Applications:** Earth sciences, environment & wildlife, disaster management, etc.

Significance of Private participation

- ⮕ **Economy**: Boosts $8.4 billion space economy to $44 billion by 2033 (7-8% global share).
- ⮕ **Innovation**: E.g., Pixxel's Firefly for hyperspectral imaging.
- ⮕ **ISRO Focus**: Enables advanced missions for Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- ⮕ **Jobs**: Creates high-skilled opportunities, reduces brain drain.
- ⮕ **Self-Reliance**: Enhances data sovereignty.
- ⮕ **Leadership**: 300+ startups strengthen global position (2% current share).

Challenges regarding Private sector participation in Space

- ⮕ **Legislation**: Lack of comprehensive law causes legal ambiguity.

Government Initiatives to promote Private sector participation in Space sector

- ⮕ **IN-SPACe**: 2020 agency for private participation.
- ⮕ **Space Policy 2023**: Regulatory clarity.
- ⮕ **Venture Fund**: ₹1,000 crore for startups.
- ⮕ **Tech Transfer**: 10 ISRO technologies to industries.
- ⮕ **FDI**: 100% FDI in space sector.

- **Operations**: Regulatory delays due to multiple approvals.
- **Technology**: Limited capacity increases import reliance.
- **Demand**: Upstream sector nascent, downstream dominant (80%).

Conclusion

- **Pixxel-led EOSS** marks a new era of public-private synergy, aiming for global leadership and Viksit Bharat with policy support and collaboration.

7.3. News in Shorts

7.3.1. ISRO inaugurates HOPE Analog Mission in Tso Kar Valley, Ladakh

Himalayan Outpost for Planetary Exploration (HOPE) is a specially designed **Habitat Module** for crew living and **Utility Module** for operations and support systems.

About HOPE Mission

- **Aim:** To simulate space-like conditions on Earth to aid research for future interplanetary missions.
- **Led by: ISRO's Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC).**
- **Objectives:** Simulates Moon/Mars conditions; tests human survival, health, and equipment.
- **Studies:** Epigenetics, genomics, physiology, psychology, etc.
- **Location:** Tso Kar Valley for Mars-like UV, low pressure, cold, saline permafrost.
- **Global Context:** Part of analog missions like US Mars Desert, Canada Flashline, Russia BIOS-3.

About Indian Human Spaceflight Programme, Gaganyaan

- **Objective:** To demonstration human spaceflight capability.
- **Launch Vehicle:** LVM3 rocket
- **Major milestones planned:** Air Drop Tests, Test Vehicle, Pad Abort Tests, Unmanned Flights, and Manned Flight.

7.3.2. ISRO's heaviest rocket Lunar Module Launch Vehicle (LMLV) to be ready by 2035

Key Features of LMLV

- **Design**: **Enhanced** NGLV, **40-storey building**.
- **Purpose**: **Lunar missions**, including India's first human mission by 2040.
- **3 Stages**: **Liquid propellent (first two stages)** and a **cryogenic propellant (third stage)**.

ISRO's Key Launch Vehicles and Capabilities

- **PSLV:** Workhorse for Sun-synchronous, LEO, GTO (e.g., Chandrayaan-1, MOM).
- **GSLV:** 4th-gen, 2-ton GTO for communication satellites.
- **LVM 3:** Heavy-lift, 4-ton GTO or 10-ton LEO (Chandrayaan-2/3), for Bharatiya Antariksh Station.
- **SSLV:** 3-stage, all-solid, for 10-500 kg Mini/Micro/Nano satellites.

7.3.3. EU AI Code of Practice on General-Purpose (GPAI)

26 tech gaints **(Amazon**, **Google, Microsoft, and IBM)** signed EU's voluntary AI Code of Practice on GPAI.

- **Benefits**: Offers legal certainty, eases transition to EU AI Act (effective in 2 years).
- **Chapters**: Transparency, copyright, safety/security.

About EU AI Act

- **Nature**: World's first comprehensive AI law with a risk-based approach.
- **Impact**: Ensures accountability for AI providers, affects generative AI businesses and third-party risks.
- **Global Standard**: Like GDPR, aims for positive AI impact worldwide.
- **Compliance**: Penalties up to 7% of global turnover.
- **Key concerns:**
  - Legal uncertainties for developers, exceeds AI Act scope.
  - Regulatory complexity may hinder Europe's AI competitiveness.

7.3.4. Brain-Computer Interface (BCI)

Stanford scientists developed a password-protected BCI to ensure privacy by requiring mental passwords before decoding thoughts.

What is a BCI?

- **Definition**: Enables direct brain-to-device communication by translating neural signals into commands, bypassing muscular control.
- **Process**: Acquires brain activity (implants/wearables), processes signals, sends commands, with feedback for adaptation.

Brain-Computer Interface

Motor Control	BCI Control
Plan: Decide to turn on the lamp.	**Plan:** Decide to turn on the lamp.
Execute: Reach out with your arm & use finger to press lamp's on/off switch.	**Execute:** Computer analyzes brain activity, identifying your wish to turn lamp on; sends signal to lamp, instructing it to turn on.

Output: Lamp responds.	**Output:** Lamp responds to signal from computer.

Key Applications of BCIs: Medical, Mental Wellness, Gaming/Industry, Cognitive, etc.

Key Concerns Related to BCIs

- ➲ **Cybersecurity:** Risks like brain tapping, mind control, etc.
- ➲ **Privacy:** Safeguarding neural data.
- ➲ **Cognitive Liberty:** Threat to mental autonomy.
- ➲ **Health:** Unknown long-term effects.
- ➲ **Regulatory/ Cost:** Lack of standardized, high costs.

Way Forward

Robust Regulations, enhanced security and establishing neurorights to safeguard mental privacy,etc.

7.3.5. Annual Fastag Passes

Ministry launched FASTag Annual Pass for ₹3,000 for one year or 200 toll plaza crossings.

About FASTAG

- ➲ **Technology**: **RFID-based toll payment** from accounts while moving.
- ➲ **RFID**: Uses tags/readers and radio waves for short-range communication.
- ➲ **Management:** Overseen by NPCI and NHAI.

7.3.6. Maharashtra inks deal with IIT Madras startup (TuTr Hyperloop Pvt. Ltd.) to build hyperloop

Linear Induction Motor (LIM) system will connect **Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (Navi Mumbai) to Vadhavan Port.**

About Hyperloop Mobility System

- ➲ **Origin**: Proposed by Elon Musk (SpaceX, 2013), open-sourced ultra-high-speed rail (UHSR).
- ➲ **Technology**: Magnetic levitation (maglev) pods in low-pressure tubes.
- ➲ **Functioning**: Sealed tubes with vacuums, LIM for 1,200 km/h, components include steel tubes (100Pa), capsules, compressor, air bearings.
- ➲ **Advantages**: Speeds (Mumbai-Pune in 25 mins), energy efficiency, noise reduction, logistics boost.
- ➲ **Issues**: Conceptual stage, high costs ($25-27 million/mile), safety (fire, evacuation), vacuum maintenance, straight-line infrastructure needs.

7.3.7. SHRESTH Initiative

Ministry launched **State Health Regulatory Excellence Index (SHRESTH)** to benchmark and strengthens state drug regulatory systems.

About SHRESTH

- ➲ **Proposed by**: Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO).
- ➲ **Aim**: Enhance state drug regulatory performance for consistent safety and quality.
- ➲ **Indices**: Based on HR, Infrastructure, Licensing, Surveillance, Responsiveness.

CULTURE

8.1. Goswami Tulsidas

Why in the News?

500th birth anniversary

About Goswami Tulsidas

- **Birth: Rajapur Village, Banda, Uttar Pradesh.**
- **Real Name:** Rambola Dubey
- **Father:** Aatmaram.
- **Mother:** Hulasi.
- **Teacher:** Shri Narharidas Ji

Key Contributions

- **Literary: Wrote** Ramcharitmanas (Awadhi, **UNESCO-listed**), **Vinay Patrika** and **Kavitavali** (Braj), etc.
- **Bhakti Movement:** Vaishnava saint of Saguna Bhakti, from Ramanandi Sampradaya; **harmonized Nirguna and Saguna devotion.**
- **Dialects:** Promoted **Awadhi and Braj languages.**
- **Temple: Sankatmochan Temple,** Varanasi.
- **Ramlila:** Based on Ramcharitmanas started by disciples post-death (e.g., Megha Bhagat, 1625).

Teachings

- **Navavidha Bhakti:** Nine devotion principles (e.g., saintly company, Guru Service).
- **Social:** Advocated **equality** (devotion over caste) and **Shaivism-Vaishnavism unity**.
- **Adwaita:** Embraced formless Rama in Monoism.
- **Taxation:** Proposed a cyclical, prosperity-driven tax system.

Conclusion

Tulsidas's devotion, equality, and unity messages inspire moral and social upliftment.

Contemporaries of Goswami Tulsidas ji

- Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi (1564-1624)
- Mian Mir (1550-1635)
- Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gangohi (1456-1537)
- Guru Nanak (1469-1539)
- Emperor Akbar (1542-1605)
- Surdas (1478-1583)
- Shankaradeva (1449-1568)
- Mirabai (1503-1546)
- Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (1486-1534)
- Sant Eknath (1533-1599)
- Tukaram (1598-1650)
- Purandaradasa (1494-1564)

8.2. 100 Years of Kakori Train Action

Why in the News?

2025 **centenary year of Kakori Train action**.

About Kakori Train Action

- ➲ **Date: August 9, 1925**, at **Kakori** near **Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.**
- ➲ **Action**: HRA revolutionaries seized British railway funds from the 8-down train.
- ➲ **Leaders: Ram Prasad Bismil**, **Ashfaqullah Khan, Chandrashekhar Azad, Roshan Singh, etc.**

Aftermath

- ➲ **British Response:** Manhunt led to 40+ arrests; Kakori Conspiracy trial charged 28 HRA members.
- ➲ **Sentences:** Bismil, Ashfaqullah, Rajendra Lahiri, and Roshan Singh were sentenced to **death.**

Impact on India's Independence Movement

- ➲ **Inspiration:** New generation of revolutionaries **– Bhagat Singh, etc.**
- ➲ **Unity**: Showcased secular collaboration.
- ➲ **Awareness**: Trial exposed British harshness, boosting support.
- ➲ **Shift**: Promoted direct action alongside non-violence.
- ➲ **Legacy:** Embodied revolutionary spirit; led to HSRA in 1928.

About HRA and HSRA

- ➲ **Hindustan Republican Association (HRA)**
  - ➜ **Founded:** 1924
  - ➜ **Principle**: India to be federal Republic.
  - ➜ The organization **drafted a constitution (Yellow Paper) and published manifesto titled "Revolutionary"** in 1925, criticizing **Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent methods.**
- ➲ **Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA)**
  - ➜ **Founded:** 1928
  - ➜ **Principle**: **Socialism.**

Conclusion

Kakori Action challenged colonial economics, spurred revolutionary shifts, and inspired HSRA, reinforcing armed resistance.

8.3. Gallantry Awards

Why in the news?

President approved 127 Gallantry awards & 40 Distinguished Service awards.

About Gallantry Awards

- ➲ **Objective:** Recognize bravery, valour, or self-sacrifice in wartime and peacetime.
- ➲ **Conferred by**: President.
- ➲ **Ministry: Ministry of Defence** seeks recommendations **biannually.**
- ➲ **History:**
  - ➜ **Param Vir Chakra, Maha Vir Chakra & Vir Chakra:** 1950 (effective 1947).
  - ➜ **Ashok Chakra series:** Instituted 1952 (Effective 1947).
    - ❖ **Renamed:** As **Ashok Chakra**, **Kirti Chakra**, and **Shaurya Chakra (1967).**
- ➲ **Benefits:** Monthly allowance, travel concessions, etc.

Types of Gallantry Awards, Criteria, and Benefits

Category	Name	Features	Eligibility
Wartime	**Param Vir Chakra**	Highest military decoration	All ranks, civilians under Armed Forces.
	Mahavir Chakra	Second highest	
	Vir Chakra	Third highest	
Peacetime	**Ashoka Chakra**	Equivalent of Param Vir Chakra	Armed Forces, Police, civilians.
	Kirti Chakra	Equivalent of Maha Vir Chakra	
	Shaurya Chakra	Equivalent of Vir Chakra	

➲ **Other Distinguished Service Awards:** Param Vishisht Seva Medal, Ati Vishisht Seva Medal, Vishisht Seva Medal, etc.

8.4. COMMONWEALTH Games

Why in the News?

Union cabinet approved India's bid to host Commonwealth Games 2030 at Ahmedabad.

About Commonwealth Games (CWG)

➲ **Event**: Multi-sport event every four years among Commonwealth nations.
➲ **History**: First in 1930 (Hamilton, Canada), 19th in 2010 (Delhi).
➲ **Earlier names: British Empire Games** (1930-1950), **British and Commonwealth Games** (1954-1964), **British Commonwealth Games** (1970-1974).

About Commonwealth

➲ **Genesis**: 1926 agreement established **equal member status** within British Empire, owing allegiance to the Crown but not ruled by UK.
➲ **Members**: 56 countries (**including India**), Gabon and Togo joined in 2022.
➲ **Key organizations**: **Board of Governors** (High Commissioners) and **Commonwealth Secretariat** (London).

8.5. News in Shorts

8.5.1. Vitthalbhai Patel

100 years of Vitthalbhai Patel becoming **first elected Indian President of the Central Legislative Assembly** (August 1925).

About Vitthalbhai Patel (1873–1933)

➲ **Born:** Nadiad, Gujarat.
➲ **Profile:** Elder brother of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, political leader, lawyer, and social reformer.

Key Contributions

➲ **Reforms:** Advocated social and political reforms for India's freedom.
➲ **Councils:** Member of Bombay Legislative Council; elected to Imperial Legislative Council in 1918.
➲ **Swaraj Party:** Co-founded with Motilal Nehru and Chittaranjan Das in 1922.
➲ **Mayor:** Bombay Municipal Corporation (1923 – 1925).

8.5.2. National Film Awards 2023

About the National Film Award

➲ **Genesis:** Established in 1954 by the Government of India.
➲ **Presentation:** Conferred annually by **Indian President.**
➲ **Award Sections:** Features Film, Dadasaheb Phalke Award, etc.
  ➜ **Dada Saheb Phalke Award**: Highest cinema award, instituted 1969.

ETHICS
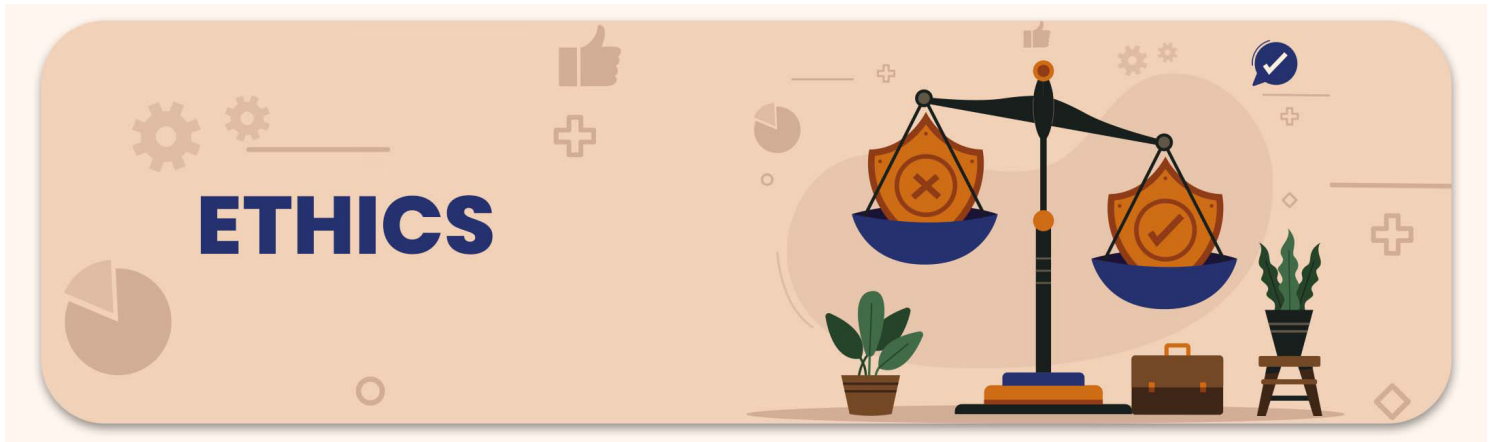
9.1. Trust in Public Institutions

Introduction

Allegations of political misuse of bodies like ECI, ED, and CBI have raised concerns over eroding trust in India's public institutions. **UN World Social Report 2025** shows global institutional trust decline; over half the population now has little or no trust in governments, based on 1995–2022 survey data.

What is meant by Trust?

➲ **OECD defines trust** as belief that institutions or individuals act consistently with positive expectations.
  ➡ **Trust** underpins the social contract, crucial for governance with clear understanding of its nature, drivers, and consequences.
➲ **Types of Trust:**
  ➡ **Horizontal:** Among community members.
  ➡ **Vertical:** In governing institutions.
  ➡ **Social:** Generalized trust in strangers.
  ➡ **Political:** Confidence in institutions and actors.

Stakeholders and their Interests in maintaining Trust in Public Institutions

Stakeholder	Interest
Citizens	Efficient services, public participation, well-being, stability.
Government	Legitimate policy making, compliance, effective enforcement, smoother governance.
Civil Society & Media	Freedom of expression, rights advocacy.
Private Sector	Predictable regulations, fair competition, reduced corruption, entrepreneurship

Reasons behind erosion of Trust in Public Institutions

➲ **Administrative non-performance:** Poor service quality, unresponsiveness and abuse of authority. **(2nd ARC)**
➲ **Economic Insecurity:** Failure to provide economic security erodes the social contract, with less secure groups reporting lower trust.**(UNDESA)**
➲ **Political Exclusion:** Marginalized groups' limited influence restricts their ability to demand better policies or services.
➲ **Scandals and Corruption:** Undermine trust by suggesting institutions prioritize self-interest over public good.
➲ **Disinformation and Social Media:** Amplifies perceived failures, manipulates views, and questions election legitimacy.
➲ **Inefficient Judicial systems:** Weakens rule of law and limits remedies for grievances against institutions.

Major Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions

Competencies	
Reliability	• Protection in emergencies, legitimate data use, satisfaction with services.
Responsiveness	• Services improved via feedback, innovation, evidence-based decisions.
Values	
Transparency	• Accessible information, citizen participation, clear reforms.
Integrity	• Accountability among government branches.
Fairness	• Equal treatment in services, benefits, and representation of diverse groups.

Measures to improve Trust in Public Institutions

- ➲ **Foster citizen engagement:** Through policymaking like **Social Audit.**
- ➲ **Consistent implementation:** Improving service delivery **E.g., DBT.**
- ➲ **Promoting transparency:** Through open data and **dashboards.**
- ➲ **Uphold ethical governance:** With equity and focus on marginalized groups**.**
- ➲ **Establish independent anti-corruption bodies:** E.g., **Lokpal and Lokayukta.**
- ➲ **Strengthen institutional frameworks:** With parliamentary – executive harmony and independent judiciary.
- ➲ **Address misinformation using technology:** Adopting **governance models** like **Fact Checking Units.**

Conclusion

Trust is vital for society and representative democracy; its erosion signals a "crisis of democracy," undermining institutions, actors, and democratic quality.

9.2. Ethics of Stray Dog Management

Introduction

In 2024, 37 lakh dog bite cases were reported; India leads **global rabies deaths**. **Supreme Court** ruled vaccinated stray dogs be released, stressing **balance** between animal protection and citizen safety.

Key Stakeholders and Invested interest

Stakeholders	Interest
Residents	Fundamental duty of compassion **(Art. 51A(g)),** but face safety, health risks; vulnerable groups like children and elderly at higher risk.
Pet Owners	**Contribute via** abandonment; solutions through responsible ownership and stray management support.
Government Agencies	Vaccination, sterilization, stray control; municipal responsibility **(Art. 243W, 246);** NCDC **targets rabies elimination by 2030** under **NAPRE**.
Supreme Court	Balancing public health and animal rights.
Animal Welfare Organizations	Promote care models, oppose culling; **AWBI issues revised ABC module.**

Ethical Values in Conflict in Management of Stray Dogs

- ➲ **Compassion vs. Public Safety:** Feeding sustains strays but may increase aggression.
- ➲ **Animal Rights vs. Human Rights:** Animals' right to live **(Art. 21, Jallikattu Case 2014)** conflicts with humans' right to safety, property, and fear-free spaces.

- **Kant vs Utilitarianism:** Kant demands dignity for animals, opposing utilitarian sacrifice for human convenience.
- **Non-Maleficence Dilemma:** Solutions must minimize harm to humans and animals, often unmet in practice.
- **Rights-Duties Paradox:** Though animals lack duties, vulnerability and sentience justify rights, similar to infants or the disabled.

Ways for Ethical Management of Stray Dogs

- **Principle of Beneficence:** Promote welfare of humans and animals through **proactive interventions. Animal Birth Control (ABC) Rules, 2023** focus on sterilization/vaccination; **Netherlands** encourages shelter adoptions via higher dog taxes.
- **Proportionality & Graduated Response:** Actions must match risks, based on evidence, starting with least harmful measures; e.g., **SC ordered shelters, sterilization after rabies spike in Delhi-NCR.**
- **Virtue Ethics:** Cultivating compassion, responsibility, and community engagement for sustainable practices.
- **National Rabies Control Program:** Phased rabies prevention in Tier-1/2 cities, with strengthened surveillance.
- **Local Bodies and Volunteers:** Empower RWAs, NGOs, and citizen support for dog management.

Conclusion

Stray dog management requires a multi-stakeholder approach involving local bodies, communities, and animal rights groups, aligning with the One Health framework.
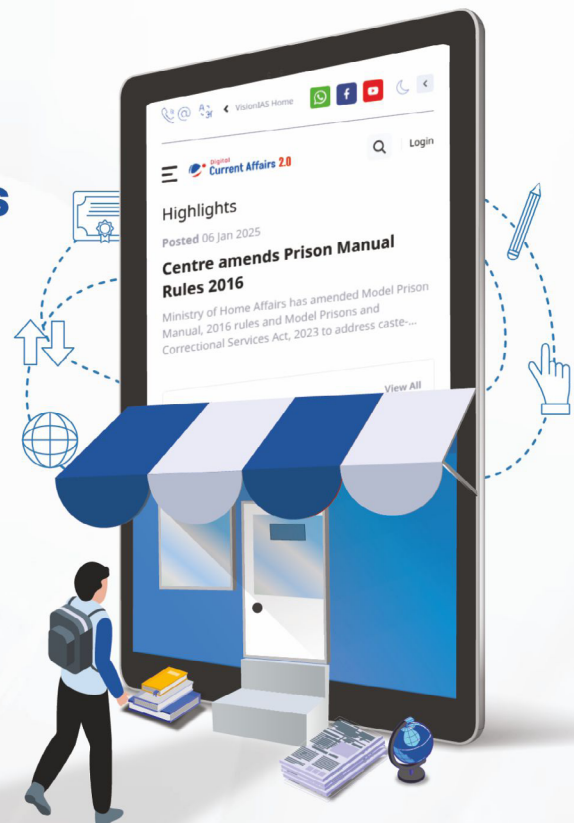
GOVERNMENT SCHEMES
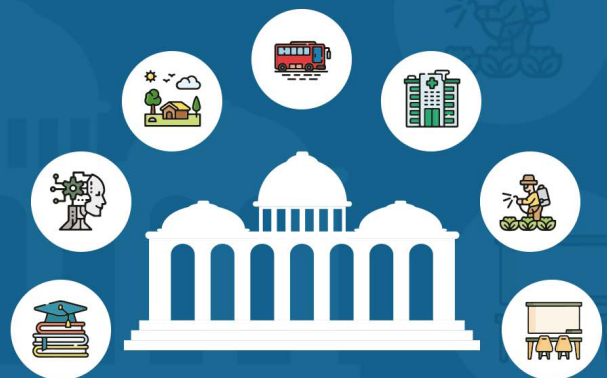
10.1. Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana

Why in News?

PM announced **Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana** to boost youth employment.

Objectives

- ➲ **Job creation, skilling, employability, and social security**, especially in manufacturing.
- ➲ **Target:** 3.5 crore jobs in 2 years.
- ➲ **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Labour & Employment, via EPFO.

Key Features

- ➲ **Part A – Support to First-Time Employees**
  - ➡ **Incentive:** 1month EPF wage (max ₹15,000) in 2 instalments (after 6 & 12 months and financial literacy program).
  - ➡ **Eligible:** Salaries up to ₹1 lakh.
  - ➡ **Benefits:** Formalised jobs, on-job training, savings habit, financial literacy.
    - ◇ **Payment:** DBT through Aadhar-based system.
- ➲ **Part B – Incentives to Employers**
  - ➡ For new employees (salary ≤ ₹1 lakh).
  - ➡ **Incentive:** Up to ₹3000/month for 2 years (extended to 4 yrs in manufacturing).
  - ➡ Paid directly to **PAN-linked accounts.**
  - ➡ **Benefits:** Job creation offset, workforce stability, social security coverage.

10.2. Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)

Why in News?

Union Cabinet approved ₹12,000 crore targeted subsidy for **PMUY consumers in 2025-26.**

Objectives

- ➲ Provide **LPG connections to BPL families.**
- ➲ Promote **clean energy, reduce indoor pollution**, empower women with **safe cooking fuel.**

Features

- ➲ Launched **2016 (8 crore deposits-free connections).**
- ➲ **Ujjwala 2.0 (2021):** +1.6 crore connections; facility for migrant households.
- ➲ **Target (2023-26):** 10.35 crore connections.
- ➲ **Type**: Central Sector Scheme by **Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas (MoPNG) with OMCs + states.**
- ➲ **Eligibility:** Adult woman (≥18 yrs) from BPL household without LPG.

- **Migrants**: Only self-declaration, no ration card required.

Benefits

- **Cash Assistance:** ₹1600 (14.2 kg) / ₹1150 (5 kg) covers cylinder, regulator, hose, card, installation.
- Free **first refill and stove** with **deposit-free connection**.
- **Targeted subsidy**: ₹300 per 14.2 kg cylinder for up to 12 refills/year.
- **Exclusions:** Households **already having LPG or no adult female member.**
- **Awareness:** LPG Panchayat for **safety and benefits.**

Achievements

- **10.33 crore connection**s till Mar 2025.
- **Globally recognised by IEA & WHO** for health and environmental impact.
- **Beneficiaries of PMUY**: Identified Households from SECC List-2011, SC/ST households, PMAY (Gramin) beneficiaries, Antodaya Anna Yojana, Most Backward Classes, Forest Dwellers, Residents of Islands/River Islands, Tea Garden and Ex-tea Garden Tribes, Other Poor Families.

QUICK FACTS

Topics	Key facts/Data
Election to the Office of the Vice-President of India	**Constitutional Provisions related to Vice President** ➲ **Electoral College**: Includes 782 Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha members (elected + nominated). ➲ **Voting System**: Proportional Representation by Single Transferable Vote and secret ballot. ➲ **Authority**: ECI conducts election under constitutional and legal powers.
National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC)	**About NCDC** ➲ **Genesis:** The NCDC was established in 1963 by an Act of Parliament as a statutory Corporation under the Ministry of Cooperation. ➲ **Functions**: The NCDC Act has been amended to expand the corporation's area of operation, allowing it to assist different types of cooperatives and broaden its financial base.
Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2025	**About Process Reforms** ➲ Process reforms are **"nuts and bolts" changes** to specific rules or procedures. ➡ Unlike structural reforms, **which change the overall system, process reforms** improve how existing systems work. ➲ They are small, targeted changes **aimed at improving efficiency in specific sectors or policies**. ➲ **The Economic Survey 2020-21 supports simpler regulations** and smoother processes over complex rules and opacity.
Rules for OCI Card Tightened	**About OCI Cards** ➲ Introduced in 2005 as an amendment to **the Citizenship Act, 1955.** ➡ In 2015, the **PIO card scheme merged with OCI**; All PIO cardholders became OCI cardholders. ➲ OCI is **not dual citizenship** and does not grant political rights.
ASEAN	**About ASEAN** ➲ **Genesis (1967):** Formed in Bangkok via **ASEAN Declaration.** ➲ **Aims: Economic & cultural progress**; peace, stability, rule of law; cooperation in trade, education, agriculture, industry. ➲ **Secretariat:** Jakarta, Indonesia. ➲ **Members:** 10 nations; **Founders**: Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand.

India-Singapore	**About India-Singapore Relations**
	⮎ **Diplomatic Ties**: India recognised Singapore's independence in 1965.
	➡ CECA (Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement) signed in 2005; Upgraded to Strategic Partnership (2015) and **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (2024).**
	➡ **2025 marks the 60th year of diplomatic relations.**
	⮎ **Defence Exercise**s: Agni Warrior (Army) and SIMBEX (Navy).
Alaska Summit	**About Alaska**
	⮎ Non-contiguous U.S. state on the **northwest edge of North America.**
	⮎ Purchased from **Russia under the Alaska Treaty of 1867.**
	⮎ Maritime boundaries **include Beaufort Sea and Arctic Ocean (north), Gulf of Alaska and Pacific Ocean (south), Bering Sea (west), Chukchi Sea (northwest).**
Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD)	⮎ India is a founding **member of AIBD, and Prasar Bharati India's public service broadcaster represents** the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting in the organization.
Product Nation	**Product Nation**
	⮎ **Definition:** A product nation is a country that **produces and exports** of **high-value goods**.
	⮎ **Purpose**: Shifts from being only a consumer or assembler to becoming a creator of globally competitive goods.
Internationalization of Rupee	⮎ **Internationalization of Rupee** refers to a process that involves increasing use of the rupee in cross-border transactions.
	⮎ **Vostro Account:** A **foreign bank's account** held in a domestic bank in the local currency.
	⮎ **Nostro Account: Domestic bank's account** in a foreign bank in the currency of the overseas country.
Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act	**About FRBM Act**
	⮎ **The FRBM Act, 2003 ensures fiscal discipline, long-term stability, and mandates annual CAG compliance review.**
	⮎ FRBM Act mandates following to be laid before Parliament along with the Budget: Macro-economic Framework Statement, Medium Term Fiscal Policy Statement, Fiscal Policy Strategy Statement.
Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2025	**Key Amendments**
	⮎ National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust (NMEDT).
	⮎ Inclusion of other minerals in a mining lease.
	⮎ Removal of limit on sale for captive mines.
	⮎ Inclusion of contiguous area.
	⮎ Establishment of Mineral Exchanges.
Indian Ports Act, 2025	**About Ports**
	⮎ **Port Network**: 12 major ports (13th under construction at Vadhavan) and ~200 non-major ports.
	⮎ Major ports: Central Government-owned, Non-major ports: Managed by State.
	⮎ **Maritime Trade**: Handles 95% of volume and 70% of trade value; major ports 53%, non-major 47%.
10 Years of Sagarmala Programme	**About Sagarmala Programme**
	⮎ **Ministry & Launch**: 2015, Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways (MoPSW).
	⮎ **Aim**: Boost economic development via India's 11,098 km coastline and 14,500 km navigable waterways.

RBI's FREE-AI Vision for Financial Sector	**FREE-AI Vision for Financial Sector**
	➲ **Aim:** Ensure safe, fair, and accountable AI adoption in India's financial sector.
	➲ **7 Sutras**: Foundational principles guiding AI adoption: Trust, People first, Fairness and equity, Accountability etc.
Small Finance Bank Universal License	➲ **Universal Banking Licence**: Allows offering commercial and investment banking services under one entity.
	➲ **Historical Context**: Last universal banking licences granted in 2014 to Bandhan Bank and IDFC Bank (now IDFC First Bank).
Steel Scrap Recycling Policy (SSRP)	**Key Issues in Steel Scrap Sector as per Report**
	➲ **No comprehensive database** on steel scrap sector, No designated Nodal Ministry for steel scrap matters, Absence of formal scrap markets, Steel scrap recycling sector lacks industry status, Insufficient skill development and certification for scrap workforce, Obsolete technology used in scrap processing centres.
Agni-5	**About Agni-5**
	➲ **Nuclear-capable Surface-to-Surface** Ballistic Missile with three-stage solid fuel engine.
	➲ **Range:** 5,000+ km.
	➲ **Developer**: DRDO under IGMDP **(Agni, Prithvi, Trishul, Nag, Akash).**
	➲ **Significance**: Gives India MIRV-capable IRBM status **like US, Russia, China, France.**
SLINEX-25	➲ **It is naval exercise between India–Sri Lanka.**
	➲ **It begun in 2005.**
Integrated Air Defence Weapon System (IADWS),	**Key Components**
	➲ **Indigenous Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missiles (QRSAM):** DRDO-made, 5–30 km range, mobile, protects armoured columns in motion.
	➲ **Advanced Very Short-Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS) missiles**: RCI-made MANPADS, counters low-altitude aerial threats.
	➲ **Laser-DEW**: CHESS-made, **engages targets** at light speed **with laser beams.**
E-Mobility	**About India Electric Mobility Index (IEMI)**
	➲ First-of-its-kind tool to benchmark states' e-mobility progress.
	➲ Tracks **16 indicators** under 3 themes.
	➲ **Categories:** Achievers (100), Front Runners (65–99), Performers (50–64), Aspirants (0–49).
	➲ **2024 Rankings:** Delhi (77) > Maharashtra (68) > Chandigarh & Karnataka.
India's Resolution on Wise-use of Wetlands	**About Wise Use Principle (Ramsar Convention)**
	➲ **Core principle** of wetland conservation.
	➲ **Defined As:** Maintaining ecological character of wetlands using **ecosystem-based approaches** within **sustainable development**.
	➲ **Mandates:** National plans, legislation, management actions, public education.
Cloudbursts	➲ It is an **extreme amount of precipitation** in a short period, sometimes accompanied by hail and thunder, that can create flood conditions.
	➲ **Recent Examples:** Kishtwar district, Jammu and Kashmir and Chamoli Cloudburst, Uttarakhand (2025) and Himachal Pradesh (2020).
Urban Migration	**Definition of Migration**
	➲ As per IOM, movement of people from usual residence to a new place, across borders or within a state. In India, Census defines migrants by Place of Birth (POB) or Place of Last Residence (PoLR) differing from enumeration place.

MERITE scheme	**About MERITE scheme** ➲ **Type: Central Sector Scheme** ➲ **Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Education** ➲ Improve quality, equity, governance in technical education across all States/UTs; aligned with NEP 2020.
Space Programme of India	**Key facts of Space Programme of India** ➲ **About Subhanshu Shukla:** 1st Indian aboard ISS via Ax-4 (2025); only 2nd Indian in space after Rakesh Sharma (1984). ➲ **About Space-based applications:** Agriculture (INSAT, Resourcesat), Disaster Management (DMS), Defence (RISAT, GSAT-7), Navigation (NavIC). ➲ **India's Initiative:** India Space Policy 2023, Bharatiya Antariksh Station by 2035, crewed lunar mission by 2040.
Hope Analog Mission	➲ **Location:** Tso Kar Valley, Ladakh as it has Mars-like conditions (UV radiation, low pressure, saline permafrost). ➲ **Objective:** Human survival research, planetary protocols, astrobiology studies. ➲ **Global Analogues:** MDRS (US), Flashline Arctic Station (Canada), BIOS-3 (Russia).
Lunar Module Launch vehicle	➲ ISRO's heaviest rocket; ready by 2035. ➲ **Payload: 80 tonnes LEO / 27 tonnes Moon.** ➲ **Aim:** To support India's 1st crewed lunar mission (by 2040).
EU AI Code of Practice	➲ **Voluntary pact** by 26 companies (Amazon, Google, Microsoft). ➲ **3 focus areas:** Transparency, Copyright, Safety & Security. ➲ Prepares for EU AI Act (1st comprehensive AI law, risk-based).
Brain Computer Interface	➲ Stanford's **password-protected mind-reading BCI**. ➲ **Applications:** Paralysis recovery, mental wellness, gaming, cognitive enhancement. ➲ **Concerns:** Cybersecurity (brain tapping), privacy, neurorights.
Shresth Initiative	**About Shresth Index** ➲ **Launched by** CDSCO, Benchmarks State Drug Regulators. ➲ **5 parameters:** HR, Infrastructure, Licensing, Surveillance, Responsiveness.
Kakori Train Action	**About Kakori Train action** ➲ 1925 event by HRA to seize British funds. ➲ Led to deaths of Ram Prasad Bismil and Ashfaqullah Khan, inspiring HSRA.
Gallantry Awards	**About Gallantry Awards** ➲ Announced twice yearly (Republic Day, Independence Day). ➲ Include Param Vir Chakra (wartime) and Ashoka Chakra (peacetime).
Commonwealth Games	**Key Details** ➲ India to host 2030 CWG in Ahmedabad ➲ First held in 1930, with 56 member countries.

ACTIVITIES

12.1. MCQS

1. **Consider the following statements.**
   1. Sports governance in India is placed in the Concurrent List of the Seventh Schedule.
   2. The Act Establishes National sports bodies such as National Paralympic Committee.

   Which of the above is/are correct?
   (a) 1 only
   (b) 2 only
   (c) Both 1 and 2
   (d) Neither 1 nor 2

2. **Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2025 provides for**
   (a) Criminalization of minor offences
   (b) Suspension of MPs upon charge-sheet
   (c) Automatic revision of fines by 10% every 3 years
   (d) Direct impeachment of Ministers

3. **With reference to the National Sports Governance Act, 2025.**
   1. It provides for National sports board (NSB) to grant recognition to sports bodies.
   2. It establishes a National Sports Tribunal to adjudicate sports-related disputes.

   Consider the following statements,
   (a) 1 only
   (b) 2 only
   (c) Both 1 and 2
   (d) Neither 1 nor 2

4. **Consider the following statements about ASEAN:**
   1. ASEAN was founded in 1967 in Bangkok, through the ASEAN Declaration.
   2. Secretariat of ASEAN is situated in Singapore.

   Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
   (a) 1 only
   (b) 2 only
   (c) Both 1 and 2
   (d) Neither 1 nor 2

5. **Which of the following best describes the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty (1987)?**
   (a) It prohibits nuclear testing in the atmosphere.
   (b) It mandates elimination of ground-launched missiles with ranges from 500–5,500 km.
   (c) It restricts missile defence shields in Europe.
   (d) It eliminates tactical nuclear weapons globally.

6. **Consider following statements about Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).**
   1. It was created by a treaty in 2014.
   2. It ensures free movement of goods, services, capital, and labour.

   Which of the above is/are correct?
   (a) 1 only
   (b) 2 only
   (c) Both 1 and 2
   (d) Neither 1 nor 2

7. **Which of the following countries are members of ASEAN?**
   1. Indonesia
   2. Thailand
   3. Australia
   4. Philippines

   Choose the correct option given below,
   (a) 1, 2 and 4 only
   (b) 1, 3 and 4 only
   (c) 1, 2, 3 and 4
   (d) 1 and 2 only

8. **Consider the following statements regarding Gig Workers in India.**
   1. The Code on Social Security, 2020 defines a gig worker as someone engaged outside the traditional employer-employee relationship.
   2. The Karnataka Platform-Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Bill, 2025 provides for the establishment of a welfare board and fund for gig workers.

3. Over 80% of gig workers in India are informal employees.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

(a) All three

(b) Only two

(c) Only one

(d) None

9. **Consider the following statements regarding Sovereign Credit Ratings (SCR).**

1. Higher sovereign ratings reduce borrowing costs and facilitate foreign investment.

2. Sovereign ratings are legally binding for a country's borrowing.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) Only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

10. **Consider the following statements regarding Small Finance Banks (SFBs).**

1. Small Finance Banks were conceptualized to promote financial inclusion and were announced in the Union Budget 2014-15.

2. SFBs are registered under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

11. **Consider the following statements regarding International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs) in India.**

1. GIFT City in Gujarat is India's first IFSC and operates as a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) since 2015.

2. IFSCs provide both onshore and offshore financial services in foreign currency.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

12. **Consider the following sentences,**

1. The Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025 provides for deportation of illegal immigrants in India.

2. India is a signatory to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, which governs treatment of refugees.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

13. **With reference to Tiger Reserves in India, consider the following statements:**

1. Tiger Reserves are notified by the Central Government under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

2. No alteration in the boundaries of a Tiger Reserve can be made without the recommendation of the National Tiger Conservation Authority and the approval of the National Board for Wild Life.

3. Sundarbans Tiger Reserve is now the largest Tiger Reserve in India after its recent expansion.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 2 and 3 only

14. **With reference to India's Electric Mobility transition, consider the following statements.**

1. The India Electric Mobility Index (IEMI) was launched by NITI Aayog.

2. In 2024, Delhi topped the IEMI rankings.

3. The PLI Scheme for Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) aims to support domestic manufacturing of batteries with a capacity of 50 GWh.

4. Public EV charging is cheaper than home charging due to lower GST rates and absence of operator margins.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 1, 3 and 4 only

(d) 2, 3 and 4 only

15. **Consider the following statements regarding India's resolution on the "Wise-Use of Wetlands".**

1. The resolution adopted at Ramsar COP15 in Zimbabwe aligns with India's Mission LiFE initiative.

2. The "Victoria Falls Declaration" adopted at COP15 was specific to India's wetlands conservation strategy.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

16. **According to the Census 2011, which of the following is the primary reason for rural-to-urban migration in India?**

(a) Education

(b) Work

(c) Marriage

(d) Natural disasters

17. The Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan aims to develop a cadre of tribal leaders primarily to achieve which of the following outcomes in tribal areas?
(a) Industrialization of tribal lands
(b) 100% saturation of government services
(c) Privatization of tribal resources
(d) Migration of tribals to urban centers

18. Consider the following statements about India's first commercial Earth Observation (EO) satellite constellation.
1. It is being developed entirely by ISRO with government funding.
2. It will consist of 12 satellites equipped with SAR, multispectral, and hyperspectral sensors.
Which of the above statements is/are correct?
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

19. Which of the following personalities were contemporaries of Goswami Tulsidas ji (1532–1623)?
1. Surdas
2. Mirabai
3. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu
4. Sant Eknath
5. Tukaram
Select the correct option given below,
(a) 1, 2 and 3 only
(b) 1, 4 and 5 only
(c) 2, 3 and 5 only
(d) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

20. In which year was the Kakori Train Action executed?
(a) 1920
(b) 1925
(c) 1930
(d) 1942

12.2. True/False Statements

1. The Online Gaming Act, 2025 completely bans all types of online games in India. (T/F)
2. National Sports Board under the National Sports Governance Act, 2025 is a public authority under RTI. (T/F)
3. For the post of Vice President Nomination requires 20 proposers/seconders and ₹15,000 deposit. (T/F)
4. Dnieper River runs through Kyiv in Ukraine. (T/F)
5. Armenia–Azerbaijan conflict is mainly over Nagorno-Karabakh, a mountainous region inside Azerbaijan. (T/F)
6. Competition Commission of India (CCI) functions under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA). (T/F)
7. Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) was launched under the Ministry of Rural Development and aims to provide all-weather road connectivity to unconnected rural habitations. (T/F)
8. Food has a larger weight in Consumer Price Index (CPI) while fuel group has greater weight in Wholesale Price Index (WPI). (T/F)
9. Sudarshan Chakra Mission aims at developing an indigenous nuclear submarine fleet. (T/F)
10. SLINEX is a trilateral naval exercise between India, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. (T/F)

11. Drake Passage separates South America and the Antarctic Peninsula. (T/F)
12. Mount Lewotobi is an active volcano in Malaysia. (T/F)
13. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) defines a cloudburst as a rainfall event where 10 cm of rain is received at a station in one hour. (T/F)
14. Kerala's "Digi Keralam" programme, which made it India's first 100% digitally literate state, focuses exclusively on urban residents above 18 years of age. (T/F)
15. Registrar General of India is responsible for the Civil Registration System under the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969, but not for conducting the Population Census. (T/F)
16. According to '400 Million Dreams' Report, migrants account for 28.88% of the population in 2023, down from 37.64% in 2011. (T/F)
17. HOPE Analog Mission was established in Thar Desert to simulate Martian conditions. (T/F)
18. There is no vaccine for Hepatitis C virus. (T/F)
19. The first Commonwealth Games were held in Delhi in 1930. (T/F)
20. The Ashoka Chakra is a peacetime gallantry award. (T/F)

12.3. Mains Practice Questions

1. Process reforms are the nuts and bolts of governance." In the context of the Jan Vishwas Bill, 2025, explain with examples. (10 Marks, 150 Words)
2. Evaluate the challenges to ASEAN centrality in the evolving Indo-Pacific geopolitical landscape. Discuss the primary causes of these strains and propose strategies for India to bolster ASEAN's central role. (10 Marks, 150 Words)
3. India's MAHASAGAR doctrine seeks to align national interests with global maritime governance. Examine its role in addressing traditional and non-traditional challenges in the Indian Ocean. (10 Marks, 150 Words)
4. Regional imbalances continue to pose economic, social, and political challenges to India's development. Discuss the causes and consequences of such imbalances, and suggest measures to address them. (10 Marks, 150 Words)

5. India's push for the internationalization of the rupee is seen as part of a larger global trend of de-dollarization. Discuss the benefits and challenges of this move for India. (10 Marks, 150 Words)

6. Discuss India's nuclear deterrence capability in light of the successful test of Agni-5. (10 Marks, 150 Words)

7. The private sector has emerged as a key player in India's space journey, complementing ISRO's efforts. Discuss the role of private companies in advancing India's space programme and evaluate the challenges they face in contributing to this sector. (10 Marks, 150 Words)

8. Illegal immigration poses both security and socio-economic challenges for India. What should be the way forward for India? (10 Marks, 150 Words)

9. Cloudbursts in the Himalayan region are becoming more frequent and intense due to both natural and anthropogenic factors. Discuss the causes, consequences, and challenges in forecasting such events. (10 Marks, 150 Words)

10. Evaluate the significance of the Kakori Train Action in shaping the revolutionary phase of India's freedom struggle. (10 Marks, 150 Words)

11. Critically evaluate the key provisions of the National Sports Governance Act, 2025 in India's aspiration to host the 2036 Olympics. (15 Marks, 250 Words)

12. Critically examine the need for a fair and representative global order. How can India contribute to its realization? (15 Marks, 250 Words)

13. Blue Economy is a critical pillar for India's sustainable growth and maritime security. Discuss its potential and associated challenges. What initiatives have been taken by the government to harness it? (15 Marks, 250 Words)

14. "India's EV transition is not only about vehicles but about ecosystem readiness." Discuss in the context of financing, infrastructure, and policy support. (15 Marks, 250 Words)

15. "Emerging transport technologies like Hyperloop promise revolutionary mobility solutions but pose significant challenges for India." Critically examine in the context of India's infrastructure and economic priorities. (15 Marks, 250 Words)

16. Discuss the significance of developing a dedicated tribal cadre like Adi Karmayogis in addressing the persistent gaps in tribal development in India. How does this initiative align with broader goals of inclusive governance? (15 Marks, 250 Words)

17. Examine the push and pull factors driving urban migration in India and evaluate their socio-economic consequences on both origin and destination areas. What measures have been taken to mitigate associated challenges? (15 Marks, 250 Words)

18. Analyze how achieving 100% digital literacy in Kerala can serve as a model for socio-economic development in other Indian states. What are the key positive impacts of digital literacy on governance and citizen empowerment? (15 Marks, 250 Words)

19. Critically analyze the growing role of the private sector in India's defence production. (15 Marks, 250 Words)

20. Bring out the contributions of Goswami Tulsidas to the Bhakti Movement and their impact on Indian society. (15 Marks, 250 Words)

12.4. Ethics Case Study

1. You are an honest IAS officer, recently appointed as the Municipal Commissioner of a rapidly urbanizing city struggling with inequality and weak infrastructure. Public trust in the municipal body is already low, as your predecessor was removed on corruption charges.

   Within days of your posting, a newly built flyover collapses during heavy rains in a low-income area, causing deaths, injuries, and destruction of homes and shops. The tragedy fuels deep public anger and distrust in institutions. The crisis is worsened by spread of misinformation on social media. Honest staff feel demoralized and unfairly blamed, slowing relief work. Meanwhile, social media narratives amplify the credibility crisis of the municipal administration.

   The State Chief Secretary directs you to act sensitively but firmly, ensuring both relief and restoration of public confidence.

   Based on the above narration of the case, answer the following:
   (a) Identify ethical issues and dilemmas arise in this case, especially regarding institutional trust,
   (b) What immediate and long-term steps would you take to manage the crisis and rebuild institutional credibility?
   (c) Social media is being misused to spread disinformation. How would you leverage the same platform to engage positively with citizens and restore trust in the administration?

2. You are the Municipal Commissioner of a large Indian city that has recently reported a steep rise in dog bite cases and suspected rabies deaths. Animal welfare organizations are protesting against any form of relocation or culling of stray dogs. Meanwhile, residents are demanding immediate action to protect public safety. Media reports have intensified public fear, and there is pressure on you to act quickly.

   On the basis of case, answer the following questions:
   (a) What are the key ethical issues in this case?
   (b) How would you balance public safety with animal rights?
   (c) Suggest a humane and practical course of action that upholds constitutional and legal provisions.

ANSWERS AND EXPLANATION

13.1. MCQs Answer and Explanation

1. **Answer: B**
   Explanation:
   - **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Sports regulation is under State List (Entry 33), not Concurrent List.
   - **Statement 2 is correct:** The Act Establishes various sports bodies such as National Olympic Committee, Paralympic Committee, and Sports Federations affiliated with international bodies, with units at state/district levels, governed by international charters.

2. **Answer: C**
   Explanation:
   - Fines are revised upward by 10% every 3 years to maintain deterrence.

3. **Answer: C**
   Explanation:
   - NSB recognizes bodies, affiliates, and only recognized bodies get central funds; it is also under RTI.

4. **Answer: A**
   Explanation:
   - **Statement 1 is correct:** Founded in 1967 in Bangkok. Secretariat is in Jakarta.
   - **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Secretariat of ASEAN is situated in Jakarta, Indonesia.

5. **Answer: B**
   Explanation:
   - Signed by US and Soviet Union in 1987, mandating destruction of ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles (500–5,500 km).

6. **Answer: C**
   Explanation:
   - **Statement 1 is correct:** Created by Treaty on EAEU (2014).

   - **Statement 2 is correct:** Enables free movement of goods, services, capital, and labor.

7. **Answer: A**
   Explanation:
   - 10 Members of ASEAN: **Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.**

8. **Answer: A**
   Explanation:
   - **Statement 1 is Correct:** Code on Social Security defines gig workers outside traditional employment.
   - **Statement 2 is Correct:** Karnataka Bill provides for a welfare board and fund for gig workers.
   - **Statement 3 is Correct:** NITI Aayog reports over 82.5% of gig workers are informal employees.

9. **Answer: A**
   Explanation:
   - **Statement 1 is Correct:** Higher ratings reduce default risk, borrowing costs, and attract investment.
   - **Statement 2 is Incorrect:** SCRs are advisory and not legally binding.

10. **Answer: C**
    Explanation:
    - **Statement 1 is correct:** SFBs were introduced in 2014-15 to enhance financial inclusion.
    - **Statement 2 is correct:** SFBs are licensed and governed under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

11. **Answer: C**
    Explanation:
    - **Statement 1 is Correct:** GIFT City is India's first IFSC and a SEZ since 2015.

- **Statement 2 is Correct:** IFSCs provide financial services in foreign currency and operate under IFSCA.

12. Answer: A
Explanation

- **Statement 1 is Correct:** The Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025 provides for deportation of illegal immigrants in India.
- **Statement 2 is Incorrect:** The 2025 Act empowers deportation, while India is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention.

13. Answer: B
Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Tiger Reserves are **notified by State Governments,** not the Centre, under Section 38V of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** As per Section 38W (1), alteration of boundaries requires recommendation of the **National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)** and approval of the **National Board for Wildlife (NBWL).**
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** After expansion, Sundarbans Tiger Reserve is the **second-largest,** behind Andhra Pradesh's Nagarjunasagar-Srisailam Tiger Reserve.

14. Answer: B
Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** IEMI tracks **16 indicators** under three categories i.e.Transport Electrification Progress (demand), Charging Infrastructure Readiness, and EV Research & Innovation (supply-side). Hence not demand-only.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** For 2024, Delhi (77) ranked highest, followed by Maharashtra (68), Chandigarh, and Karnataka.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** PLI–Advanced Chemistry Cell scheme supports **50 GWh domestic battery manufacturing** to reduce imports.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** Public charging is almost **4 times costlier** than home charging due to 18% GST + operator margins.

15. Answer: A
Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The resolution indeed aligns with Mission LiFE, launched by India at COP26 in Glasgow (2021).
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The Victoria Falls Declaration was a general outcome of COP15 acknowledging wetlands' ecological, social, and economic roles, not specific to India's wetlands strategy.

16. Answer: C
Explanation

- Marriage (29% as per Census 2011 data).

17. Answer: B
Explanation

- 100% saturation of government services like road connectivity and Ayushman Bharat.

18. Answer: B
Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** PixxelSpace India-led Consortium has won the IN-SPACe proposal to build India's first fully indigenous commercial Earth Observation Satellite System (EOSS) under PPP model.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It is a constellation of 12 state-of-the-art EO satellites planned to be launched over the next 5 years. It will be equipped with panchromatic, multispectral, hyperspectral, and microwave Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) sensors.

19. Answer: D
Explanation:

- **All options are correct:** Surdas (c. 1478–1583); Mirabai (c. 1498–1546/47); Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (1486–1534); Sant Eknath (1533–1599); Tukaram (c. 1598–1650).

20. Answer: B
Explanation:

- The train action was executed on August 9, 1925, at Kakori, (near Lucknow), which was transporting treasury funds intended for the British government in Lucknow.

13.2. True/False Answers

Answers

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

13.3. Approach to the Mains Practice Questions

1. **Approach:**
   - **Introduction:** Define process reforms (improving procedures).
   - **Body:** State the Features of Jan Vishwas Bill like decriminalization, rationalized penalties, auto fine revision. Also explain why they are needed.
   - **Conclusion:** Provide a Way forward like regular stakeholder consultation & tech adoption.

2. **Approach:**
   - **Introduction:** Start by talking about ASEAN's 1967 vision & centrality.
   - **Body:** Explain the reason behind the strain, and what India's role is.
   - **Conclusion:** India-ASEAN synergy for regional stability.

3. **Approach:**
   - **Introduction:** Start by mentioning importance of IOR (trade, EEZ, oil).
   - **Body:** Explain MAHASAGAR doctrine, and challenges associated with IOR.
   - **Conclusion:** Provide an optimistic way ahead like, free, open, inclusive ocean aligned to UNCLOS.

4. **Approach:**
   - **Introduction:** Briefly define regional imbalances.
   - **Main Body:** Discuss the economic, social, and political **challenges. Also highlight the reason behind such imbalances and their consequences.**
   - **Conclusion:** Conclude with the measures to be taken for reduction in regional imbalances, including recommendations of Standing Committee on Finance.

5. **Approach:**
   - **Introduction:** Begin by defining what is meant by Internationalization of Rupee and De-dollarization.
   - **Main Body:** Discuss **the benefits and challenges including the US tarrifs and global uncertainties. Also mention the steps taken by India.**
   - **Conclusion:** Conclude with the measures to be taken for its promotion.

6. **Approach:**
   - **Introduction:** Introduce Agni-5 features, range, MIRV capability.
   - **Body:** Explain role in Strategic Forces Command & nuclear doctrine, then explain how it provides Strategic balance vis-à-vis China and Pakistan.

   - **Conclusion:** Provide a Way forward like modernization, survivability, triad readiness.

7. **Approach:**
   - **Introduction:** Start with providing some related data: 23% share in 2024-25.
   - **Body:** Explain the drivers behind growing participation of private sector like reforms, FDI, DAP-2020, iDEX, corridors along with significance and associated challenges.
   - **Conclusion:** Provide a balanced Way forward.

8. **Approach:**
   - **Introduction:** Briefly mention about illegal immigration problem in India.
   - **Body:** List factors (geography, socio-economic, political, lack of refugee law) and their impact.
   - **Conclusion:** Conclude with mentioning the new High Powered Demographic Mission.

9. **Approach**
   - **Introduction:** Define cloudburst and mention recent examples.
   - **Body:** Highlight causes of cloudbursts (Natural factors, Climate change, anthropogenic factors, etc) and then mention consequences. Also, write about challenges of forecasting cloudbursts.
   - **Conclusion:** Bring out the need for a shift from reactive relief to proactive resilience and build synergy.

10. **Approach**
    - **Introduction:** Briefly introduce the Kakori Train Action as a pivotal revolutionary event by HRA.
    - **Body:** Explain impact of the incidence.
    - **Conclusion:** Summarize the action's role in galvanizing revolutionary momentum, fostering unity, and influencing subsequent resistance.

11. **Approach:**
    - **Introduction:** Provide the context of recent act that has been passed.
    - **Body:** Examine the current governance challenges. Then, elaborate on the key features of the Act, such as the National Standards Body (NSB), the tribunal, and the code of ethics. Finally, outline the significance and challenges associated with the Act.
    - **Conclusion:** Conclude with roadmap for athlete-centric governance.

12. **Approach:**
   - **Introduction:** Mention the current global inequities (UNSC, IMF, climate).
   - **Body:** Highlight the issues (North-South divide, tech gaps), and mention India's role in creating new global order (G4 reforms, Voice of Global South, Rio Declaration).
   - **Conclusion:** Highlight India as a bridging power for equitable global order.

13. **Approach:**
   - **Introduction:** Begin by defining what is meant by Blue Economy.
   - **Main Body:** Discuss its potential and challenges. Also, mention initiatives taken to harness it.
   - **Conclusion:** Conclude with the measures to be taken for its promotion of Blue economy in brief.

14. **Approach:**
   - **Introduction:** EVs as $200 billion opportunity; IEMI benchmarks progress.

   Body:
   - **Financing:** High capital cost, need for pooled fund, leasing & BaaS.
   - **Infrastructure:** Charging infra gaps, DISCOM-RWA coordination, need for 20 key corridors.

   Policy support: GST cuts, PM E-DRIVE, PM e-Bus Sewa, PLI schemes, and international best practices.

   Conclusion: Transition demands holistic ecosystem readiness — technology, finance, infra, awareness — aligned with sustainability goals.

15. **Approach:**
   - **Introduction:** Define Hyperloop (vacuum-based high-speed transport, 1200 km/h potential). Mention IIT-Madras & Maharashtra govt. pilot.
   - **Body:** Give details on opportunities and challenges.
   - **Conclusion:** Hyperloop is promising but must align with India's developmental realities.

16. **Approach:**
   - **Introduction:** Explain the scheme's vision and targets.

   Body:
   - Analyze gaps (e.g., high ST poverty, weak delivery despite budget increase) and how cadre bridges them (e.g., cultural sensitivity, Gram Sabha involvement, service saturation).

   - Also discuss alignment with inclusive governance (e.g., convergence, mentorship, digital platform).

   Conclusion: Link to sustainable nation-building and preserving tribal wisdom.

17. **Approach:**
   - **Introduction:** Define migration and key stats (e.g., 35% urban migration).

   Body:
   - Give details about push (e.g., unemployment, disasters) and pull factors (e.g., jobs, education); consequences (positive: GDP contribution, remittances; negative: informal sector vulnerabilities, slums, discrimination).
   - Suggest measures taken (e.g., govt initiatives like e-Shram, Working Group recommendations).

   Conclusion: Emphasize balanced regional development.

18. **Approach:**
   - **Introduction:** Describe Kerala's achievement via Digi Keralam and Akshaya.
   - **Body:** Highlight impacts (e.g., efficiency via CSCs, financial inclusion via DBT/UPI, democratic participation, livelihoods). As model: Inclusive approach for all ages, replicable projects. Challenges: Digital divide elsewhere.
   - **Conclusion:** Advocate scaling for Digital India goals.

19. **Approach:**
   - **Introduction:** India Space Policy 2023 → promotes private startups.
   - **Body:** Give details on opportunities. Then broadly explain challenges.
   - **Conclusion:** Sustainable private sector participation is key to India's rise as a global space leader.

20. **Approach:**
   - **Introduction:** Briefly explain who was Goswami Tulsidas & what was Bhakti Movement.
   - **Body:** Give details of his contributions.
   - **Conclusion:** Explain its contemporary cultural impact.

13.4. Approach to Case Studies

1. **Approach:**
   ➡️ **Introduction:** define the ethical terms such as leadership, etc.
   ➡️ **Body:**
      ◆ Identify Ethical Issues & Dilemmas: Public Trust vs Administrative Credibility, Accountability vs Morale, Equity & Justice, Truth vs Disinformation and Professional Integrity.
      ◆ Discuss immediate & long-term steps
      ◆ Give details on positive use of social media.
   ➡️ **Conclusion:** Write approach to increase public confidence and moral of subordinates.

2. **Approach:**
   ➡️ **Introduction:** Write about sustainable cohabitation with right to health as well as rights of animals.
   ➡️ **Body:**
      ◆ Identify key ethical issues like **Public safety vs Animal rights, Rule of law vs Popular pressure, Justice & Equity and Media Ethics.**
      ◆ **Explain how will you balance public safety with animal rights**
      ◆ **Then suggest** short term & long term humane and practical actions.
   ➡️ **Conclusion:** Write ethical concept of empathy and balance for public health by vaccination of dogs, etc.

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14. Self-Evaluation

Progress Tracking Table

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

Monthly Learning Summary

Top 3 Learnings/Insights

1.

2.

3.

Progress Comparison

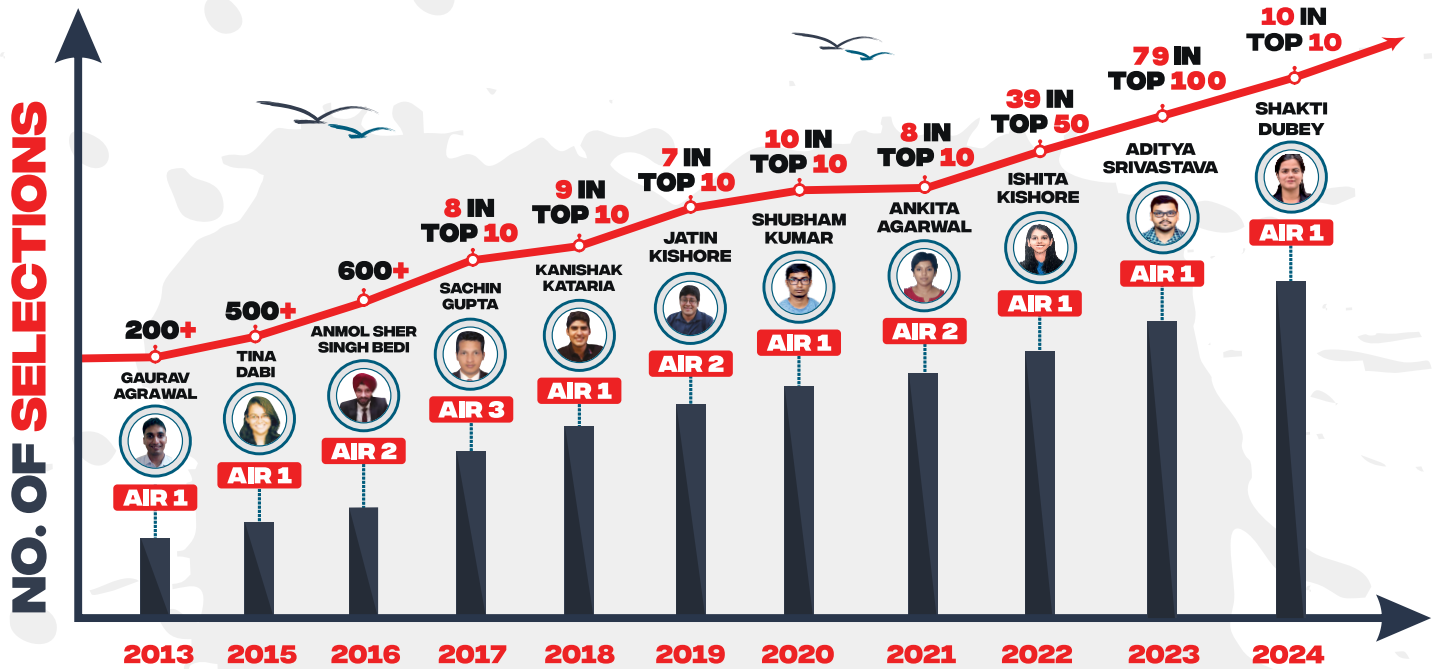Previous Month's Score

Current Month's Score

Areas of Improvement

Reflection Section

Strengths

Areas for Improvement

Goals for Next Month

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to all Successful Candidates

10 in **TOP 10** Selections in **CSE 2024**
from various programs of **Vision IAS**

1 AIR
Shakti Dubey

2 AIR — **Harshita Goyal**

3 AIR — **Dongre Archit Parag**

4 AIR — **Shah Margi Chirag**

5 AIR — **Aakash Garg**
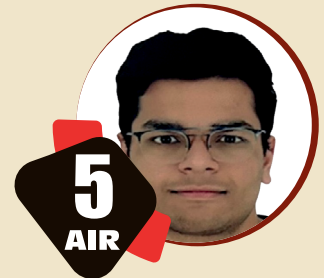
6 AIR — **Komal Punia**

7 AIR — **Aayushi Bansal**

8 AIR — **Raj Krishna Jha**

9 AIR — **Aditya Vikram Agarwal**

10 AIR — **Mayank Tripathi**

79 Selections in **TOP 100** in **CSE 2023**

1 AIR — **Aditya Srivastava**

2 AIR — **Animesh Pradhan**

5 AIR — **Ruhani**

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