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#### Dear Students,



In the competitive landscape of the UPSC Mains examination, the **significance of integrating data, facts, examples and government initiatives** into your answers cannot be overstated.

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These elements serve as the backbone of a compelling and persuasive response, elevating your answer from a generic narrative to a well-substantiated argument.



To support you, we have **distilled essential information from the VisionIAS Mains 365 resources** which are renowned for their comprehensive coverage of current affairs. This document provides a concentrated source of high-quality data, facts, examples and government initiatives.



The layout of this document is designed for **quick reference and easy integration into your answer.** 



Leveraging this distilled information will help you **craft comprehensive**, **informative**, **and compelling answers** essential for securing higher marks.



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## 1. IT, Computer and Robotics

## 1.1. Fourth Industrial revolution (4IR)

Definition: Refers to digital transformation of the manufacturing industry by new technologies such as AI, AM/3D Printing, augmented/virtual reality, and the Internet of Things (IoT).



#### Key Initiatives:

- » Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (India) in Maharashtra,
- » Smart Advanced Manufacturing and Rapid Transformation Hub (SAMARTH) Udyog Bharat 4.0, etc.

Challenges/Concerns	Way Forward	
<ul> <li>Increased digital environment footprint.</li> <li>Cyber security challenges include privacy issue, etc.</li> <li>Other: Lack of skilled workforce, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Enhancing regulatory framework</li> <li>Developing ethical guidelines</li> <li>Investing in up skilling and reskilling</li> </ul>	

## 1.2. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Technology

 Definition: Enables computers to simulate human intelligence and problem-solving capabilities. It includes learning, reasoning, problem-solving, and language understanding.

Key Applications			
Sphere	Applications		
Agriculture	<ul> <li>Intelligent crop planning and precision agriculture: E.g. SENSAGRI, Sensor-based Smart Agriculture</li> </ul>		
	<ul> <li>Farmgate-to-fork: E.g. Market-based intelligence, traceability and quality of logistics, etc.</li> </ul>		



Health Care	Diagnosis and Treatment Planning: E.g. S.A.R.A.H. Smart AI Resource Assistant, developed by WHO		
	<ul> <li>Clinical research and discovery: E.g. ProteinSGM, a Generative AI model from the University of Toronto is used for protein designing.</li> </ul>		
Defence	Border Security: Detects border intrusions, target classification, etc.		
	» AI-based technologies can be used for, logistics, UAV, advanced military weaponry, etc.		
	<ul> <li>Warfare systems: E.g. Vista, AI-controlled F-16 (Fourth generation fighter jet of the USA)</li> </ul>		



 Key Measures for Regulation: European Union's AI Act is world's first comprehensive AI law, Bletchley Declaration, Hiroshima AI Process (HAP) by G7, GPAI, etc.

Challenges/Concerns	Way Forward 🖉 🖉
<ul> <li>Internal workings of AI Based model are not known by users (black boxes)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>International Cooperation to establish basic global standards.</li> </ul>
Lack of clear regulations and guidelines	<ul> <li>Increased transparency by private actors</li> </ul>
for applications.	Better Design to reduce degree and
Infringing Intellectual property rights	impact of bias
	Adopting Asilomar Al Principles



## 1.2.1. IndiaAl Mission

#### Aim:

- » Establish an ecosystem for AI innovation through **public-private partnerships**.
- Deploying over 10,000 Graphics processing units (GPUs) for advanced AI computing infrastructure.
- » Driving **responsible**, **inclusive growth of India's AI ecosystem** through democratization, data quality improvement, and indigenous AI capabilities development.
- Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- Funding: Over 5 years through a public-private partnership model.
- Implementing agency: 'IndiaAI' Independent Business Division under Digital India Corporation.
- **Components:** Compute Capacity, Innovation Centre, Datasets Platform etc.
- Pillars of IndiaAI and Related Schemes
  - » Al in Governance: BHASHa INterface for India, India Stack and AI
  - » Al Computer & Systems: AIRAWAT, National Supercomputing Mission
  - » Data for AI: Data Management Office, India Datasets Program and India Data Platform
  - » AI, intellectual property (IP) & Innovation: Centre of Excellence for Artificial Intelligence
  - » Skilling in Al: Future Skills Prime
  - » AI Ethics & Governance: RAISE: Responsible AI for Social Empowerment, by MeitY

## 1.2.2. Deepfakes

- Definition: Refers to a video/image that has been edited using an algorithm to replace a person in the original video/image with someone else, in a way that makes the video look authentic.
- Regulatory measures: No specific legal provisions
  - » However, some laws indirectly address deepfake, viz., **Section 66E and 66D** of the IT Act of 2000, **Indian Copyright Act of 1957** etc.

Challenges/Concerns	Way Forward	
<ul> <li>Damaging content (breach of personal data)</li> <li>Weaponization against Women</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Establish and update laws and regulations</li> <li>Ensuring responsibility and Accountability of social media platforms</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>(Women form about 90% of the victims)</li> <li>Crisis of Authenticity (Misinformation</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>International Cooperation (for shared standards and protocols)</li> </ul>	
<ul><li>and Disinformation),</li><li>Lack of Regulation etc.</li></ul>	<ul> <li>Invest in Research and Development (detection methods) etc.</li> </ul>	

## 1.3. Quantum Technology

 Definition: An emerging field powered by the principles defined by quantum mechanics, a subfield of physics that explains the nature and behaviour of matter and energy on the atomic and subatomic level.



#### Key Initiative:

- » National Quantum Mission
- » National Mission on Quantum Technologies & Applications (NMQTA)
- » Quantum Frontier Mission of PM-STIAC etc.

Challenges/Concerns	Way Forward	
<ul> <li>Difficulty in achieving and maintaining quantum superposition and</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Establishing dedicated centres for research</li> </ul>	
entanglement.	Setting priorities to safeguard nation	
<ul> <li>Absence of indigenous development of critical quantum components.</li> </ul>	<b>security</b> such as investing in post quantum cryptography.	
Spending on R&D is about 0.64 % of GDP.	<ul> <li>Promoting domestic manufacturing facilities</li> </ul>	

## 1.4. Blockchain Technology

Definition: Blockchain is a shared, immutable ledger that facilitates the process of recording transactions and tracking assets in a business network.



#### **•** Key Initiatives:

- » National Strategy on Blockchain, 2021 (by MeitY)
- » India's first Blockchain District has been conceptualized in Telangana, etc.

Challenges/Concerns	Way Forward (National Strategy on Blockchain)	
<ul> <li>Variable requirements for processing</li></ul>	<ul> <li>A National Level Blockchain Framework</li></ul>	
power, etc. affect their scalability.	(NLBF)	
<ul> <li>Decentralized storage on every node</li></ul>	<ul> <li>Integration of National Level Services to</li></ul>	
creates privacy challenges.	Blockchain such as eSign, etc.	
<ul> <li>Localization hurdles as data</li></ul>	<ul> <li>Capacity building by conducting short</li></ul>	
redundancies are stored across all nodes	term courses	

## 1.5. Robotic Technology

 Status: In terms of annual industrial installations, India ranks 10th globally as per the World Robotics Report, 2022 (Draft National Strategy for Robotics (NSR)).

Significance/Applications			
Manufacturing	Healthcare	Agriculture	National Security
Logistics and	Cleaning & Disinfecting	Precision farming, Crop	Combat robots,
Warehousing	Robots, Surgical Robots,	and Soil Health	Remotely operated
automation, etc.	Safety & Monitoring Robots, etc.	Monitoring, etc.	vehicle, etc.

 Key Initiatives: Draft National Strategy for Robotics (NSR), by MeitY; Center for Advanced Manufacturing for Robotics and Autonomous Systems (CAMRAS), etc.

Challenges/Concerns	Way Forward (National Strategy on Blockchain)
<ul> <li>Difficult to replicate human-like</li> <li>perception</li> </ul>	Setting up and managing the Robotic Innovation Unit (RIU) network
<ul> <li>Limited Governance Mech (Absence of separate robotics leg</li> </ul>	nisms Develop demonstrations and te platforms.
<ul> <li>Lack of reliable &amp; continuous ad foundational infrastructure</li> </ul>	ess to Undertake exploratory research throug mission mode <b>moonshot projects</b>

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## 1.6. Brain-Computer Interface (BCI)

- Definition: A system that determines functional intent the desire to change, move, control, or interact with something in our environment - directly from brain activity.
  - » BCIs allow controlling an application or a device using only our mind.



- Concerns: Fear of inaccurate mapping, Vulnerable to cyberattacks, may influence other brain functions, or cause any unwanted side effects such as seizures, headaches, etc.
- Conclusion: BCI will play significant role in in dealing with many health related issues which are not being tackled at present time. However, it needs to be implemented after assessing it side-effects.

## 1.7. 3D Printing Technology

 Definition: 3D Printing Technology or Additive manufacturing (AM) is the technology that constructs a three-dimensional object from a digital 3D model by adding material layer by layer.



#### Key Initiatives:

- » National Strategy for Additive Manufacturing, 2022 by MeitY,
- » National Centre for Additive Manufacturing, set up by MeitY in collaboration with the Telangana, etc.



(	Key Adv	antages	
Dunid Dustatuming		Custolia a bilitar	
Rapid Prototyping	Design Flexibility	Sustainability	<b>On-demand Production</b> and <b>Quality Assurance</b>

- Challenges/Concerns: Limited Materials, Initial investment in equipment is substantial, Layers can delaminate under stress etc.
- Way Forward
  - » Promoting linkage between research institute and enterprises.
  - » Adopting governance mechanism to define standards



## 2. Biotechnology, Nanotechnology and Issues Relating to Intellectual Property Rights

## 2.1. Biotechnology

 Definition: Area of Biology that uses living processes, organism or systems to manufacture products intended to improve quality of human life.



 Key Initiatives: Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance (BIRAC), a PSU of DBT; National Biopharma Mission (NBM); Biological Research Regulatory Approval Portal (BioRRAP); etc.

Challenges/Concerns	Way Forward
Lack of Regulatory Mechanism	Increase in investment towards R&D
<ul> <li>Ethical Issues: E.g. Bio piracy, Designer Babies, Human clinical trials, safety issues of GMO</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Building capacities both human resource and infrastructure to cater to the current needs</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Environmental Issues: Unintended consequences on environment and genetic variability.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Collaboration between government and industry for improving IP regime.</li> </ul>

## 2.1.1. Genetically Modified Organism

 Definition: A genetically modified organism (GMO) is any living organism whose genetic material has been modified to include certain desirable techniques.





#### Regulation

- » Environment Protection Act 1986 (EPA)
- » Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee
- » Biological Diversity Act, 2002
- » Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex)
- » Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

Challenges	/Concerns		Way Forward
<ul> <li>GMOs can potent crossbreed</li> </ul>	ally <b>outcompete</b> or	<ul><li>♦</li></ul>	Conduct field demonstration studies Following Bioethics, environmental
<ul> <li>Introduction of <b>new</b> into the food supply</li> <li><b>Regulation</b> differs in</li> </ul>		\$	ethics & Research ethics Risk assessments to determine the possible consequences of their use.

## 2.2. Gene Editing

Definition: It is a way of making specific changes to the DNA of a cell or organism. This allows genetic material to be added, removed, or altered at particular locations in the genome.



	Challenges/Concerns	Way Forward
\$	<b>Ethical Dilemma</b> (rise of designer babies, etc.)	<ul> <li>Promoting Altruistic Science</li> <li>Human germline editing should be</li> </ul>
<ul><li>◇</li></ul>		permitted only when there is no reasonable alternative
\$	<b>Health risks</b> (could cause allergic reactions)	<ul> <li>Robust policy framework to ensuring accountability and self-regulation</li> </ul>



## 2.2.1. CRISPR-Cas9

- Definition: CRISPR (Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats)/Cas9 is used to modify gene function, to change genetic code or edit DNA at particular locations.
- Applications of CRISPR: Edit genes in human embryo; Change genetic codes of crops to improve crop resilience; creating new therapies for Cancer treatment & sickle cell diseases etc.



## 2.2.2. CAR-T cell therapy

- Definition: A type of cellular immunotherapy treatment that uses T cells that are genetically altered in a lab to enable them to locate and destroy cancer cells more effectively.
  - » NexCAR19 (Actalycabtagene autoleucel) is India's first indigenous CAR-T cell therapy.



- » Cytokine Release Syndrome (CRS)
- » Neurological Toxicity leading to confusion, seizures, or other neurological issues.
- » Patient Eligibility factors such as age, overall health can impact eligibility
- » **Other issues:** high cost, Limited Applicability etc.
- Conclusion: There is need for enhanced safety profiles for minimizing severe side effects such as cytokine release syndrome and increased accessibility by intregating it in healthcare system.

## 2.2.3. Gene Therapy

- Definition: A technique that uses a gene(s) to treat, prevent, or cure a disease or medical disorder.
  - » In most gene therapy, a **normal gene is inserted into the genome** to supplement an abnormal disease-causing gene and **restore target cell to a normal state.**
- Application: Both inherited genetic diseases (e.g., haemophilia and sickle cell disease) and acquired disorders (e.g., leukaemia) could be treated with gene therapy.





## 2.3. Genome Sequencing

• **Definition:** Determining the exact order of base pairs in a strand of DNA in an individual.

Significance/Applications		
Understanding <b>Evolution</b>	Crop and Livestock Improvement (Helpful in selecting desirable	Paternity and Ancestry Testing
	Understanding	Understanding Evolution Crop and Livestock Improvement (Helpful in

- Key Initiatives:
  - » GenomeIndia Project, inspired by Human Genome Project (1990) and launched by DBT.
  - » IndiGen programme, whole genome sequencing of diverse ethnic groups from India, funded by CSIR.
  - » Global Alliance for Genomics and Health (GA4GH)

Challenges/Concerns	Way Forward
Lack of regulatory framework	Establish clear regulations
<ul> <li>Fragmentation of genetic data</li> <li>Privacy and data issues (sensitive)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Prioritize genomic research funding and establish centralized sequencing facilities</li> </ul>
information such as personal data, medical and family history)	<ul> <li>Develop advanced training programs for researchers</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Cyber threats, Problems of sample contamination and viable run quality etc.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Improved access of up-to-date genomic data and open access publication models.</li> </ul>

## 2.4. Stem Cell

 Definition: Stem cells are special human cells that are able to develop into many different cell types such as muscle cells, blood cells, and brain cells.





Challenges/Concerns	Way Forward	
<ul> <li>Immune rejection of donor cells by host immune system</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Better regulation for basic, clinical research and product development</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>Use of embryos for human embryonic stem cell</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Informed consent for trials</li> <li>Addressing ethical dilemma by</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>Limited technology: To generate large quantities of stem cells.</li> </ul>	developingguidelines(likeIndia'sNational Guidelines for Stem Cell Research)	

## 2.5. Nanotechnology

 Definition: Refers to the design, characterization, production and application of structures, devices and systems by controlling shape and size at the nanoscale.

	Key Applications		
Sphere	Sphere Applications		
Agriculture	<ul> <li>Nanofertilizers and Nanopesticides: E.g., Nano Silver</li> <li>Nanobiosensors</li> <li>Crop Protection: E.g. Silica nanoparticles</li> </ul>		
Health Care	<ul> <li>Clinical investigation, e.g., Gold nanoparticle</li> <li>Better imaging tools</li> <li>Drug delivery, hydrophobic and hydrophilic drugs</li> </ul>		
Environment	<ul> <li>Sustainable Production: Green chemistry;</li> <li>Pollutant sensing: detects contaminations</li> <li>Water treatment: Graphene filters</li> <li>Reduced energy Consumption</li> </ul>		
Defence	<ul> <li>Nano-Enhanced Sensors: Detect chemical and biological weapons.</li> <li>Body Armour: Silicon dioxide nanoparticles</li> <li>Supports Nano medicines</li> <li>Advanced weapon/ equipment</li> </ul>		

#### Key Initiatives:

- » Nano Science and Technology Initiative (NSTI), 2002
- » Mission on Nano Science and Technology (Nano Mission), 2007
- » Nano-electronics Innovation Council set up by MeitY



	Challenges/Concerns		Way Forward
\$	Nano particles may easily <b>enter the</b> lungs.	\$	Promoting Academy and Industry Linkage
<b>\$</b>	Nanoparticles can form new form of non- <b>biodegradable pollutants.</b>	\$	Coordination with various international/ inter-governmental organizations
\$	<b>Ethical Concern</b> (Nano particles may be used in warfare, invade people's privacy etc.)	\$	Increasing funding of <b>Nano Mission</b> and establishing more dedicated institutes.

## 2.6. Traditional Knowledge and Genetic Resources (GRs) in India at a Glance

- Definition: Knowledge system held by indigenous communities
- Measures: Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL), India's Patent Act, 1970, Biological Diversity Act, 2002 (in line with Convention of Biodiversity), Forest Rights Act 2006, Ministry of AYUSH

Concern	Way Forward	
<ul> <li>Biopiracy</li> <li>Lack of Documentation</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Establishing agricultural research programmes and centres</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>Inadequate Global Legal Framework</li> <li>Insufficient Conservation of biodiversity</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Setting up or promoting herbal gardens</li> <li>Curriculum for schools, universities</li> </ul>	

## 2.6.1. Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Associated

## Traditional Knowledge

 Key provisions of Treaty: Mandatory Patent Disclosure Requirements (PDRs), Mandatory legal, administrative, and/or policy Framework at national level, Establishment of information systems.







## **3. AWARENESS IN THE FIELD OF SPACE**

#### 3.1. India's Race to Space

 Definition: Space race is an outgrowth of mid-20th-century Cold War over who could conquer space exploration first.

Emerging trends of Indian space sector	or Implication of India's enhanced role	
<ul> <li>Growing commercialization: E.g. Agnikul Cosmos and Skyroot</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Geopolitical significance: India's rising capabilities to support a commercial</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>Increasing international collaborations:</li> <li>201 Service established from the service of the service of</li></ul>	space	
<b>381 Foreign satellite</b> launched from 1999-2022.	<ul> <li>India as a space start-up hub: Home to almost 190 registered space-tech start-</li> </ul>	
Focus on challenging missions:	ups	
Mangalyaan Mission and Soft land on lunar's south pole.	<ul> <li>Leading nation for satellite launches: With a success rate of almost 95%,</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>Development of new technologies: Reusable launch vehicles</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Outer Space use for national security: ASAT capability</li> </ul>	

## 3.2. Indian Space Policy – 2023

 Vision of Space Policy 2023: To augment space capabilities; Develop a flourishing commercial presence in space; use space as a driver of technology development; etc.

Stakeholder	Role
Government	Research & Development and predictable regulatory framework.
Non- Governmental	<ul> <li>Offer national and international space-based communication services.</li> </ul>
Entities (NGEs)	<ul> <li>Establish and operate Ground facilities for space object operations, e.g. Satellite Control Centres (SCCs), Remote sensing satellite systems.</li> </ul>
Department of Space (DOS)	<ul> <li>Nodal department for implementation of the Indian Space Policy-2023.</li> </ul>
ISRO	Focus research and development, Share technologies with NGEs
IN-SPACe-	<ul> <li>single window agency for the authorisation of space activities by govt</li> </ul>
NSIL	<ul> <li>Commercializing space technologies and platforms</li> </ul>

#### Significance of Space Policy 2023:

- Delineates specific roles for major stakeholders
- Collaborate globally in addressing global challenges
- Sets stage for India's expanded participation in global space arena
- Facilitating technology transfers

## 3.3. Private Sector in Space

Space Start-ups increased to nearly 200 in 2024 from 1 in 2022. (Economic survey 2023-2024)



 Initiatives: Indian Space Policy 2023, IN-SPACe, New Space India Limited, Budget 2024–25 announced Rs 1,000 crore venture capital fund.

Challenges/Concerns	Way Forward	
\$ <b>Multiplicity of regulations:</b> approvals needed from Department of Space, ISRO, Antrix etc.	\$	<b>Regulatory clarity:</b> To remove barriers for private firms and better synergies with ISRO.
\$ <b>Increase in space debris:</b> 26,000 are pieces of debris that are larger than 10	\$	<b>Promoting satellite manufacturing:</b> PLI scheme for satellite manufacturing.
cm in size.	\$	Handhold private sector: ISRO can act
\$ <b>Security and strategic concern:</b> possible leak of confidential information.		as an enabler by technology transfer, collaborations,
	\$	Intellectual Property (IP) protections, support to start-ups with critical items



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## 3.4. Aditya-L1

- About: Aditya L1 carries 7 payloads (5 by ISRO and 2 by Indian Academic institutes)
- Out of 7, four of will carry out remote sensing of the Sun and three will do in-situ observation.
  - » Remote sensing payloads: VELC, SUIT, SOLEXS, HELIOS
  - » In-situ payloads: ASPEX, PAPA, Advanced Tri-axial High Resolution Digital Magnetometer



## 3.5. Chandrayaan-3

Chandrayaan-3 objectives: Demonstration of a Safe and Soft Landing on the Lunar Surface,
 Demonstration of Rover roving on the moon & Conduct in-situ scientific experiments.



#### **Implications of Findings**

- Presence of a volatile substance like water ice and could prove critical for lunar habitation.
- Measurements of Lunar Plasma potentially assist in mitigating noise that lunar plasma introduces into radio wave communication.

## 3.6. Gaganyaan Mission

Objective: Demonstration of human spaceflight capability (3 member crew to orbit of 400 km for 3-day mission) and bringing them back safely to earth, by landing in Indian sea waters.



 Challenges: Development of Indigenous technology, Human health and safety, Training of astronauts, Budget constraints.

## 3.7. International Space Stations (ISS)

- About: Habitable artificial satellite, in low Earth orbit (at an altitude of between 370–460 km).
  - » **Key partners for ISS:** European Space Agency, NASA, Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency, Canadian Space Agency, Roscosmos



#### About Bharatiya Antariksha Station: India's own Space Station

- First tests of the proposed Bharatiya Space Station in 2025 and talks are on with the industry to manufacture, test and launch its first module by 2028.
- Benefits: Advancing scientific knowledge, enhancing the nation's prestige, promoting global co-operation & peace etc.
- Challenges regarding Indian space station:
  - » Station building is costly endeavor: India's R&D expenditure-GDP ratio is low (0.7%).

- » **Need of expertise in human spaceflight:** India will have to train a team of astronauts and ensure their safety and well-being in space.
- » Upgrade needed in ISRO's technological infrastructure

## 3.8. Developmental Role of ISRO

Food security and Agriculture	<ul> <li>E.g. Resourcesat-2 Sattelite</li> <li>FASAL Project &amp; CHAMAN Project</li> </ul>	
Rural Development	Village Resource Centers (VRCs), IWMP, GeoMGNREGA etc.	
Urban Development	<ul> <li>e.g. Use of geospatial data in AMRUT scheme.</li> </ul>	
Water Management	Satellite with ARGOS and ALTIKA (SARAL)	
Railways	<ul> <li>Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC) and Bhuvan</li> </ul>	
Weather Forecasting	<ul> <li>INSAT and earth observation satellites, IMD</li> </ul>	
Disaster Management	<ul> <li>Development of Flood Early Warning System (FLEWS) in Assam</li> </ul>	

## 3.9. Space Habitation

 Definition: It refers to setting up of habitation for humans beyond earth such as on Moon, Mars etc.

Benefits from Space Habitation						
Scientific	<ul> <li>We might find answer to the question on existence of extraterrestrial life.</li> <li>Inspiration to scientific community as well as kids to generate interest in science and future space exploration.</li> </ul>					
Economic	<ul> <li>Raw materials such as gold, silver, platinum, etc. could be harnessed from space bodies.</li> <li>Development of habitation technology opens up new sectors such as life support, radiation shields, etc. which can generate employment opprotnuities.</li> </ul>					
Address global challenges	<ul> <li>Enhanced global partnerships and exploration capabilities may help advance international preparedness for protecting the Earth from catastrophic events such as some asteroid strikes.</li> <li>Advancing collaborative research on space weather and protecting spacecraft by developing new means for space debris removal.</li> </ul>					
Spinoff benefits	• Inventions of new materials for space habitation can help people in other aspects of life (eg. Nitinol used for satellites are being used by orthodontists now)					

#### Issues associated:

- » Enormous Costs, Managing oxygen, food, medical supplies etc.,
- » Health Implications: Cosmic radiation, lack of a breathable atmosphere etc.,
- » Environmental Modification: possibility of triggering the Kessler syndrome,
- » Lack of Legal Regulation and ethical concerns (such as Damage to the value of alien planets, afforded by limited people, etc.), etc.

## 3.10. Outer Space Governance

#### **Existing Outer Space Governance Framework**

- Outer Space Treaty 1967: Principles Governing Outer Space,
- Rescue Agreement 1968: Agreement on t Rescue of Astronauts, Return of Astronauts.
- Liability Convention 1972
- Registration Convention 1976
- Moon Agreement 1979: Agreement Governing Activities of States on Moon and Other Celestial Bodies.
  - » India is signatory to all five treaties but India has not ratified Moon agreement.



Conclusion: United Nations in its policy brief document titled 'For All Humanity – the Future of Outer Space Governance' recommended measures to improve outer space governance such as develop norms and principles for space debris removal, enacting new treaty to ensure peace, security, and the prevention of an arms race, etc.





## 3.11. Space Debris (Space Junk)

 Definition: Defined as all non-functional, artificial objects, including fragments and elements thereof, in Earth orbit or re-entering into Earth's atmosphere.

#### Concerns/Risks Associated with Space Debris

- » Harm to operational spacecraft and satellites resulting into Kessler Syndrome.
- » Current and future space-based explorations and operations **pose a safety risk to** astronauts.
- » Debris can re-enter atmosphere in uncontrolled way can **create risk to population** on ground.

Initiatives for mitigating Space Debris			
Indian initiatives	Global initiatives and international partnerships		
<ul> <li>Debris Free Space Missions (DFSM) 2030:</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Inter-Agency Debris Coordination Committee (IADC):</li> </ul>		
<ul> <li>ISROSystemforSafeandSustainable OperationsManagement (IS4OM):</li> <li>Space Situational Awareness</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>VN Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines:</li> <li>Zero Debris Charter: Signed by 12 countries</li> <li>guiding principles and jointly defined targets</li> </ul>		
<ul> <li>Control Centre (SSACC)</li> <li>Project Network for Space Object Tracking and Analysis (NETRA) by ISRO</li> </ul>	to become <b>debris neutral by 2030.</b>		





# THE PLANET VISION

In a world facing unprecedented environmental challenges, staying informed and empowered is more crucial than ever. VisionIAS brings you **'The Planet Vision'**, a simplified, informative, and interactive magazine to delve into the complexities of the environment.

With the belief, that individual efforts and awareness are the key to a sustainable future, the magazine seeks to inspire and educate people to develop a deeper understanding and appreciation for the environment, nature & planet.



#### Objectives of 'The Planet Vision'



Sensitise the young generation: Highlighting pressing environmental issues and their multifaceted impacts.



**Inspire Action and Promote Sustainable Lifestyle:** Inspiring stories and case studies to motivate readers to make environmentally conscious choices.



Bridge Environmental Science and Public Understanding: Presenting complex scientific concepts in a simple and interactive manner.



**Showcase Solutions:** Spotlight innovative technologies, projects, and initiatives that offer solutions to environmental challenges.

**Highlight Local Efforts:** Showcase local conservation efforts, community initiatives, and grassroots projects that make a positive impact on the environment.

#### Who is the magazine for?

The Magazine is designed for students, eco-conscious individuals, educators, environmentalists, and anyone who cares about the health of our planet.

#### Key elements of the 'The Planet Vision'



**Cover Stories:** Thought-provoking articles about a critical ongoing environmental issue, along with the mitigation strategies adopted at the national and international levels.



**Briefing and Developments:** Stay informed about the latest environmental news, trends, and solutions.



**Protect and Preserve:** Inspirational stories of local conversation efforts.



**Environment and You:** Illustrating ways to make environmentally conscious choices in everyday life.



**Green Tech:** New and emerging technologies in the field of environment.



Interactive elements:

**Snapshot:** Telling a story through capturing images.

Quizzes and crosswords: To test your understanding and knowledge as a reader.

Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.



Scan the QR code, to download and read the Magazine:

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## 4. HEALTH

## **4.1. Antimicrobial Resistance**

- Definition: AMR occurs when microbes (bacteria, fungi, parasites and viruses) evolve so that antimicrobial drugs against them are no longer effective.
  - » It is among top 10 public health threat (WHO).

Reasons behind AMR	Implications of AMR
<ul> <li>Overuse and misuse of antimicrobials</li> </ul>	Increased mortality and morbidity, and
<ul> <li>Poor infection prevention and control practices in healthcare settings</li> </ul>	prolonged illness.(1.27 million deaths in 2019)
<ul> <li>Effluents discharge from hospitals, industries, and urban settlements</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Longer hospital stays, additional diagnostic tests etc.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Economic impact (US\$ 1 trillion to 3.4 trillion annual losses to GDP by 2030)</li> </ul>

#### Initiatives

- » National
  - National Program on AMR containment
  - National Action Plan on AMR (NAP AMR), 2017
  - National AMR surveillance network of state medical college labs (NARS-Net)
  - Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945
- » Global
  - Global Action Plan on AMR (by WHO), GLASS, 2015



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## 4.2. Fixed-Dose combinations (FDCs) Drugs

 Definition: Refers to products containing two or more active ingredients used for a particular indication(s) (as per Drugs & Cosmetics Rule 1945)



Issues associated with FDCs	Way Forward
Lack of individual dose flexibility	Require robust scientific evidence of FDC
Unapproved and Banned FDCs	efficacy and safety
Increased risk of	Vigilant market monitoring mechanisms
<ul> <li>Reduced transparency and affordability concerns</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Harmonize export policies with domestic regulations</li> </ul>
Limited choice for patients	<ul> <li>CDSCO should enforce stringent guidelines for FDC approval</li> </ul>

## 4.3. Organ and Tissue Transplantation

#### Definition:

- » Organ Transplantation: Includes kidney, liver, heart, lung, pancreas, and intestine etc.
- » **Tissue Transplantation:** Involves corneas (eye), skin, bone, heart valves, and blood vessels etc.
- Legal Framework: Governed under the "Transplantation of Human Organs Act 1994", later "Transplantation of Human Organs & Tissues Act (THOTA) 2011.

Challenges in Organ Transplantation in India	Way Forward 📀
\$ Low Donation: 0.52 donors per million population (in Spain it is 49.61 per million).	\$ Adopting an <b>opt-out model of</b> organ donation system
\$ Slow progress: 6,916 in 2014 to about 16,041 in 2022 (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)).	\$ Kerala, first State to formulate well-defined clinical protocols for brain death certification.
\$ Supply-demand Mismatch: Only 8,000 out of 1.5-2 lakh people obtain a kidney transplant	\$ Creation of <b>digital registry</b> on organ transplantation
\$ <b>Other:</b> Organ trafficking, <b>Lack of male donor participation</b> (70%-75% of donors are female), etc.	\$ Streamline transportation process



## 4.4 Digital Health

 World Health Organization (WHO) and Indian government launched Global Initiative on Digital Health (GIDH).



- About Digital Health: Refers to use of digital technologies for healthcare purposes.
- Significance
  - » Early diagnosis of critical alterations in the disease progression,
  - » Decreased healthcare costs,
  - » improved patient health outcomes through personalised treatment plans,
  - » Increase quality and reduce the administrative workload,
  - » Enhanced accessibility through initiatives like telemedicine.
- Initiatives: Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM), eSanjeevani, Telemental Health Assistance and Networking Across States (Tele-MANAS), Nikshay 2.0 portal,

	Concerns	Way Forward		
\$	<b>Data consent concerns:</b> Patients are reluctant to share their data due to security reasons.	\$	<b>Connect</b> global and regional collaboration, digital infrastructure and health information gaps, etc.	
\$	<ul> <li>Data Processing (Vast data generated at hospitals, clinics, etc.),Quality Concern</li> <li>Other: Lack of Infrastructure (such as digital connectivity in rural areas and hilly terrain), Ensuring accountability or</li> </ul>		Establishing digital health governance, instead of focusing exclusively on digital	
\$			health interventions. Data protection: Focusing on ethical and regulatory oversight, etc.	
	<b>liability</b> in case of device failure, lack of <b>Digital Illiteracy</b> etc.	٥	<b>AI</b> should be utilised to process data collected by healthcare professionals	



Types of Drug - Resistant TB

**Extensively drug** 

Resistant tuber-

Totally drug- resistant

tuberculosis (TDR-TB)

## 4.5. Tuberculosis (TB)

 Definition: An infectious disease caused by bacillus Mycobacterium tuberculosis bacteria which most often affects lungs and is known as pulmonary TB.

Multidrug

**Resistance TB** 

» Extrapulmonary TB affects other areas of the body. (e.g. gastrointestinal TB, skeletal TB, liver TB)

#### Challenges

- » Social Stigma and Taboo
- » Poor Healthcare Infrastructure
- » Poverty a **Malnutrition**
- » **Comorbidities** (wit HIV, diabetes)
- » High Treatment Costs & High- dropout rates
- Initiative

» India's

- (MDR) culosis (XDR-TB) and Resistant to Isoniazid Resistant to at Resistant to all and Rifampin, plus (with least Isoniazid and first- and secany fluoroquinolone Rifampicin. ond-line TB drugs. and at least one of three injectable second-line drugs **(amik**acin, kanamycin, or capreomycin). Initiatives:
- National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP),Pradhan Mantri TB Mukt Bharat Abhiyan, Nikshay Poshan Yojana, ,Mission Indradhanush, BPaL regimen trial.
- » Global Initiative: WHO Initiative: #ENDTB Strategy,TB vaccine accelerator Council



## 4.6. Food Fortification

- Fortification: Addition of key vitamins and minerals to staple foods such as rice, wheat, oil, milk and salt to improve their nutritional content.
- Key issues: Fortified rice could be harmful to people suffering from thalassemia and sickle cell anaemia.





## 4.7. Ultra-processed Food (UPF)

 Concern: Diets high in UPF, fats and sugars drove a hidden cost of over \$7 trillion a year on our health and environment.



#### Initiatives to curtail Ultra-Processed food

- » 2% cap on trans-fatty acids in food products
- » Food Safety and Standards (Advertising and Claims) Regulations, 2018 aims to hold food businesses accountable for their claims/advertisements.
- » Ban on advertisements of UPF in school canteens or within 50 metres of school campuses
- » FSSAI campaigns like 'Eat Right India' movement, 'Aaj Se Thoda Kam'
- » Aerated beverages in India are taxed at 28% GST and additional 12% compensation cess.
- » ICMR has released revised dietary guidelines, 2024.



## 5. ACHIEVEMENTS OF INDIANS IN SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY; INDIGENIZATION OF TECHNOLOGY AND DEVELOPING NEW TECHNOLOGY

## 5.1. Satyendra Nath Bose

- Popularly known as "Father of the God Particle"
- Fundamental particle 'Bosons' are named after him

Scientific Contributions				
Bose-Einstein <ul> <li>Fifth State of matter, created when particles are cooled to absolute zero (-273.15 degrees Celsius/0 Kelvin).</li> </ul>				
	\$	<b>Properties of BEC: Super fluidity, Super conductivity, Coherence</b> of quantum state <b>and</b> wave function.		
Bose-Einstein Statistics	\$	• <b>Statistical procedure</b> for counting possible states of a quantum system.		
Other:	<b>◇</b>	X-ray diffraction cameras		
	\$	<b>Deduced Planck's Black body radiation</b> law without any reference to classical electrodynamics.		

## 5.1.1. Higgs Boson

- Definition: Elementary particle with a very short life, aka God particle.
  - » It is a type of **boson**, a force-carrying subatomic particle.
  - » Gets its mass just like other particles from its interactions with the Higgs field.



- » Physicist Peter Higgs who passed away recently proposed it as a new fundamental particle.
- Higgs Field
  - » Particles do not have a mass of their own; they get their mass by interacting with the Higgs field.



Intensity of interaction between the field and the particle decides the quantity of mass of the particle

## 5.2. Satellite-Based Toll Collection System

 About: Uses GNSS-based imaging to track the position of the vehicle and collect tolls based on the distance travelled.



 Challenges: Signal interference or inaccurate readings; Privacy Concerns; need to equip older vehicles with GNSS technology etc.

Difference between FASTags & Satellite-based toll collection				
Parameters	FASTags	GNSS-based Toll collection		
Technology	Radio Frequency Identification(RFID)	Satellite-based imaging and ANPR cameras		
Equipment needed in Vehicles	RFID ⊺ag on windscreen	OBU with GNSS connectivity		
Calculation of Toll tax	Fixed rates	Based on real-time vehicle movement data		
Requirement of Toll Plazas	Required for scanning FASTag	Not required		

## 5.3. Advanced Driver Assistance Systems

About: It is a set of electronic systems which are integrated into vehicles to enhance driver safety, improve vehicle performance, and provide convenience.



 Benefits of ADAS: Reduces accidents, Optimise traffic flow, increases ease of driving, reduces fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions through optimization in driving patterns.



 Conclusion: The adoption of ADAS can be facilitated by establishing effective regulations and standards for ADAS implementation.



## 6. Miscellaneous

## 6.1. Nuclear Energy in India

 Status: Installed capacity of 8180 MW will become 22480 MW by 2031-32, which is about 1.8% of total electricity generation. (Ministry of power)

#### Significance

- » Clean, cost-efficient, generation of pink hydrogen, thus facilitating transition to net zero economy.
- » Promote peaceful use of nuclear technologies.



#### Initiative

- » Supply contracts under IAEA.
- » Resolution of issues related to Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage (CLND) Act & Creation of Indian Nuclear Insurance Pool.
- » Enabling Joint Ventures of Public Sector Companies to set up nuclear power projects.
- » Monitoring through **PRAGATI Platform.**
- » Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership for training.





## **6.2. Fast Breeder Reactor**

- Definition: FBR is a nuclear reactor that uses fast neutron to generate more nuclear fuel than they consume while generating power.
  - » Uranium-Plutonium Mixed Oxide (MOX) fuel.
  - » The Uranium-238 "blanket" surrounding the fuel core to produce more fuel.
- Core-loading
  - » Core loading is the process of placing nuclear fuel assemblies inside the core of a nuclear reactor.
  - » It has started in the **indigenous Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor** (PFBR) was initiated at Kalpakkam, TN.



#### India's 3 stage Nuclear Power Program:

» **Dr Homi J Bhabha,** devised **this program in 1950s** to make the most of India's abundant thorium reserves.



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## 6.3. Small Modular Reactor (SMR)

 Definition: Advanced nuclear reactors, with up to 300 MW per unit, are factory-assembled and transported for installation, reducing size compared to conventional reactors.



- Bharat Small Reactors (BSRs): In Budget 2024-25, government has announced to partner with private sector to develop Bharat Small Reactors (BSRs).
  - » Unlike SMRs, BSRs are based on India's existing PHWR technology.

## 6.4. Nuclear Fusion

- Definition: Process by which two light atomic nuclei combine to form a single heavier one while releasing massive amounts of energy.
- Advantages: Abundant fuels (Deuterium from water), safer as amounts of fuel used is less



#### Initiatives

- » India joined International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER), collaboration of 35 nations to build the world's largest tokamak.
- » ITER-India, Institute for Plasma Research
- » Indigenous tokamak ADITYA and semi-indigenous Steady State Superconducting Tokamak (SST-1).

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## 6.5. Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)

- Definition: BESS are type of electrochemical storage system which uses different electrochemical reactions to store electricity.
- Initiatives undertaken for BESS
  - » Legal status for ESS
  - » Bidding Guidelines for BESS
  - » National Framework for Promoting Energy Storage Systems unveiled by the Ministry of Power in 2023.
  - Battery Waste Management Rules, 2022 to promote circular economy in BESS sector.
  - » Scheme for Viability Gap Funding (VGF)

Way Forward

- » Soft loan facility for Discoms/transmission companies for BESS
- » Phased manufacturing programme
- » Re-design GST rates to discourage imports
- » Recycling and sustainability

## 6.5.1. Sodium Ion Battery

 About: An electrochemical energy storage device that utilizes sodium ions as charge carriers to store and release electrical energy.

Sphere	Sodium Ion Battery	Lithium-Ion Battery
Occurrence	Sodium more abundant	Lithium limited to few countries.
Charging	Charges faster	Slow charging
Safety	Safer, less prone to explosion or fire	Less safe, prone to catching fire or exploding
Use Extreme temperatures		Lower temperature range
Applicability	Large-scale storage systems	Portable devices



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## 6.6. Nobel Prizes

## 6.6.1. Nobel Prize in Physics 2023

- Prize awarded for: Generation of attosecond pulses of light for the study of electron dynamics in matter.
- Awardees: Pierre Agostini, Ferenc Krausz, and Anne L'Huillier
- Electron dynamics refers to the behaviour and movement of electrons within atoms and molecules.
- Attoseconds pulses can be used to provide images of the processes inside atoms and molecules (including electron dynamics).



## 6.6.2. Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2023

- Prize awarded for: The discovery and development of quantum dots.
- Awardees: Moungi G. Bawendi, Louis E. Brus and Aleksey Yekimov.
- Definition: Quantum dots are man-made semiconductor particles, whose sizes are normally not more than 10 nanometers.
  - » Their properties can be changed by changing their size, for example they have different colours depending on their size.
  - » Quantum confinement (electrons are confined in small regions), leads to many unique optical and transport properties.



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#### Applications of Quantum Dots

- » Electronics screens, for targeted drug delivery, Nano medicine
- » **Other potential uses:** In quantum computing, thinner solar cells, flexible electronics, tiny sensors, and encrypted quantum communication

## 6.6.3. Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2023

- Prize awarded for: Discoveries concerning nucleoside base modifications that enabled the development of effective mRNA vaccines against COVID-19.
- Awardees: Katalin Karikó and Drew Weissman.
- Concerns with mRNA vaccines
  - » Issues with In vitro transcribed mRNA vaccines:
    - Instability and challenging to deliver, requiring the sophisticated infra.
    - Inflammatory reactions
    - Inefficient protein production in cells and tissues.
  - » They questioned why this **synthetic mRNA was considered to be a foreign substance** while mRNA from mammalian cells did not give rise to the same reaction.

#### Breakthrough by Nobel Laureates

- » Hypothesis: They hypothesised that the absence of altered bases in the in vitro transcribed RNA could explain the unwanted inflammatory reaction.
- Testing: On testing, they produced different variants of mRNA, each with unique chemical alterations in their bases, which they delivered to dendritic cells.
- » Result: Inflammatory response abolished when base



modifications were included in the mRNA.

## 6.7. Superconductivity

- Definition: A phenomenon in which certain materials exhibit zero electrical resistance and the expulsion of magnetic fields when cooled below a critical temperature (Tc).
- Discovered by Heike Kamerlingh Onnes in 1911.
- Currently, superconductivity can be achieved only at very low temperatures, more than 250 degrees Celsius below zero.
  - » Materials like Mercury, Lead, Aluminum, Tin, Niobium, etc., become superconducting at Tc.



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## 6.8. Deep Tech Startups

 Definition: A startup that typically produces a solution along an unexplored pathway based on new knowledge within a scientific or engineering discipline or by combining knowledge from multiple disciplines.



## 6.9. PRITHvi Vlgyan (PRITHVI) Scheme

- Union Cabinet approved the overarching scheme PRITHvi Vigyan (PRITHVI).
- About PRITHvi VIgyan (PRITHVI)
  - » Ministry: Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)
  - » Tenure: 2021-26
  - » Encompasses five ongoing sub-schemes:

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- ACROSS (Atmosphere & Climate Research-Modelling Observing Systems & Services)
- O-SMART (Ocean Services, Modelling Application, Resources and Technology)
- **PACER** (Polar Science and Cryosphere Research)
- SAGE (Seismology and Geosciences)

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- **REACHOUT** (Research, Education, Training, and Outreach)
- Significance of integrated R&D efforts under PRITHVI
  - Improve understating of the Earth System sciences.
  - Enable development of integrated multi-disciplinary earth science research.
  - Address challenges of weather and climate, ocean, cryosphere, seismological science and services.
  - Convert research into practical solutions for future disasters arising from Climate change, etc.
  - **Understand** and **predict weather accurately** due to increased cross-disciplinary coordination.



## Building Mental Resilience for UPSC CSE with VisionIAS Student Wellness Cell

The UPSC Civil Services Examination is one of the most prestigious exams in the country, bringing immense professional and personal satisfaction. However, the journey often involves overcoming loneliness, intense competition pressure, anxiety, and other psychological challenges. These issues can impact both your preparation and overall well-being.

At **VisionIAS**, we recognize the multifaceted nature of this journey. To support our students comprehensively, we have established a dedicated Student Wellness Cell. Since April 2024, our highly professional psychologists and experienced professionals have provided confidential and mindful support as per student needs.

#### From Stress Management to Academic Excellence



Enhancing Academic Performance: Effective stress management contributes



Comprehensive Wellness Cell:

to better academic

outcomes.

Addressing various issues impacting mental health and academic performance.



**Professional Mental Health Support:** Seeking professional help is crucial for success in UPSC preparation.

Safe and Non-Judgmental Environment: A space for students to discuss issues and receive personalized support.



Well-Supported Mind for Excellence: Mental well-being is essential for achieving success in UPSC exams.

<u> </u>	

#### **Confidential and Structured Support:** Multiple, structured sessions based on the severity of the issues.

#### **Common Issues and Our Approach**

Our counseling services have addressed a variety of issues, including:



Anxiety and Hopelessness: Using Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) to promote positive thinking.

Lack of Motivation and Focus: Introducing time management strategies and SMART goal-setting.



**Emotional Struggles:** Providing a safe space for expression and techniques such as journaling and progressive muscle relaxation.



**Social Isolation and Loneliness:** Encouraging healthy social interactions and setting personal boundaries.



**Family and Personal Issues:** Offering advice on coping with family dynamics, personal loss, and significant life stressors.



To support the larger student community, **VisionIAS** is now extending our counseling and wellness support to all students preparing for UPSC CSE, regardless of their coaching institute affiliation. Schedule a session by visiting our office at Apsara Arcade near Karol Bagh Metro Station or emailing **student.wellness@visionias.in**.

Remember, seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

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