



PIB Summary

March 2026

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1. Vice President Lays Foundation Stone of Chetana Ganashram in Thrissur, Kerala



- The foundation stone ceremony marks the beginning of a community-oriented development project in Kerala.
- Chetana Ganashram is envisioned as a center for social service, education, and cultural engagement.
- The Vice President emphasized the importance of service, inclusivity, and societal harmony.
- Such institutions contribute to grassroots empowerment and social cohesion.
- The initiative aligns with India's emphasis on community-driven development.
- It also highlights Kerala's active civil society participation in social welfare initiatives.
- From a governance perspective, it reinforces collaborative development between state and community institutions.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Role of the Vice President

The Vice President of India:

- It is the second-highest constitutional office in India.
- Acts as the ex-officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha (Article 64).
- Is elected under Article 66 of the Constitution.

Thrissur, Kerala

Thrissur is:

- Known as the cultural capital of Kerala.
- A hub for religious harmony and social reform movements.
- Prominent for community-driven institutions and public initiatives.

Community Institutions & Social Development

Institutions like Ganashrams typically focus on:

- Education and skill development
- Cultural preservation
- Social outreach programmes
- Value-based community engagement

Such projects complement state-led welfare schemes.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Foundation Ceremony:** Launch of a new community development initiative.
- **Social Welfare Focus:** Emphasis on service and inclusive growth.

- **Cultural Significance:** Strengthens local heritage and values.
- **Constitutional Presence:** Vice President's participation underscores importance.
- **Community Empowerment:** Encourages grassroots development.
- **Collaborative Governance:** Partnership between public institutions and civil society.
- **Way Forward:** Expansion of service-oriented community infrastructure.

3. The Vice President is directly elected by the people of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Article 64:** Vice President is ex-officio Chairman of Rajya Sabha.
- **Article 66:** Election of Vice President.
- **Thrissur:** Cultural capital of Kerala.
- **Ganashram:** Community-based socio-cultural institution.
- **Grassroots Development:** Community-driven welfare initiatives.
- **Rajya Sabha:** Upper House of Parliament.
- **Constitutional Offices:** President, Vice President, Governors, etc.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. The Vice President of India acts as the ex-officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha.
2. The Vice President is elected by an electoral college consisting of members of both Houses of Parliament.

2. International Conference ANVESH-2026 Showcases Next-Generation Vision for Emerging & Sustainable Healthy Foods



- ANVESH-2026 focused on next-generation foods that are nutritious, climate-resilient, and environmentally sustainable.
- Discussions included plant-based proteins, millets, functional foods, nutraceuticals, and biofortified crops.
- The conference emphasized integrating traditional food knowledge with modern food technology.
- It aligned with India's push for sustainable agriculture and nutrition security.

- Food innovation was positioned as central to tackling malnutrition and climate change.
- The platform encouraged academia-industry collaboration and startup incubation.
- Strategically, it supports India's leadership in sustainable food systems.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Sustainable Healthy Foods

These include:

- Millets and climate-resilient grains
- Plant-based protein alternatives
- Functional foods with added health benefits
- Biofortified crops (e.g., iron-rich, zinc-rich varieties)
- Probiotic and fermented products

Nutrition & Public Health Linkage

India continues to address:

- Malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies
- Rising lifestyle diseases (diabetes, obesity)
- Food security challenges under climate stress

Food innovation plays a crucial preventive health role.

Policy Context

- National Food Security Act (NFSA)
- POSHAN Abhiyaan

- International Year of Millets (2023 legacy impact)
- Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 – Zero Hunger

Climate & Food Systems

- Agriculture contributes to greenhouse gas emissions.
- Sustainable food production reduces water and carbon footprints.
- Crop diversification improves resilience.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Innovation Focus:** Emerging food technologies and alternative proteins.
- **Climate Resilience:** Promotion of millets and low-water crops.
- **Health Integration:** Nutraceutical and functional food research.
- **Startup Ecosystem:** Encouragement for food-tech entrepreneurship.
- **Traditional Knowledge Integration:** Combining indigenous diets with modern science.
- **SDG Alignment:** Supports Zero Hunger and Good Health goals.
- **Way Forward:** Scaling sustainable supply chains and consumer awareness.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Functional Foods:** Foods providing additional health benefits beyond basic nutrition.
- **Biofortification:** Increasing nutrient content of crops through breeding.

- **Milletts:** Nutri-cereals like jowar, bajra, ragi.
- **SDG 2:** Zero Hunger.
- **POSHAN Abhiyaan:** National Nutrition Mission.
- **Nutraceuticals:** Food-derived products with medicinal benefits.
- **Climate-Resilient Crops:** Adapted to drought and temperature variability.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Biofortification refers to increasing the nutrient content of crops through scientific breeding methods.
2. Millets are considered climate-resilient crops requiring relatively less water.
3. Functional foods provide only basic caloric energy without additional health benefits.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

3.CSIR-NIScPR Organises Workshop on Strengthening India's Semiconductor Ecosystem



- The workshop aimed to promote research collaboration and policy dialogue in the semiconductor sector.
- It highlighted the strategic importance of semiconductors for electronics, defence, telecom, and emerging technologies.
- Discussions focused on design capabilities, fabrication infrastructure, and skilled workforce development.
- The event aligned with India's push for self-reliance in critical technologies.
- It also emphasized strengthening the semiconductor value chain—from R&D to manufacturing and packaging.
- Strategically, the initiative supports technological sovereignty and economic security.
- The workshop reinforced the role of science-policy integration in industrial growth.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

CSIR-NIScPR

The **CSIR-National Institute of Science Communication and Policy Research** functions under the **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)**.

It works on science communication, STI policy research, and innovation studies.

Semiconductor Significance

Semiconductors are essential for:

- Smartphones and consumer electronics
- 5G and telecom infrastructure
- Electric vehicles
- Defence systems
- Artificial Intelligence and IoT devices

Global supply chain disruptions during the pandemic highlighted vulnerabilities in chip manufacturing.

India's Semiconductor Push

- India Semiconductor Mission (ISM).
- Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes.
- Semiconductor fabrication (fab) and packaging incentives.
- Focus on chip design and electronics manufacturing clusters.

Strategic Context

- Semiconductors are critical for national security.
- Countries are pursuing supply chain diversification.
- Technology geopolitics increasingly centers on chip manufacturing.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Policy Dialogue:** Academia-industry-government collaboration.
- **R&D Focus:** Strengthening chip design capabilities.
- **Manufacturing Push:** Emphasis on fabrication and packaging units.
- **Skill Development:** Training semiconductor workforce.
- **Strategic Autonomy:** Reducing import dependency.
- **Supply Chain Resilience:** Addressing global vulnerabilities.
- **Way Forward:** Public-private partnerships and global collaborations.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **CSIR:** India's premier R&D network under Ministry of Science & Technology.
- **NIScPR:** Science policy and communication institute.
- **Semiconductor:** Material with conductivity between conductor and insulator.
- **Fab (Fabrication Unit):** Facility where semiconductor wafers are manufactured.
- **PLI Scheme:** Incentive scheme to boost domestic manufacturing.
- **India Semiconductor Mission (ISM):** Initiative to build semiconductor ecosystem.
- **Chip Design vs Fabrication:** Design = architecture; Fabrication = physical manufacturing.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. CSIR-NIScPR functions under the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research.
2. Semiconductor fabrication units are commonly referred to as "fabs."
3. Semiconductors are used only in consumer electronics and not in defence systems.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

4. Controller General of Communication Accounts Inaugurates North Zone Review Meeting



- The North Zone Review Meeting reviewed performance, compliance,

and financial oversight in telecom operations.

- Key discussions included spectrum revenue collection, license fee assessment, and audit compliance.
- The meeting aimed to streamline coordination between field units and headquarters.
- It emphasized digital tools for monitoring telecom revenue and regulatory compliance.
- The initiative aligns with India's expanding digital infrastructure and telecom sector growth.
- Strategically, it strengthens fiscal discipline and transparency in the communications domain.
- It also reinforces inter-regional coordination within the Department of Telecommunications.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Controller General of Communication Accounts (CGCA)

The CGCA functions under the **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)**.

Key responsibilities include:

- Assessment and collection of license fees from telecom operators
- Spectrum usage charge (SUC) accounting
- Monitoring telecom revenue
- Financial reporting and compliance audits

Telecom Revenue Framework

Revenue streams include:

- License fees
- Spectrum usage charges
- Penalties and dues
- Universal Service Obligation (USO) contributions

Digital Governance Context

With rapid 5G rollout and telecom expansion:

- Revenue monitoring systems require digital dashboards.
- Compliance tracking ensures fair competition.
- Transparent accounting strengthens investor confidence.

North Zone Significance

The North Zone includes several key telecom circles with high subscriber density and infrastructure development.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Regional Review:** Focus on North Zone telecom performance.
- **Revenue Monitoring:** Strengthening spectrum and license fee oversight.
- **Compliance Framework:** Enhancing audit and regulatory mechanisms.
- **Digital Tools:** Promoting real-time financial monitoring.
- **Inter-Unit Coordination:** Improving administrative efficiency.
- **Telecom Expansion Context:** Supports 5G and broadband rollout.
- **Way Forward:** AI-based revenue analytics and strengthened audit systems.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **CGCA:** Apex accounting authority for telecom revenues.
- **Department of Telecommunications (DoT):** Under Ministry of Communications.
- **Spectrum Usage Charges (SUC):** Fees paid for spectrum allocation.
- **License Fee:** Percentage of Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR).
- **USOF:** Universal Service Obligation Fund for rural telecom expansion.
- **5G Rollout:** High-speed telecom expansion phase.
- **AGR:** Adjusted Gross Revenue calculation for telecom dues.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. The Controller General of Communication Accounts functions under the Department of Telecommunications.
2. Spectrum Usage Charges are collected from telecom operators for spectrum allocation.
3. Universal Service Obligation Fund is used exclusively for defence communications.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

5.INSV KAUNDINYA TO BE FLAGGED INTO MUMBAI HARBOUR



- INSV *Kaundinya* represents India's commitment to reviving traditional seafaring skills and maritime exploration.
- The vessel's arrival in Mumbai symbolizes successful completion of its voyage.
- It reflects the Indian Navy's emphasis on adventure, endurance, and oceanic navigation.
- Such expeditions strengthen maritime awareness and naval diplomacy. The initiative also celebrates India's ancient maritime legacy.
- Strategically, it highlights the Indian Navy's outreach and soft power projection.
- The flag-in ceremony reinforces India's maritime identity.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Indian Naval Sailing Vessel (INSV)

The INSV series of vessels are operated by the **Indian Navy** for:

- Training in navigation and seamanship
- Long-distance ocean expeditions
- Promoting maritime heritage

Name 'Kaundinya'

The vessel is named after Kaundinya, an ancient Indian mariner associated with early maritime links between India and Southeast Asia.

This reflects India's historical oceanic trade and cultural exchanges.

Mumbai Harbour

Located in Maharashtra, Mumbai Harbour is a key naval and commercial maritime hub. It hosts major naval commands and dockyards.

Maritime Significance

- Reinforces India's SAGAR vision (Security and Growth for All in the Region).
- Promotes maritime security and blue economy awareness.
- Enhances ocean navigation skills.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Voyage Completion:** Successful maritime expedition.
- **Heritage Revival:** Celebration of ancient seafaring traditions.
- **Naval Training:** Strengthens seamanship skills.

- **Strategic Messaging:** Maritime outreach and diplomacy.
- **Youth Inspiration:** Encourages adventure and naval careers.
- **Maritime Security Vision:** Supports SAGAR doctrine.
- **Way Forward:** Expanded ocean expeditions and international maritime cooperation.

3. The Indian Navy operates under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **INSV:** Indian Naval Sailing Vessel.
- **Indian Navy:** Maritime arm of India's Armed Forces.
- **SAGAR:** Security and Growth for All in the Region doctrine.
- **Blue Economy:** Sustainable use of ocean resources.
- **Seamanship:** Skills related to ship handling and navigation.
- **Mumbai Harbour:** Major port and naval base.
- **Maritime Diplomacy:** Naval engagement for foreign policy objectives.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. INSV vessels are operated by the Indian Navy for training and expeditions.
2. SAGAR stands for "Security and Growth for All in the Region."

1. PRESIDENT OF INDIA GRACES EVENT 'SASHAKT NARI, SAMRIDDH DELHI'



- The event focused on strengthening women's participation in economic, social, and governance processes.
- The President emphasized inclusive development and gender equality.
- She highlighted the role of women in driving sustainable growth and innovation.
- The program showcased various initiatives supporting women's entrepreneurship and skill development.
- It reinforced the idea that empowered women contribute directly to national prosperity.
- The event aligned with India's broader commitment to gender justice.
- It also recognized grassroots women leaders and achievers.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Women Empowerment in India

Women empowerment initiatives focus on:

- Education and literacy
- Financial inclusion and entrepreneurship
- Skill development
- Political representation
- Health and nutrition

Constitutional Provisions

- **Article 14:** Equality before law
- **Article 15(3):** Special provisions for women and children
- **Article 39(a) & (d):** Equal livelihood and equal pay

Government Initiatives

- Beti Bachao Beti Padhao
- Mission Shakti
- Self-Help Groups (SHGs) movement
- Digital and financial inclusion programs

Delhi Context

Delhi has seen increased participation of women in:

- Start-ups
- Public services
- Skill development schemes
- Urban self-help networks

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Presidential Address:** Emphasis on inclusive growth.
- **Women-led Development:** Core theme of the event.
- **Economic Empowerment:** Focus on entrepreneurship and skills.
- **Recognition:** Felicitation of women achievers.
- **Policy Alignment:** Supports SDG 5 (Gender Equality).
- **Social Impact:** Encourages grassroots leadership.
- **Way Forward:** Strengthened institutional and financial support for women.

1. Article 15(3) allows the State to make special provisions for women and children.
2. SDG 5 relates to Gender Equality.
3. The President of India exercises executive powers under Article 74 independently of the Council of Ministers.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Article 14:** Equality before law.
- **Article 15(3):** Protective discrimination for women.
- **SDG 5:** Gender Equality.
- **SHGs:** Self-Help Groups promoting financial inclusion.
- **Mission Shakti:** Umbrella scheme for women's safety and empowerment.
- **Women-led Development:** Policy shift from women's development to leadership.
- **Financial Inclusion:** Access to banking and credit services.

2.IAS Officers Inducted from State Civil Services Call on the President



- The interaction formed part of the officers' induction training programme.
- The President addressed the officers on the values of integrity, public service, and constitutional responsibility.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

- She emphasized citizen-centric governance and ethical administration.
- The officers were inducted into the IAS from State Civil Services after due selection processes.
- The visit reflects the tradition of civil servants engaging with constitutional authorities.
- It reinforces accountability and dedication to public welfare.
- The programme strengthens administrative coordination between the Centre and States.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Indian Administrative Service (IAS)

- Constituted under Article 312 of the Constitution.
- Part of the All India Services.
- Officers serve both Union and State governments.

Induction from State Civil Services

- Experienced State Civil Service officers are promoted to IAS.
- Selection is conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).
- Ensures administrative continuity and experience integration.

LBSNAA, Mussoorie

The **Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA)** is the premier training institution for civil servants.

Key functions:

- Foundation Course
- Mid-career training programmes
- Induction training for promoted IAS officers

Role of the President

- Head of the State under Article 52.
- Symbol of constitutional governance.
- Appoints IAS officers formally under constitutional provisions.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **128th Induction Programme:** For promoting IAS officers.
- **Presidential Address:** Focus on ethics and public service.
- **Constitutional Values:** Emphasis on integrity and accountability.
- **Centre-State Linkage:** Strengthens cooperative federalism.
- **Administrative Capacity Building:** Continuous professional training.
- **Institutional Tradition:** Officers' courtesy call at Rashtrapati Bhavan.
- **Way Forward:** Technology-driven and citizen-focused governance.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Article 312:** Creation of All India Services.
- **IAS:** Premier civil service of India.
- **UPSC:** Conducts recruitment and promotions to All India Services.
- **LBSNAA:** Apex civil services training academy.
- **All India Services:** IAS, IPS, IFoS.

- **Cooperative Federalism:** Shared governance between Centre and States.
- **Rashtrapati Bhavan:** Official residence of the President.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. The Indian Administrative Service is constituted under Article 312 of the Constitution.
2. Promotee IAS officers from State Civil Services undergo induction training at LBSNAA.
3. The IAS functions exclusively under State Governments.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

3. India AI Impact Summit 2026: Landmark Global Declaration and Major AI Investment Commitments



इलेक्ट्रॉनिकी एवं सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

सत्यमेव जयते

- The summit brought together global policymakers, industry leaders, researchers, and startups.
- A comprehensive declaration emphasized ethical AI, transparency, and inclusive growth.
- Significant investment pledges were announced to strengthen AI infrastructure and innovation ecosystems.
- The discussions focused on AI for public good, governance, healthcare, agriculture, and education.
- India reiterated its commitment to building trustworthy AI frameworks. The summit aligned AI growth with data protection, cybersecurity, and digital sovereignty.
- It positioned India as a key player in shaping global AI norms.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Artificial Intelligence in India

India has prioritized AI through initiatives such as:

- National AI Mission
- Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)
- AI for All vision
- Public-private innovation partnerships

Key Institutional Role

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (**Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology**) plays a central role in AI policy and digital governance.

Global AI Governance Context

AI governance discussions globally focus on:

- Ethical standards
- Bias mitigation
- Data privacy
- Transparency and explainability
- Responsible innovation

Strategic Importance

- Enhances India's digital economy.
- Supports startup and deep-tech ecosystems.
- Strengthens AI-driven public service delivery.
- Encourages global collaboration in emerging technologies.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Global Declaration:** Focus on ethical and responsible AI.
- **Investment Commitments:** Major funding announcements in AI R&D and infrastructure.
- **AI for Public Good:** Healthcare, agriculture, education use cases.
- **Startup Ecosystem Boost:** Support for innovation and incubation.
- **Data Governance:** Emphasis on privacy and cybersecurity.
- **International Collaboration:** Multi-country participation.
- **Way Forward:** Regulatory clarity and skill development in AI domains.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **AI:** Simulation of human intelligence processes by machines.

- **DPI:** Digital Public Infrastructure (e.g., Aadhaar, UPI, DigiLocker).
- **MeitY:** Nodal ministry for digital governance.
- **Ethical AI:** Fair, transparent, and accountable AI systems.
- **Explainability:** Ability to understand AI decision-making.
- **Deep Tech:** Advanced technology based on scientific innovation.
- **Digital Sovereignty:** Control over national digital infrastructure and data.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology is responsible for AI policy initiatives in India.
2. Ethical AI governance includes transparency and bias mitigation.
3. Digital Public Infrastructure refers exclusively to private sector digital platforms.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

4. Union Minister Raksha Khadse Announces Nationwide ASMITA League to Mark International Women's Day



- The ASMITA League aims to promote women's participation in sports across India.
- The initiative aligns with the vision of women-led development and grassroots sports empowerment.
- It seeks to provide structured competitive platforms for young women athletes.
- The programme encourages greater community engagement and youth participation.
- It also strengthens India's sports ecosystem under the Khelo India framework.
- The league promotes inclusivity and equal opportunities in athletics.
- The initiative marks a convergence of sports promotion and youth mobilization.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

ASMITA League

- Focused on women athletes across disciplines.
- Encourages participation at district, state, and national levels.
- Aims to nurture talent and improve sports infrastructure access.

Khelo India Programme

Launched to:

- Revive sports culture at the grassroots level.
- Identify and support talented athletes.
- Provide scholarships and training support.

MY Bharat (Mera Yuva Bharat)

- Youth-focused initiative.
- Encourages civic participation and nation-building.
- Promotes skill, sports, and leadership engagement.

Gender & Sports Policy Context

- Emphasis on increasing female sports participation.
- Aligns with SDG 5 (Gender Equality).
- Supports India's Olympic and international sporting ambitions.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Nationwide Rollout:** Multi-level competitions for women.
- **Joint Initiative:** Khelo India & MY Bharat collaboration.
- **Women Empowerment:** Focus on leadership through sports.

- **Grassroots Engagement:** District-level inclusion.
- **Talent Identification:** Structured competition pathway.
- **Youth Mobilisation:** National participation drive.
- **Way Forward:** Institutionalized annual women-centric leagues.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Khelo India:** Flagship sports development programme.
- **MY Bharat:** Youth mobilization initiative.
- **SDG 5:** Gender Equality goal.
- **Grassroots Sports:** Community-level athletic development.
- **Women-led Development:** Policy focus on female leadership.
- **Sports Scholarships:** Financial support for athletes.
- **Talent Pipeline:** System for identifying and training athletes.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Khelo India aims to promote sports culture at the grassroots level.
2. MY Bharat focuses exclusively on Olympic athlete training.
3. Increasing women's participation in sports aligns with SDG 5.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

5. Advancing Self-Reliance and Export Resilience: India's Growing Global Footprint



- India is strengthening domestic manufacturing while expanding export competitiveness.
- Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes have boosted sectors such as electronics, pharmaceuticals, and renewables.
- Export diversification has reduced overdependence on select markets.
- Strategic trade agreements are enhancing global market access.
- Supply chain resilience is being prioritized in critical sectors.
- The policy focus combines self-reliance with global integration rather than isolation.

- India's export growth reflects structural transformation in manufacturing and services.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Atmanirbhar Bharat

- Focus on domestic manufacturing capacity.
- Reduction of critical import dependence.
- Promotion of MSMEs and innovation.

Policy Instruments

- PLI Schemes
- Ease of Doing Business reforms
- Digital Public Infrastructure
- Trade facilitation measures

Institutional Framework

The **Ministry of Commerce and Industry** leads trade policy and export promotion initiatives.

Export Resilience

- Diversification of export baskets.
- Expansion into emerging markets.
- Strengthening value chains in electronics and pharmaceuticals.
- Leveraging Free Trade Agreements (FTAs).

KEY DRIVERS OF EXPORT GROWTH

1 Manufacturing Push

Electronics, defence equipment, automobiles, and pharmaceuticals have witnessed capacity expansion.

2 Trade Agreements

India has signed or negotiated multiple FTAs to widen market access.

3 Services Exports

IT, financial services, and professional services continue to drive surplus growth.

4 Supply Chain Integration

Integration into global value chains enhances competitiveness.

STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE

- Reduces vulnerability to global shocks.
- Strengthens foreign exchange reserves.
- Enhances employment generation.
- Boosts India's geopolitical leverage through trade partnerships.
- Supports the vision of becoming a developed nation by 2047.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Atmanirbhar Bharat:** Self-reliance initiative launched in 2020.
- **PLI Scheme:** Incentive linked to incremental production.
- **FTA:** Free Trade Agreement reducing trade barriers.
- **MSME:** Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.
- **Trade Diversification:** Expansion to new markets/products.

- **Value Chain:** Production stages across countries.
- **Export Resilience:** Capacity to sustain trade amid disruptions.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes aim to boost domestic manufacturing and exports.
2. Export resilience requires diversification of products and markets.
3. Self-reliance necessarily implies complete disengagement from global trade.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

1. INDIA FULLY PREPARED AMID EVOLVING SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST – ENERGY SUPPLIES ROBUST



सत्यमेव जयते

पेट्रोलियम एवं
प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
**PETROLEUM AND
NATURAL GAS**

- India has assured energy security despite geopolitical tensions in the Middle East. Officials highlighted diversified crude import sources to reduce dependency risks.
- Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR) provide buffer stocks against short-term disruptions.
- Close monitoring of global supply chains and shipping routes is underway.
- India's refining capacity and logistics network remain stable.
- The statement reinforces macroeconomic stability amid global volatility.
- Energy resilience supports inflation control and economic growth.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

India's Energy Dependence

- India imports over 80% of its crude oil requirements.

- The Middle East remains a major supplier region.
- Diversification includes supplies from the US, Russia, Africa, and Latin America.

Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR)

India maintains underground crude storage facilities as emergency buffers.

These reserves can be released during supply disruptions or price spikes.

Institutional Framework

The **Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas** oversees energy policy, supply monitoring, and coordination with oil marketing companies.

Energy Security Concept

Energy security refers to:

- Availability of energy resources.
- Affordability and price stability.
- Diversified sourcing.
- Strategic reserves and domestic capacity.

Geopolitical Sensitivity

The Middle East hosts major oil-producing nations and critical shipping routes such as the Strait of Hormuz, impacting global energy flows.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Diversified Imports:** Reduced overdependence on any single region.

- **Strategic Reserves:** Buffer stocks maintained for contingencies.
- **Refining Strength:** India among the world's top refining hubs.
- **Supply Chain Monitoring:** Real-time assessment of shipping routes.
- **Macroeconomic Stability:** Energy security crucial for inflation management.
- **Diplomatic Engagement:** Continuous coordination with supplier nations.
- **Way Forward:** Renewable energy expansion and green transition.

2. Energy security involves both availability and affordability of energy resources.
3. India is fully self-sufficient in crude oil production.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR):** Emergency crude oil storage.
- **Energy Security:** Reliable and affordable energy supply.
- **Strait of Hormuz:** Critical global oil transit chokepoint.
- **Crude Oil Imports:** >80% of India's requirement.
- **Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs):** Public sector energy distributors.
- **Diversification Strategy:** Multi-source procurement approach.
- **Refining Capacity:** India among top global refining nations.

2.PRIME MINISTER ADDRESSES POST-BUDGET WEBINAR ON "SUSTAINING AND STRENGTHENING ECONOMIC GROWTH"



PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Strategic Petroleum Reserves are meant to cushion against short-term crude supply disruptions.

- The Prime Minister emphasized timely and efficient execution of Budget proposals.
- He highlighted reforms in manufacturing, infrastructure, MSMEs, and financial sector deepening.

- The focus was on crowding in private investment and boosting employment.
- Digital public infrastructure and innovation were underscored as growth multipliers.
- The interaction brought together policymakers, industry leaders, and stakeholders.
- The webinar stressed cooperative federalism for policy implementation.
- It reinforced India's ambition to become a high-growth, developed economy by 2047.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Post-Budget Webinars

- Institutionalized to ensure effective Budget implementation.
- Provide a platform for stakeholder consultation.
- Encourage Centre-State coordination and industry participation.

Union Budget Framework

- Presented under **Article 112** (Annual Financial Statement).
- Includes revenue, expenditure, fiscal deficit targets.
- Acts as a macroeconomic roadmap.

Growth Strategy Themes

- Capital expenditure push.
- MSME credit expansion.
- Infrastructure development (roads, railways, logistics).
- Financial sector reforms.

- Innovation and start-up ecosystem support.

Institutional Anchoring

The **Ministry of Finance** is responsible for fiscal policy and budgetary implementation.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Implementation Focus:** Converting announcements into outcomes.
- **Capital Expenditure Push:** Infrastructure-led growth model.
- **Private Investment:** Enabling regulatory and financial reforms.
- **MSME Support:** Credit facilitation and digital platforms.
- **Digital Public Infrastructure:** Growth multiplier effect.
- **Cooperative Federalism:** States' role in economic delivery.
- **Way Forward:** Sustainable, inclusive, and innovation-driven growth.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Article 112:** Annual Financial Statement (Union Budget).
- **Fiscal Deficit:** Excess of total expenditure over total receipts (excluding borrowings).
- **Capital Expenditure:** Spending on asset creation.
- **MSME:** Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.
- **Crowding-in Effect:** Public investment stimulating private investment.
- **Digital Public Infrastructure:** Aadhaar, UPI, DigiLocker ecosystem.

- **Cooperative Federalism:** Shared governance between Centre and States.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. The Union Budget is presented under Article 112 of the Constitution.
2. Capital expenditure refers to spending on asset creation and infrastructure.
3. Fiscal deficit represents the difference between revenue receipts and revenue expenditure only.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

3.RAV CONDUCTS NATIONAL-LEVEL HANDS-ON TRAINING ON AGNIKARMA & RAKTA-MOKSHANA IN NEW DELHI



- The training focused on practical demonstration of two classical Ayurvedic para-surgical procedures.
- It aimed to standardize clinical practices and improve therapeutic outcomes.
- Participants received supervised, hands-on exposure to procedural techniques.
- The initiative strengthens capacity building in traditional healthcare systems.
- It aligns with efforts to integrate evidence-based Ayurveda into mainstream healthcare.
- The programme contributes to quality assurance and safety protocols in AYUSH practice.
- It reinforces India's global positioning in traditional medicine systems.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Rashtriya Ayurveda Vidyapeeth (RAV)

- Autonomous body under the Ministry of AYUSH.
- Focuses on continuing medical education and skill enhancement.
- Promotes advanced training in Ayurvedic specialties.

Agnikarma

- A therapeutic heat-based procedure.
- Used for musculoskeletal disorders, pain management, and localized conditions.
- Classified under para-surgical techniques in Ayurveda.

Rakta-Mokshana

- Bloodletting therapy described in classical Ayurvedic texts.
- Used to treat conditions associated with vitiated blood (Rakta Dosha).
- Includes methods like leech therapy (Jalaukavacharana).

AYUSH Framework

- AYUSH includes Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa, and Homoeopathy.
- Institutionalized under the Ministry of AYUSH.
- Focus on integrative and preventive healthcare.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Hands-on Training:** Practical demonstration under expert supervision.
- **Clinical Standardization:** Uniform protocols for para-surgical therapies.
- **Capacity Building:** Skill enhancement for practitioners.
- **Evidence-Based Approach:** Emphasis on safety and efficacy.
- **AYUSH Integration:** Strengthening traditional medicine systems.
- **National Outreach:** Participation from across India.
- **Way Forward:** Research-backed modernization of classical therapies.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **RAV:** Autonomous body for Ayurveda education & training.

- **Agnikarma:** Heat-based para-surgical Ayurvedic procedure.
- **Rakta-Mokshana:** Bloodletting therapy in Ayurveda.
- **Jalaukavacharana:** Leech therapy method.
- **AYUSH:** Acronym for traditional medicine systems in India.
- **Ministry of AYUSH:** Established in 2014.
- **Para-surgical Procedures:** Non-major surgical therapeutic techniques.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Agnikarma is a heat-based therapeutic procedure in Ayurveda.
2. Rakta-Mokshana involves therapeutic bloodletting.
3. Rashtriya Ayurveda Vidyapeeth functions under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

4.OVER 100,000 SCHOOLS SATURATED BY UIDAI'S SPECIAL DRIVE ON MANDATORY BIOMETRIC

UPDATE IN AADHAAR



- UIDAI conducted a large-scale outreach campaign in schools to complete mandatory biometric updates for children.
- Biometric updates are required when children attain specific age milestones.
- The drive aimed to prevent authentication failures in welfare and service delivery.
- It strengthened Aadhaar-linked benefits under various government schemes.
- The initiative enhanced digital identity accuracy and reliability.
- It supports smoother access to scholarships, DBT schemes, and public services.
- The campaign reflects governance emphasis on inclusive digital infrastructure.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Aadhaar Biometric Update

- Biometric update is mandatory at age 5 and again at age 15.
- Includes fingerprint, iris scan, and photograph update.

- Ensures accuracy as children's biometric traits change with age.

UIDAI

- Established under the Aadhaar Act, 2016.
- Functions under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- Responsible for issuing and managing Aadhaar numbers.

Importance of Biometric Accuracy

- Prevents authentication errors.
- Ensures seamless Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).
- Reduces duplication and identity fraud.

Digital Governance Linkage

Aadhaar forms a key pillar of India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), enabling:

- Welfare delivery
- Banking access
- Scholarship transfers
- Health scheme integration

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **School-Based Drive:** Outreach in over 100,000 institutions.
- **Mandatory Update:** Required at age 5 and 15.
- **Authentication Reliability:** Reduced biometric mismatches.
- **DBT Linkage:** Improved access to welfare schemes.

- **Digital Inclusion:** Ensured children remain in the digital identity net.
- **Administrative Efficiency:** Streamlined identity management.
- **Way Forward:** Continued awareness and periodic data updation.

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (a)

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Aadhaar Act, 2016:** Statutory backing for Aadhaar.
- **UIDAI:** Statutory authority under MeitY.
- **Biometric Data:** Fingerprints, iris, photograph.
- **Mandatory Update Ages:** 5 years and 15 years.
- **DBT:** Direct Benefit Transfer.
- **DPI:** Digital Public Infrastructure.
- **Authentication:** Verification of identity through biometric/OTP.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Biometric updates in Aadhaar are mandatory at specific age milestones during childhood.
2. UIDAI functions under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
3. Aadhaar has no role in Direct Benefit Transfer schemes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 only

1. MOVING BEYOND EXTRACTION: INDIA'S FIRST NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON MINE CLOSURE & REPURPOSING HELD AT NEYVELI



- The workshop focused on transitioning from traditional mining to environmentally responsible mine closure practices.
- Stakeholders discussed strategies for ecological restoration and repurposing mined land for economic use.
- The event emphasized integrating sustainability, community welfare, and land rehabilitation into mining policy.
- Experts highlighted opportunities such as renewable energy parks, agriculture, tourism, and water reservoirs on reclaimed land.
- The initiative supports India's commitment to sustainable development and environmental restoration.
- It also aligns with global best practices in responsible mining.
- The discussions contribute to strengthening India's mining governance framework.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Mine Closure

Mine closure refers to the systematic process of:

- Rehabilitation of mined land
- Environmental restoration
- Socio-economic transition for affected communities

It is an essential stage in the mining lifecycle.

Legal Framework in India

The **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957** mandates preparation of Mine Closure Plans.

Types of closure plans include:

- **Progressive Mine Closure Plan (PMCP)** – implemented during mining operations
- **Final Mine Closure Plan (FMCP)** – implemented after mining ends

Institutional Context

The **Ministry of Coal** and **Ministry of Mines** oversee mining policy and sustainability measures.

Neyveli Mining Region

Neyveli in Tamil Nadu is known for large lignite deposits and mining operations run by **NLC India Limited**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **First National Initiative:** Dedicated workshop on mine closure and land repurposing.
- **Sustainability Focus:** Environmental restoration after mining activities.
- **Land Repurposing:** Potential for renewable energy, agriculture, and tourism.
- **Policy Dialogue:** Participation of policymakers, industry, and experts.
- **Community Impact:** Emphasis on livelihood transition for affected populations.
- **Environmental Protection:** Rehabilitation of soil, water bodies, and biodiversity.
- **Way Forward:** Institutionalizing mine closure as a core component of mining governance.

Consider the following statements:

1. The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 governs mineral resource regulation in India.
2. Progressive Mine Closure Plans are implemented only after mining operations cease.
3. Mine reclamation involves restoring mined land for productive use.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **MMDR Act, 1957:** Governs mineral resource management in India.
- **PMCP:** Progressive Mine Closure Plan during mining operations.
- **FMCP:** Final Mine Closure Plan after mine exhaustion.
- **Mine Reclamation:** Restoration of land to usable condition.
- **Lignite:** Low-grade brown coal used in power generation.
- **NLC India Limited:** PSU involved in lignite mining and power generation.
- **Post-Mining Land Use:** Agriculture, forestry, solar parks, reservoirs.

2.POLICY REFORMS THAT TRANSFORMED INDIA'S BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT



- Over the past decade, India has undertaken major structural reforms to simplify business regulations.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

- Key initiatives include the Goods and Services Tax (GST), Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), and corporate tax reforms.
- Digital governance measures have reduced compliance burdens and improved transparency.
- Policies promoting startups and innovation have strengthened the entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- Infrastructure and logistics reforms have enhanced competitiveness in global trade.
- These changes have contributed to improved investor confidence and economic resilience.
- The reforms collectively support India's goal of becoming a major global economic hub.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Ease of Doing Business Reforms

India introduced multiple regulatory reforms to simplify procedures for businesses:

- Simplification of company registration.
- Online compliance mechanisms.
- Reduction in licensing requirements.

Major Structural Reforms

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Implemented in 2017, GST replaced multiple indirect taxes with a unified tax system.

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), 2016

Created a time-bound insolvency resolution process to address stressed assets.

Corporate Tax Reduction

Corporate tax rates were reduced to enhance competitiveness and attract investments.

Institutional Framework

The **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)** plays a central role in improving India's business climate.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Tax Reform:** Introduction of GST unified indirect taxation.
- **Insolvency Framework:** IBC strengthened credit discipline.
- **Digital Governance:** Online approvals and compliance platforms.
- **Startup Ecosystem:** Policies encouraging innovation and venture funding.
- **Infrastructure Push:** Logistics, ports, and industrial corridors.
- **Investor Confidence:** Increased FDI inflows and domestic investment.
- **Way Forward:** Continued regulatory simplification and policy stability.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **GST:** Implemented on 1 July 2017.
- **IBC, 2016:** Time-bound insolvency resolution mechanism.
- **DPIIT:** Nodal department for industrial promotion.
- **FDI:** Foreign Direct Investment in productive assets.
- **Startup India:** Initiative launched in 2016.

- **Corporate Tax Reform (2019):** Reduced rates for new manufacturing firms.
- **Ease of Doing Business:** Global index formerly published by the World Bank.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code introduced a time-bound resolution process for stressed assets.
2. GST replaced multiple indirect taxes with a unified taxation system.
3. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade functions under the Ministry of Finance.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

3. INAUGURAL EDITION OF RAISINA SCIENCE DIPLOMACY INITIATIVE (SDI) FOCUSES ON STRATEGIC AUTONOMY AND DISRUPTIVE TECHNOLOGIES



- The **Raisina Science Diplomacy Initiative (SDI)** is a new platform aimed at strengthening India's role in global **science diplomacy and technological governance**.
- The inaugural edition focused on the strategic importance of **disruptive technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Quantum Computing, Biotechnology, and Space Technologies**.
- These technologies are increasingly shaping **national security, economic competitiveness, and geopolitical alignments**.
- For India, the initiative highlights the need to build **technological sovereignty while maintaining global collaboration**.
- It also underscores the growing importance of **science-led diplomacy** in addressing global challenges such as climate change, health security, and digital governance.
- The discussions emphasized **strategic autonomy**, ensuring that India

remains capable of developing and controlling critical technologies while avoiding overdependence on external actors.

- The initiative also reflects India's broader ambition to become a **trusted global partner in technology governance and innovation ecosystems**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Science Diplomacy

Science diplomacy refers to the **use of scientific collaboration among nations to address common problems and build constructive international partnerships**.

It generally operates through three dimensions:

1. **Science in Diplomacy** – Scientific inputs guiding foreign policy decisions (e.g., climate negotiations).
2. **Diplomacy for Science** – Diplomatic efforts enabling international scientific cooperation.
3. **Science for Diplomacy** – Scientific collaboration improving diplomatic relations between countries.

Science diplomacy has become increasingly relevant due to global challenges like **pandemics, climate change, and emerging technologies governance**.

Strategic Autonomy in Technology

Strategic autonomy refers to a country's ability to **independently design, develop,**

and deploy critical technologies without excessive reliance on external powers.

For India, this concept is linked with:

- **Technological self-reliance**
- **Resilient supply chains**
- **Secure digital infrastructure**
- **Indigenous innovation ecosystems**

Major initiatives supporting this goal include:

- Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan
- National Quantum Mission
- Semicon India Programme

Disruptive Technologies

Disruptive technologies are innovations that **significantly alter industries, economic systems, and geopolitical power structures**.

Key disruptive technologies include:

- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Quantum Computing
- Biotechnology and Synthetic Biology
- Advanced Semiconductors
- Space Technologies

These technologies are increasingly becoming **strategic assets influencing global power dynamics**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Strategic Focus:** The initiative emphasized building **technological strategic autonomy** while maintaining collaborative global partnerships.
- **Technology Governance:** Discussions highlighted the need for **global norms and frameworks** for emerging

technologies such as AI and quantum computing.

- **National Security Dimension:** Disruptive technologies are now central to **defence preparedness, cyber security, and intelligence capabilities**.
- **Innovation Ecosystem:** The platform encourages stronger collaboration between **government, academia, startups, and industry**.
- **Global Cooperation:** Science diplomacy can help address transnational challenges like **climate change, health security, and digital governance**.
- **Geopolitical Significance:** Countries with leadership in advanced technologies are likely to shape **future global economic and strategic order**.
- **India's Role:** India aims to position itself as a **bridge between developed and developing countries in technology governance debates**.
- **Way Forward:** Strengthening **research funding, talent development, and international scientific collaboration** will be key to achieving technological leadership.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- I. **Science Diplomacy:** Use of scientific collaboration to strengthen international relations and address global problems.
- II. **Strategic Autonomy:** Capability of a nation to **pursue independent policies and maintain technological sovereignty**.

III. **Key Disruptive Technologies Identified Globally:**

- A. Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- B. Quantum Computing
- C. Biotechnology
- D. Advanced Semiconductor Manufacturing
- E. Space Technologies

IV. **National Quantum Mission:**

- A. Approved in **2023**
- B. Budget allocation: **₹6000 crore (approx.)**
- C. Focus: Quantum computing, communication, sensing, and materials.

V. **Semicon India Programme:**

- A. Aims to establish **semiconductor fabrication and design ecosystem in India**.

VI. **Global Science Diplomacy Platforms:**

- A. **UNESCO science diplomacy initiatives**
- B. **OECD technology governance frameworks**

VII. **Importance for India:**

- A. Ensuring **secure supply chains**
- B. Reducing **technology dependence**
- C. Strengthening **innovation capacity**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Science diplomacy involves using scientific cooperation among nations to address global challenges and strengthen international relations.

2. Strategic autonomy in the technological domain implies complete isolation from international technological cooperation.
3. Disruptive technologies such as Artificial Intelligence and Quantum Computing have increasing implications for national security and geopolitical competition.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

4. NITI AAYOG AND UNICEF INDIA SIGN STATEMENT OF INTENT TO STRENGTHEN NUTRITION AND HEALTH OUTCOMES IN ASPIRATIONAL DISTRICTS AND BLOCKS



- The partnership between **NITI Aayog and UNICEF India** aims to enhance

nutrition and health outcomes among vulnerable populations in India's Aspirational Districts and Blocks.

- The initiative will focus on strengthening **maternal and child health services, nutrition monitoring systems, and community awareness programmes**.
- It seeks to use **data-driven governance and behavioural change strategies** to address persistent challenges like **malnutrition, stunting, and anaemia**.
- The collaboration also intends to support **capacity building of frontline workers**, including Anganwadi workers and health personnel.
- This effort aligns with India's broader development priorities such as **improving human capital, achieving SDG targets related to health and nutrition, and reducing regional disparities**.
- By focusing on the most underdeveloped districts and blocks, the initiative aims to ensure **inclusive development and equitable access to essential health and nutrition services**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP)

The Aspirational Districts Programme was launched in **2018** by NITI Aayog to **rapidly transform the most underdeveloped districts in India**.

Key features:

- I. Covers **112 districts across India**
- II. Focus on **five development themes**
 - A. Health & Nutrition
 - B. Education
 - C. Agriculture & Water Resources
 - D. Financial Inclusion & Skill Development
 - E. Basic Infrastructure

The programme uses **real-time data monitoring and competitive federalism** to improve governance outcomes.

Aspirational Blocks Programme

(ABP) The Aspirational Blocks Programme was launched in **2023** to **replicate the ADP model at the block level**.

Key objectives:

- Improve development outcomes in **500 blocks across India**
- Focus on **last-mile governance**
- Strengthen service delivery at the **grassroots administrative level**

Nutrition Challenges in India

Despite progress, India continues to face major nutrition challenges:

- **Child stunting**
- **Wasting**
- **Anaemia among women and children**
- **Low birth weight**

Major initiatives addressing these issues include:

- POSHAN Abhiyaan
- Integrated Child Development Services
- Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Strategic Partnership:** The Sol establishes a collaborative framework between **NITI Aayog and UNICEF India** to improve child and maternal health outcomes.
- **Target Areas:** The initiative focuses on **Aspirational Districts and Aspirational Blocks**, which represent regions with relatively weaker development indicators.
- **Nutrition Improvement:** Emphasis on tackling **malnutrition, stunting, wasting, and anaemia** among children and women.
- **Data-Driven Governance:** Strengthening **monitoring systems and evidence-based policymaking** through real-time data and analytics.
- **Capacity Building:** Training and empowering **frontline workers such as Anganwadi workers, ASHA workers, and health personnel**.
- **Community Engagement:** Promoting **behavioural change communication** for improved nutrition practices, maternal care, and child health.
- **SDG Alignment:** Supports India's commitments toward **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, particularly **SDG 2 (Zero Hunger)** and **SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being)**.
- **Inclusive Development:** Reducing **regional disparities and ensuring equitable access to health and nutrition services**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- I. **Aspirational Districts Programme (2018):**
 - A. Implemented by **NITI Aayog**
 - B. Covers **112 districts**
 - C. Uses **delta ranking system** to measure progress.
- II. **Aspirational Blocks Programme (2023):**
 - A. Covers **500 blocks across India**
 - B. Focus on **last-mile governance and service delivery**.
- III. **Key Nutrition Mission:**
 - A. POSHAN Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission) launched in **2018**.
- IV. **Key Indicators Monitored under ADP:**
 - A. Institutional deliveries
 - B. Full immunization coverage
 - C. Child stunting and wasting
 - D. Learning outcomes in schools
- V. **Frontline Health Workers:**
 - A. **ASHA workers**
 - B. **Angan wadi workers**
 - C. **Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANM)**
- VI. **Relevant Sustainable Development Goals:**
 - A. **SDG 2 – Zero Hunger**
 - B. **SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-being**
- VII. **UNICEF:**
 - A. Full form: **United Nations Children's Fund**
 - B. Works on **child protection, nutrition, education, and health worldwide**.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. The Aspirational Districts Programme aims to improve development outcomes in selected districts through data-driven governance and competitive federalism.
2. The Aspirational Blocks Programme focuses on improving development indicators at the sub-district administrative level.
3. POSHAN Abhiyaan primarily targets improving nutrition outcomes among women, children, and adolescent girls in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: ©

5. UNION MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT TO LAUNCH NATIONWIDE 'VB-G RAM G YOUTH DIGITAL CAMPAIGN' WITH MY BHARAT



- The **VB-G RAM G Youth Digital Campaign** is a nationwide initiative aimed at **engaging youth volunteers in disseminating information about government rural development schemes**.
- Through collaboration with **MY Bharat**, the campaign seeks to leverage **digital platforms and youth networks** to spread awareness in rural areas about various welfare programmes.
- The initiative focuses on empowering **young volunteers to act as change agents** who can help rural citizens understand and access government benefits.
- It also reflects the government's broader approach of integrating **digital governance, youth participation, and grassroots outreach** for effective implementation of rural development programmes.
- By promoting awareness and participation, the campaign is expected to improve **scheme uptake**,

transparency, and community engagement in rural governance.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

MY Bharat (Mera Yuva Bharat)

MY Bharat was launched in **2023** to provide a **national platform for youth engagement in nation-building activities**.

Key objectives:

- Encourage **youth participation in community development**
- Build **leadership and civic responsibility among young citizens**
- Create a **digital platform connecting youth volunteers with development programmes**

The initiative seeks to channel the demographic potential of India's **large youth population** toward social and developmental activities.

Role of Youth in Rural Development

Youth participation plays an important role in:

- **Promoting awareness of welfare schemes**
- **Supporting digital literacy in rural areas**
- **Facilitating community participation in governance**
- **Strengthening last-mile delivery of public services**

Digital campaigns involving youth can help bridge the **information gap between government programmes and beneficiaries.**

Digital Governance in Rural India

India has increasingly relied on digital tools to strengthen rural governance through initiatives such as:

- Digital India
- Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana
- Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission

These initiatives aim to **improve infrastructure, financial inclusion, and livelihood opportunities in rural areas.**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Youth Mobilisation:** The campaign aims to mobilize **youth volunteers through MY Bharat** to spread awareness about rural development schemes.
- **Digital Outreach:** Utilizes **digital platforms, social media, and online engagement tools** to reach rural communities.
- **Awareness Generation:** Focuses on informing citizens about **government welfare programmes and entitlements.**
- **Grassroots Participation:** Encourages **community engagement and participatory governance** in rural areas.
- **Capacity Building:** Provides opportunities for youth to develop **leadership skills and civic responsibility.**

- **Improved Scheme Delivery:** Increased awareness can help improve **beneficiary identification and scheme utilization.**
- **Bridging Information Gap:** Youth volunteers act as intermediaries between **government institutions and rural citizens.**
- **Inclusive Development:** Strengthens the objective of **inclusive and participatory rural development.**

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- I. **MY Bharat (Mera Yuva Bharat):**
 - A. Launched in **2023**
 - B. National platform for **youth participation in nation-building activities.**
- II. **Ministry of Rural Development:**
 - A. Responsible for implementation of **major rural welfare and livelihood programmes.**
- III. **Major Rural Development Schemes:**
 - A. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
 - B. Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin
 - C. Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission
- IV. **Digital Governance Goal:**
 - A. Improve **service delivery, transparency, and citizen participation.**
- V. **India's Demographic Advantage:**
 - A. Around **65% of the population is below 35 years of age.**
- VI. **Importance of Digital Campaigns:**
 - A. Enable **last-mile awareness**

- B. Improve **citizen access to welfare schemes**
- C. Strengthen **community participation in governance.**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. MY Bharat is a national platform designed to facilitate youth participation in nation-building activities.
2. The VB-G RAM G Youth Digital Campaign aims to use youth volunteers to increase awareness about rural development programmes.
3. The Ministry of Rural Development is responsible for implementing programmes such as MGNREGA and the National Rural Livelihoods Mission.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

1. AERODROME LICENSE GRANTED TO NOIDA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT



- The granting of an **Aerodrome License** to the **Noida International Airport (Jewar Airport)** signifies that the airport has met the **safety, infrastructure, and regulatory standards required for aviation operations**.
- The airport is expected to become one of the **largest airports in India**, serving the **National Capital Region (NCR)** and reducing congestion at Indira Gandhi International Airport.
- Strategically located in **Jewar, Uttar Pradesh**, the airport will enhance **regional connectivity, logistics efficiency, and economic development** in northern India.
- It is also expected to boost **tourism, trade, and investment** by improving air connectivity for the region.
- The project aligns with India's broader aviation expansion under the **regional**

connectivity and infrastructure development agenda.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Noida International Airport (Jewar Airport)

Noida International Airport is being developed as a **greenfield international airport** in **Jewar, Gautam Buddha Nagar district of Uttar Pradesh**.

Key characteristics:

- Planned as **one of Asia's largest airports**
- Multi-phase development with **multiple runways and terminals**
- Designed to handle **large passenger and cargo traffic**

The airport is expected to function as a **major aviation hub for northern India**.

Aerodrome License

An **Aerodrome License** is issued by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation under the **Aircraft Act, 1934** and **Aircraft Rules, 1937**.

It certifies that:

- The airport infrastructure meets **aviation safety standards**

- Runways, navigation systems, and facilities comply with **regulatory requirements**
- The aerodrome is **fit for commercial air operations**

Civil Aviation Infrastructure in India

India has been rapidly expanding its aviation infrastructure through initiatives such as:

- UDAN Scheme
- Development of **greenfield airports** across the country
- Expansion of **existing airports to handle increasing passenger traffic**

The government aims to significantly increase the **number of operational airports and improve regional connectivity**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Regulatory Approval:** The DGCA granted the **Aerodrome License**, confirming compliance with aviation safety and operational standards.
- **Strategic Location:** The airport is located in **Jewar, Uttar Pradesh**, serving the **National Capital Region (NCR)**.
- **Decongestion of Delhi Airport:** It will help reduce traffic pressure on **Indira Gandhi International Airport**, one of India's busiest airports.
- **Economic Catalyst:** The airport is expected to promote **industrial**

development, logistics hubs, and job creation in the surrounding region.

- **Cargo and Logistics Hub:** Designed to handle **large-scale cargo operations**, supporting trade and supply chains.
- **Connectivity Boost:** Improved connectivity for **western Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, and parts of Rajasthan**.
- **Greenfield Infrastructure:** Built as a **modern, sustainable airport with advanced infrastructure and expansion potential**.
- **Regional Development:** Expected to stimulate **urbanization and infrastructure growth** in the surrounding districts.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- I. **Aerodrome License:**
 - A. Issued by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation
 - B. Granted under the **Aircraft Act, 1934**.
- II. **Noida International Airport:**
 - A. Located in **Jewar, Uttar Pradesh**.
 - B. Developed as a **greenfield international airport**.
- III. **DGCA:**
 - A. India's **civil aviation regulatory authority**.
 - B. Responsible for **safety regulation and certification of aerodromes**.

IV. **UDAN Scheme:**

- A. Launched in **2016**.
- B. Objective: **Enhance regional air connectivity and make air travel affordable.**

(c) 2 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b)

V. **Greenfield Airport:**

- A. The airport developed **from scratch on undeveloped land**, unlike expansion of existing airports.

VI. **Major Airports in NCR:**

- A. Indira Gandhi International Airport
- B. Noida International Airport

2. EDUCATION AS A SERVICE CAN BOOST INDIA'S EXPORT EARNINGS: UNION COMMERCE MINISTER PIYUSH GOYAL



PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. An Aerodrome License in India is issued by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation.
2. Noida International Airport is being developed as a greenfield airport in Uttar Pradesh.
3. The UDAN Scheme primarily aims to promote international aviation connectivity.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 1 and 2 only

- The concept of **Education as a Service (EaaS)** refers to delivering education globally through **international students, digital platforms, research collaborations, and overseas campuses.**
- India aims to leverage its **large education ecosystem, skilled faculty, and digital infrastructure** to attract more foreign students and expand educational services abroad.
- Promoting EaaS can help diversify India's **services export portfolio**, which is currently dominated by IT and business services.
- The initiative also aligns with broader national goals such as **knowledge**

diplomacy, global academic partnerships, and strengthening India's soft power.

- By positioning itself as a **global education hub**, India can generate foreign exchange, enhance international collaboration, and contribute to human capital development worldwide.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Education as a Service (EaaS)

Education as a Service refers to the **delivery of educational services across borders**, either physically or digitally.

Modes include:

- **International students studying in domestic institutions**
- **Online and distance education platforms**
- **Joint degree programmes and research collaborations**
- **Foreign campuses of domestic universities**

It is considered part of **global trade in services under the education sector**.

Education in Global Services Trade

Education services fall under **Mode 2 and Mode 3 of international services trade**:

- **Mode 2 – Consumption Abroad:**
Students travel to another country for education.
- **Mode 3 – Commercial Presence:**
Educational institutions establish campuses abroad.

These are recognized under the **General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS)** of the **World Trade Organization**.

National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

National Education Policy 2020 aims to transform India into a **global knowledge superpower**.

Key provisions supporting internationalization include:

- Encouraging **foreign universities to set up campuses in India**
- Promoting **international student mobility**
- Supporting **global academic collaborations**
- Expanding **online and digital education**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Export Potential:** Education services can significantly **increase India's services export earnings**.

- **Global Education Hub:** India aims to attract **more international students to Indian universities**.
- **Digital Education:** Expansion of **online learning platforms and EdTech services** can enable cross-border education delivery.
- **Soft Power:** Educational exchanges enhance **India's cultural and intellectual influence globally**.
- **Diversification of Services Exports:** EaaS can complement India's strong **IT and business process outsourcing sectors**.
- **Knowledge Economy:** Strengthening education exports supports India's transition toward a **knowledge-driven economy**.
- **Research Collaboration:** Encourages **international partnerships in research, innovation, and technology development**.
- **Policy Support:** Alignment with **NEP 2020 reforms and internationalization of higher education**.

- A. Cross-border supply
 - B. Consumption abroad
 - C. Commercial presence
 - D. Presence of natural persons
- III. **National Education Policy 2020:**
- A. Target: **Increase Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education to 50% by 2035**.
- IV. **Education Export Channels:**
- A. International students
 - B. Online education platforms
 - C. Overseas campuses
 - D. Academic collaborations
- V. **India's Strengths in Education:**
- A. Large network of **universities and institutes**
 - B. Growing **EdTech sector**
 - C. English-language higher education
- VI. **Soft Power Tool:**
- A. Educational exchanges often strengthen **diplomatic and cultural ties between nations**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- I. **General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS):**
- A. Agreement under the World Trade Organization.
 - B. Governs **international trade in services**, including education.
- II. **Four Modes of Services Trade (GATS):**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Education services are included under the scope of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS).
2. Under GATS, students travelling abroad to pursue education fall under the "Consumption Abroad" mode of services trade.

3. The National Education Policy 2020 encourages internationalization of higher education in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (c)

3.SELF-RELIANCE IS KEY TO NAVAL READINESS AMID GLOBAL UNCERTAINTIES: RAKSHA MANTRI AT SAGAR SANKALP



- The Raksha Mantri stressed that **self-reliance in defence production and technology** is crucial for India to respond effectively to evolving global security challenges.
- Speaking during the **‘Sagar Sankalp’ naval interaction**, he highlighted the strategic importance of the **Indian Navy in safeguarding maritime**

interests and ensuring regional stability.

- The statement reflects India’s ongoing push for **indigenisation of defence equipment, domestic manufacturing, and technological innovation.**
- Self-reliance is also linked to reducing dependence on foreign defence imports while building a **robust domestic defence industrial ecosystem.**
- The initiative aligns with national programmes aimed at **strengthening defence preparedness, boosting indigenous research and development, and securing maritime interests in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Self-Reliance in Defence
(Indigenisation)

India has historically been among the **largest importers of defence equipment**. To address this, the government has promoted policies to strengthen **domestic defence production and innovation.**

Major initiatives include:

- Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan
- Make in India in defence manufacturing
- **Positive Indigenisation Lists** restricting import of certain defence equipment

- Expansion of **Defence Research and Development (DRDO)** projects

These measures aim to develop **indigenous capabilities in weapons systems, platforms, and technologies**.

India's Maritime Security

India's maritime interests are closely linked to the **Indian Ocean Region (IOR)**, which is vital for:

- **Global trade routes**
- **Energy security**
- **Strategic geopolitical influence**

The Indian Navy plays a key role in:

- Securing **sea lines of communication (SLOCs)**
- Conducting **maritime surveillance and security operations**
- Supporting **humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR)** missions.

SAGAR Vision

India's maritime strategy is guided by the concept of **SAGAR – Security and Growth for All in the Region**.

Introduced by Narendra Modi in **2015**, the vision focuses on:

- Ensuring **maritime security and cooperation in the Indian Ocean**
- Promoting **economic and developmental partnerships**

- Enhancing **regional stability and collective security**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Strategic Message:** The Raksha Mantri emphasized that **self-reliance in defence production is essential for national security**.
- **Naval Readiness:** The **Indian Navy's operational capability** is critical for addressing emerging maritime challenges.
- **Indigenisation Push:** Greater emphasis on **domestic manufacturing of warships, submarines, and defence technologies**.
- **Global Uncertainty:** Changing geopolitical dynamics and supply-chain disruptions underline the need for **strategic autonomy in defence**.
- **Maritime Importance:** India's geographic location makes the **Indian Ocean Region central to its security and economic interests**.
- **Industrial Ecosystem:** Strengthening **defence startups, private sector participation, and indigenous R&D**.
- **Regional Stability:** India aims to play a proactive role in ensuring **peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region**.
- **Operational Preparedness:** Continued investment in **modernisation**,

advanced technology, and naval infrastructure.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- I. **SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region):**
 - A. Maritime strategic vision announced in **2015**.
- II. **Positive Indigenisation List:**
 - A. Issued by the **Ministry of Defence**.
 - B. Restricts import of certain defence items to encourage **domestic manufacturing**.
- III. **Indian Navy:**
 - A. One of the **three branches of the Indian Armed Forces**.
 - B. Responsible for **maritime security and naval warfare**.
- IV. **Key Indigenous Naval Platforms:**
 - A. INS Vikrant – India's first **indigenously built aircraft carrier**.
 - B. Indigenous **Scorpene-class submarines** built in India.
- V. **Indian Ocean Region Importance:**
 - A. Handles **major share of global oil shipments and trade routes**.
- VI. **Defence Manufacturing Goal:**
 - A. India aims to significantly increase **indigenous defence production and exports**.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. The SAGAR doctrine focuses on promoting maritime security and cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region.
2. Positive Indigenisation Lists are issued to promote domestic manufacturing by restricting the import of certain defence equipment.
3. INS Vikrant is India's first indigenously built aircraft carrier.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (c)

4. KEY INTERVENTIONS FOR WOMEN'S ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT IN INDIA



- Women's economic empowerment has become a key development priority in India's policy framework.
- The government has introduced multiple initiatives to enhance **financial access, employment opportunities, and entrepreneurial support for women.**
- Major programmes focus on strengthening **Self Help Groups (SHGs), expanding digital and financial inclusion, and promoting women-led enterprises.**
- These interventions aim to address structural barriers such as **limited access to credit, skill gaps, and gender disparities in labour force participation.**
- Enhancing women's economic participation contributes to **poverty**

reduction, household welfare, and sustainable economic growth.

- The approach aligns with India's commitment to **inclusive development and achieving gender equality goals under global development frameworks.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Women and Economic Participation in India

Women's participation in the labour force remains relatively low due to factors such as:

- **Limited access to finance and productive resources**
- **Social and cultural constraints**
- **Skill gaps and lack of employment opportunities**
- **Unequal distribution of unpaid care work**

Improving women's economic participation is critical for **inclusive growth and human development.**

Institutional Framework for Women Empowerment

- India has adopted several policy measures and programmes to enhance women's economic participation.
- Key ministries involved include:

- Ministry of Women and Child Development
- Ministry of Rural Development
- Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

These ministries implement schemes related to **livelihoods, financial inclusion, entrepreneurship, and skill development.**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Self Help Groups (SHGs):**
Strengthening women-led SHGs through programmes like Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission to improve access to credit and livelihoods.
- **Financial Inclusion:** Promoting women's access to banking through initiatives such as Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana.
- **Entrepreneurship Support:**
Encouraging women entrepreneurs through schemes like Stand-Up India Scheme and Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana.
- **Skill Development:** Enhancing employability through training under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana.
- **Digital Empowerment:** Expanding women's participation in the digital economy through initiatives such as Digital India.

- **Agricultural Participation:** Supporting women farmers through better access to **credit, markets, and technology.**
- **Social Protection:** Providing maternity benefits and welfare through programmes like Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana.
- **Gender Equality Goals:** Aligning policies with global commitments to **women's empowerment and gender equality.**

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- I. **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM):**
 - A. Focus on **mobilizing rural poor women into Self Help Groups.**
- II. **Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana:**
 - A. Launched in **2014** to ensure **universal access to banking services.**
- III. **Stand-Up India Scheme:**
 - A. Provides **bank loans between ₹10 lakh and ₹1 crore** for women and SC/ST entrepreneurs.
- IV. **Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY):**
 - A. Loans for **micro and small enterprises.**
- V. **Women's Economic Empowerment:**
 - A. Considered essential for achieving **inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction.**

VI. **Relevant Sustainable Development**

Goal:

- A. **SDG 5 – Gender Equality**

VII. **Self Help Group (SHG):**

- A. Small group (usually **10–20 women**) that pools savings and accesses credit collectively.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC

MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. The Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission focuses on mobilizing rural women into Self Help Groups for livelihood promotion.
2. The Stand-Up India Scheme provides bank loans specifically to women and SC/ST entrepreneurs.
3. The Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana aims to ensure universal access to banking services.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

1. INDIA NOTIFIES STANDARDS FOR GREEN AMMONIA AND GREEN METHANOL TO BOOST GREEN HYDROGEN ECONOMY



- India has introduced **official standards defining Green Ammonia and Green Methanol**, which are key derivatives of **Green Hydrogen**.
- These standards provide clarity on **production methods, emission thresholds, and certification mechanisms**.
- Green Ammonia and Green Methanol are emerging as **transportable carriers of hydrogen and low-carbon fuels**, making them crucial for global hydrogen trade.
- The standards are expected to promote **investment, technological innovation, and international trade in green fuels**.
- For India, this step strengthens its ambition to become a **global hub for production and export of green hydrogen and its derivatives**.
- The initiative also supports India's **energy transition, decarbonisation of industries, and commitments to climate goals**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Green Hydrogen

Green Hydrogen is hydrogen produced through **electrolysis of water using renewable energy sources such as solar or wind power**.

Unlike conventional hydrogen production methods, it **does not emit carbon dioxide**, making it an important clean fuel for the future.

Applications include:

- **Steel and cement industries**
- **Refining and fertiliser sectors**
- **Shipping and aviation fuels**
- **Energy storage and power generation**

Green Ammonia

Green Ammonia is produced using **green hydrogen combined with nitrogen from the air**.

Key features:

- Acts as an **efficient carrier of hydrogen for long-distance transport**
- Used in **fertiliser production**
- Emerging as a **clean fuel for shipping and power generation**

Green Methanol

Green Methanol is produced using **green hydrogen and captured carbon dioxide**.

Key uses include:

- **Low-carbon marine fuel**
- **Chemical feedstock for industrial production**
- **Alternative fuel for transportation**

National Green Hydrogen Mission

The National Green Hydrogen Mission was launched by the Government of India in **2023** to develop a **global green hydrogen hub**.

Major objectives include:

- Achieving **large-scale production of green hydrogen**
- Reducing dependence on **fossil fuel imports**
- Promoting **export of green hydrogen and derivatives**
- Supporting **decarbonisation of hard-to-abate sectors**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Standardization Framework:** The government has defined clear **technical standards for Green Ammonia and Green Methanol production**.
- **Hydrogen Derivatives:** These fuels act as **transportable carriers of green hydrogen**, enabling global trade.
- **Investment Boost:** Standards provide **regulatory clarity for industries and investors**.
- **Energy Transition:** Supports India's shift toward **clean and renewable energy systems**.
- **Export Potential:** Strengthens India's position as a **future exporter of green fuels**.

- **Industrial Decarbonisation:** Key sectors such as **fertilisers, shipping, and heavy industry** can adopt these fuels.
- **Global Market Integration:** Aligns India's hydrogen ecosystem with **international sustainability standards**.
- **Climate Commitments:** Contributes to India's goal of achieving **net-zero emissions by 2070**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- I. **Green Hydrogen:**
 - A. Produced using **renewable energy-powered electrolysis**.
 - B. Considered a **zero-carbon fuel**.
- II. **National Green Hydrogen Mission (2023):**
 - A. Budget allocation: **₹19,744 crore (approx.)**.
 - B. Target: Establish India as a **global hub for green hydrogen production and export**.
- III. **Hydrogen Colour Codes:**
 - A. **Green Hydrogen:** Renewable energy-based production.
 - B. **Blue Hydrogen:** Produced from natural gas with carbon capture.
 - C. **Grey Hydrogen:** Produced from fossil fuels without carbon capture.
- IV. **Green Ammonia:**
 - A. Produced using **green hydrogen and nitrogen**.
 - B. Used in **fertilisers and potential marine fuel**.
- V. **Green Methanol:**

- A. Produced using **green hydrogen and captured CO₂**.
- B. Used as **clean fuel and chemical feedstock**.

VI. **Hydrogen as Energy Carrier:**

- A. Can be **stored, transported, and converted into other fuels**.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Green hydrogen is produced through electrolysis of water using renewable energy sources.
2. Green ammonia is produced using green hydrogen and nitrogen from the air.
3. Green methanol is produced using green hydrogen and captured carbon dioxide.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

2.CSIR-NIScPR CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2026 WITH FOCUS ON WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP, INNOVATION AND WELL-BEING



- The **International Women's Day 2026 celebration** organised by CSIR-NIScPR emphasized the importance of **women's leadership and participation in science, innovation, and policy-making**.
- The event showcased **success stories of women leaders, researchers, and professionals** who have contributed to scientific advancement and societal development.
- It also highlighted the need to create **supportive institutional ecosystems that encourage women's participation in STEM fields**.
- Discussions focused on **work-life balance, mental well-being, leadership skills, and inclusive workplaces**.
- Such initiatives aim to strengthen **gender equality in science and innovation ecosystems**, contributing to broader national goals of **inclusive**

development and knowledge-based growth.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

International Women's Day

International Women's Day is observed **annually on 8 March** to celebrate women's achievements and promote **gender equality and women's rights** worldwide.

The day highlights issues such as:

- **Gender equality**
- **Women's leadership**
- **Economic empowerment**
- **Participation in science and technology**

The celebration aligns with global commitments under the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals**, particularly **SDG 5 – Gender Equality**.

CSIR and Its Role in Scientific Research

Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is one of India's **largest research and development organizations**.

Key features:

- Established in **1942**
- Network of **multiple national laboratories and research institutes**
- Conducts research in **science, technology, engineering, and industrial innovation**

The CSIR-National Institute of Science Communication and Policy Research focuses on **science communication, science policy studies, and research dissemination**.

Women in STEM in India

Women's participation in **Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)** has been increasing but still faces challenges such as:

- **Gender stereotypes**
- **Limited leadership representation**
- **Work-life balance constraints**

Government initiatives promoting women in STEM include:

- Women Scientist Scheme
- GATI Programme

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Women Leadership:** The event highlighted the role of women leaders in **science, policy, and innovation ecosystems**.
- **Innovation Focus:** Showcased contributions of women scientists and researchers in **scientific discovery and technological development**.
- **Science Communication:** Promoted the importance of **effective communication of scientific knowledge to society**.
- **Well-being and Work-Life Balance:** Discussions addressed **mental health, workplace inclusivity, and professional development**.
- **Encouraging STEM Participation:** Emphasized the need to increase

women's participation in STEM careers and leadership roles.

- **Institutional Support:** Highlighted policies for **gender-sensitive research institutions and workplaces**.
- **Knowledge Sharing:** Provided a platform for **mentorship, inspiration, and professional networking among women researchers**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- I. **International Women's Day:**
 - A. Observed annually on **8 March**.
- II. **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR):**
 - A. Established in **1942**.
 - B. One of India's **largest publicly funded R&D organizations**.
- III. **CSIR-NIScPR:**
 - A. Focuses on **science communication and policy research**.
- IV. **Women Scientist Scheme:**
 - A. Supports **women scientists who want to return to research after career breaks**.
- V. **GATI Programme:**
 - A. Full form: **Gender Advancement for Transforming Institutions**.
 - B. Promotes **gender equity in STEM institutions**.
- VI. **Relevant Sustainable Development Goal:**
 - A. **SDG 5 – Gender Equality**
- VII. **STEM:**
 - A. Stands for **Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics**.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. International Women's Day is observed annually on 8 March to promote gender equality and celebrate women's achievements.
2. The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is India's premier organization for research in science and industrial development.
3. The GATI programme aims to promote gender equity in STEM institutions in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

3. PRADHAN MANTRI BHARTIYA JANAUSHADHI PARIYOJANA (PMBJP)



- The **Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP)** is a flagship initiative of the Government of India that promotes the **use of quality generic medicines at affordable prices**.
- Under the scheme, dedicated outlets known as **Jan Aushadhi Kendras** sell **unbranded generic medicines at significantly lower prices compared to branded medicines**.
- The scheme seeks to **reduce healthcare costs for citizens**, especially for economically weaker sections who often spend a large share of their income on medicines.
- By expanding the network of pharmacies and improving supply chains, the programme aims to ensure **wider availability of essential medicines across urban and rural areas**.
- The initiative also supports **domestic pharmaceutical manufacturing and rational use of medicines**,

strengthening India's public health system.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana

Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana was launched to **promote the use of generic medicines and make healthcare more affordable**.

The scheme is implemented by the Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Bureau of India under the Department of Pharmaceuticals.

Key components:

- Establishment of **Jan Aushadhi Kendras**
- Supply of **quality generic medicines**
- Ensuring medicines are sold at **affordable prices**

Generic Medicines

Generic medicines are **pharmaceutical drugs equivalent to branded medicines in dosage, safety, strength, quality, and intended use**, but sold at **lower prices**.

Advantages include:

- **Lower cost**
- **Same therapeutic effect as branded medicines**
- **Greater accessibility to essential drugs**

Healthcare Affordability in India

A significant share of healthcare spending in India occurs through **out-of-pocket expenditure**, especially on medicines.

Affordable drug initiatives like PMBJP help:

- Reduce **financial burden on households**
- Improve **access to essential medicines**
- Strengthen **public health equity**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Affordable Medicines:** PMBJP provides **high-quality generic medicines at significantly lower prices** compared to branded alternatives.
- **Jan Aushadhi Kendras:** Dedicated pharmacies established across the country to **distribute generic medicines to the public**.
- **Wide Product Range:** Includes **essential medicines, surgical items, and medical consumables**.
- **Healthcare Accessibility:** Improves access to medicines in **both urban and rural areas**.
- **Reduced Healthcare Costs:** Helps reduce **out-of-pocket expenditure on medicines**, a major component of healthcare spending.
- **Support to Domestic Pharma:** Encourages **local manufacturing and supply of generic medicines**.
- **Employment Opportunities:** Opening Jan Aushadhi Kendras also **creates livelihood opportunities for pharmacists and entrepreneurs**.
- **Public Health Impact:** Supports **equitable healthcare access**,

particularly for economically weaker sections.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- PMBJP:**
 - Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana.**
- Implementing Agency:**
 - Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Bureau of India (PMBI).
- Administrative Ministry:**
 - Department of Pharmaceuticals under the **Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers**.
- Jan Aushadhi Kendras:**
 - Retail outlets selling **affordable generic medicines**.
- Generic Drugs:**
 - Bioequivalent to branded medicines but **sold at lower prices**.
- Public Health Importance:**
 - Helps reduce **out-of-pocket health expenditure**, which constitutes a major share of healthcare spending in India.
- Affordable Healthcare Goal:**
 - Supports broader initiatives like **universal health coverage**.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana aims to promote the use of affordable generic medicines in India.
2. The scheme is implemented by the Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices

Bureau of India under the Department of Pharmaceuticals.

3. Generic medicines differ from branded medicines in therapeutic effectiveness.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

4. LAKSHADWEEP LOW TEMPERATURE THERMAL DESALINATION (LTTD) PLANT IMPROVES ACCESS TO DRINKING WATER

- The **Low Temperature Thermal Desalination (LTTD)** technology is being used in Lakshadweep to produce **fresh drinking water from seawater using temperature differences in ocean layers**.
- This technology is particularly suitable for **island territories where freshwater resources are scarce and groundwater is often saline**.
- The plant significantly improves **drinking water availability for residents**, reducing dependence on contaminated wells and expensive water transport.
- Developed with the support of Indian scientific institutions, LTTD represents an example of **indigenous technology**

supporting sustainable development in remote regions.

- The initiative also strengthens **water security, climate resilience, and infrastructure development in coastal and island ecosystems**.



BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Low Temperature Thermal Desalination (LTTD)

LTTD is a desalination process that uses the **temperature difference between warm surface seawater and cold deep seawater** to produce fresh water.

Working principle:

1. **Warm surface seawater** is introduced into a chamber maintained at **low pressure**, causing it to evaporate.
2. The **water vapour** produced is then **condensed using cold deep-sea water**, resulting in fresh water.

Key characteristics:

- **Low energy requirement**

- Uses **natural ocean temperature gradients**
- Environmentally friendly compared to conventional desalination methods

Role of NIOT

The technology has been developed by the National Institute of Ocean Technology under the Ministry of Earth Sciences.

NIOT has implemented LTTD plants in several island regions, including:

- **Lakshadweep**
- **Andaman and Nicobar Islands**

Water Challenges in Island Territories

Island regions such as **Lakshadweep** face severe freshwater constraints due to:

- **Limited groundwater availability**
- **Salinity intrusion in wells**
- **High population density on small islands**
- **Climate change and sea-level rise**

Desalination technologies like LTTD provide **sustainable solutions for potable water supply**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Innovative Technology:** LTTD converts **seawater into potable water using ocean temperature differences**.
- **Indigenous Development:** Technology developed by the **National Institute of Ocean Technology**.

- **Island Water Security:** Addresses **chronic freshwater scarcity in Lakshadweep**.
- **Low Energy Requirement:** Uses **natural thermal gradients**, reducing energy consumption.
- **Improved Quality of Life:** Residents now receive **clean drinking water at home instead of relying on saline wells**.
- **Climate Resilience:** Enhances **sustainable water infrastructure for island ecosystems**.
- **Scalability:** Technology can potentially be deployed in **other coastal and island regions**.
- **Blue Economy Linkage:** Demonstrates the role of **ocean-based technologies in sustainable development**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- I. **Low Temperature Thermal Desalination (LTTD):**
 - A. Uses **temperature difference between warm surface water and cold deep-sea water** to produce fresh water.
- II. **Developing Institution:**
 - A. National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT).
- III. **Administrative Ministry:**
 - A. Ministry of Earth Sciences.
- IV. **Advantages of LTTD:**
 - A. Low energy consumption
 - B. Environmentally friendly
 - C. Suitable for **island regions**
- V. **Lakshadweep:**
 - A. Union Territory consisting of **coral islands in the Arabian Sea**.

VI. Desalination:

- A. Process of **removing salts and minerals from seawater to produce freshwater.**

VII. Ocean Thermal Gradient:

- A. Temperature difference between **warm surface water and cold deep ocean water.**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Low Temperature Thermal Desalination uses the temperature difference between warm surface seawater and cold deep seawater to produce freshwater.
2. The technology has been developed by the National Institute of Ocean Technology under the Ministry of Earth Sciences.
3. LTTD requires large amounts of fossil fuel energy to operate.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

5.DELHI'S LEADING EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS CONTRIBUTING TO INDIA SEMICONDUCTOR MISSION



- India is strengthening its semiconductor ecosystem through the **India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)**, with premier academic institutions playing a crucial role.
- Universities and research institutes in Delhi are contributing through **advanced research, semiconductor design programmes, and specialized skill development initiatives.**
- These efforts aim to address the **critical shortage of skilled manpower in semiconductor fabrication, chip design, and electronics manufacturing.**
- Academic institutions also collaborate with industry and government agencies to promote **innovation, technology development, and startup ecosystems in semiconductor technologies.**
- The initiative supports India's strategic goal of achieving **technological self-reliance and reducing**

dependence on semiconductor imports.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)

India Semiconductor Mission was launched in **2021** to develop a **sustainable semiconductor and display manufacturing ecosystem in India**.

Key objectives include:

- Establish **semiconductor fabrication units (fabs)**
- Promote **chip design and innovation**
- Develop **skilled workforce for semiconductor industries**
- Strengthen **electronics manufacturing value chains**

The mission is implemented by the India Semiconductor Mission under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.

Importance of Semiconductors

Semiconductors are essential components used in:

- **Computers and smartphones**
- **Automobiles and electric vehicles**
- **Telecommunication networks**
- **Artificial Intelligence and defence systems**

Due to their strategic importance, countries are investing heavily in **domestic semiconductor production** to secure supply chains.

Role of Academic Institutions

Universities contribute to the semiconductor ecosystem through:

- **Research in microelectronics and chip design**
- **Training engineers and scientists**
- **Collaborations with semiconductor companies**
- **Development of startup ecosystems and innovation hubs**

Academic participation is critical for building a **sustainable talent pipeline for the semiconductor industry**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Academic Contribution:** Delhi's premier institutions are supporting semiconductor research and training under the **India Semiconductor Mission**.
- **Skill Development:** Universities are introducing **specialised courses in semiconductor design, fabrication, and electronics engineering**.
- **Research Ecosystem:** Academic labs contribute to **advanced microelectronics research and chip design innovation**.
- **Industry Collaboration:** Partnerships between **universities, industry, and government agencies** are strengthening the semiconductor ecosystem.
- **Talent Pipeline:** Institutions are helping create a **skilled workforce required for semiconductor fabrication and design sectors**.

- **Technological Self-Reliance:** The initiative supports India's goal of **reducing dependence on imported semiconductor chips**.
- **Strategic Importance:** Semiconductor capability is crucial for **digital economy, defence technologies, and emerging technologies like AI and IoT**.
- **Startup Ecosystem:** Academic institutions also nurture **deep-tech startups and innovation in semiconductor design**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- India Semiconductor Mission (2021):**
 - Aims to establish a semiconductor and display manufacturing ecosystem in India.
- Administrative Ministry:**
 - Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- Semiconductor:**
 - Material whose electrical conductivity lies **between conductor and insulator**.
 - Common materials: **Silicon, Germanium**.
- Semiconductor Uses:**
 - Microprocessors
 - Integrated circuits
 - Sensors
 - Communication devices
- Strategic Importance:**
 - Essential for **electronics manufacturing, defence systems, and emerging technologies**.
- Global Semiconductor Supply Chain:**

- Highly concentrated in **East Asia (Taiwan, South Korea, Japan)**.

VII. India's Objective:

- Build **domestic manufacturing capacity and design ecosystem**.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

- The India Semiconductor Mission aims to develop a semiconductor manufacturing and design ecosystem in India.
- Semiconductors are materials whose electrical conductivity lies between that of conductors and insulators.
- Semiconductor chips are used only in computers and smartphones.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
- 1 and 2 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b)

1. VICE-PRESIDENT INTERACTS WITH WOMEN'S SELF-HELP GROUPS IN TRIPURA ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



- The Vice-President's interaction with women SHGs emphasized the importance of **collective entrepreneurship and financial inclusion in empowering rural women**.
- Self-Help Groups have emerged as effective platforms for **microfinance, skill development, and community participation in economic activities**.
- In states like Tripura, SHGs have helped women gain **financial independence, leadership roles, and improved social status**.
- The initiative reflects India's broader development approach of **promoting**

- **women-led development through grassroots institutions.**
- Strengthening SHGs contributes to **poverty reduction, inclusive growth, and enhanced participation of women in the rural economy.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Self-Help Groups (SHGs)

Self-Help Groups are **informal groups of 10–20 individuals, predominantly women, who come together to save money, access credit, and undertake livelihood activities collectively.**

Key features:

- Members contribute **regular savings**
- Access **microcredit through banks**
- Promote **entrepreneurship and income generation**

SHGs serve as important instruments for **financial inclusion and social empowerment.**

DAY–National Rural Livelihoods Mission

The SHG movement in rural India is strongly supported by the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development.

Objectives include:

- Mobilizing rural poor into **Self-Help Groups**
- Promoting **sustainable livelihoods**
- Strengthening **financial inclusion and women's empowerment**

Women's Economic Empowerment

Empowering women economically leads to:

- **Higher household incomes**
- Improved **education and health outcomes**
- Greater **participation in decision-making**

Government initiatives supporting women empowerment include:

- Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana
- Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana
- Stand-Up India Scheme

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Women Empowerment:** SHGs are crucial instruments for **economic independence and social empowerment of women**.
- **Financial Inclusion:** Members gain access to **banking services, credit facilities, and savings mechanisms**.
- **Livelihood Opportunities:** SHGs enable women to start **microenterprises, handicrafts, agriculture-based activities, and small businesses**.
- **Community Development:** These groups strengthen **collective decision-making and grassroots governance**.

- **Tripura's SHG Movement:** The state has witnessed significant progress in **women-led rural livelihood initiatives**.
- **Women-Led Development:** The interaction highlighted the shift from **women's welfare to women-led development**.
- **Social Impact:** SHGs improve **confidence, leadership capacity, and community participation among women**.
- **Inclusive Growth:** Strengthening SHGs contributes to **poverty alleviation and balanced rural development**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- I. **Self-Help Group (SHG):**
 - A. Typically it consists of **10–20 members**, mostly women.
- II. **DAY-NRLM:**
 - A. Implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development.
 - B. Focuses on **mobilizing rural poor women into SHGs**.
- III. **International Women's Day:**
 - A. Celebrated annually on **8 March**.
- IV. **Financial Inclusion Initiatives:**
 - A. Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana
 - B. Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana
- V. **SHG-Bank Linkage Programme:**
 - A. Facilitates **access to formal banking credit for SHGs**.
- VI. **Benefits of SHGs:**
 - A. Promotes **savings culture**
 - B. Enables **microcredit and entrepreneurship**
 - C. Strengthens **social capital in rural communities**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Self-Help Groups generally consist of small groups of individuals who pool savings and access credit collectively.
2. Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission aims to mobilize rural poor women into Self-Help Groups.
3. Self-Help Groups primarily function as large-scale corporate enterprises.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

2.AIIA GOA INAUGURATES SPECIAL HEALTHCARE SERVICES FOR WOMEN ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



- The **All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA), Goa** launched special healthcare services to enhance **patient care and promote women's health through traditional Ayurvedic practices.**
- The services focus on providing **preventive, promotive, and therapeutic healthcare solutions** based on Ayurveda principles.
- Such initiatives highlight the growing role of **Ayush systems in strengthening India's healthcare ecosystem and promoting holistic wellness.**
- The programme also seeks to increase awareness about **Ayurvedic treatments for lifestyle disorders and women-specific health issues.**
- By integrating traditional knowledge with modern healthcare systems, the initiative supports the broader objective of **accessible, affordable, and inclusive healthcare services.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA)

All India Institute of Ayurveda is a premier institution dedicated to **education, research, and clinical services in Ayurveda.**

Key features:

- Established under the Ministry of Ayush
- Functions as a **centre of excellence for Ayurvedic medicine and research**
- Provides **specialized treatment, academic programmes, and research in Ayurveda**

The institute aims to promote **evidence-based Ayurveda and integrate traditional medicine with modern healthcare systems.**

Ayurveda as a Traditional Healthcare System

Ayurveda is one of the world's oldest holistic healing systems, originating in India.

Core principles include:

- **Balance of bodily energies (Doshas)** – Vata, Pitta, and Kapha
- Emphasis on **preventive healthcare and lifestyle management**
- Use of **herbal medicines, diet, and therapeutic procedures**

Ayurveda is recognized as part of India's **AYUSH systems of medicine.**

Role of AYUSH in Healthcare

The Ministry of Ayush promotes traditional systems such as:

- Ayurveda
- Yoga & Naturopathy
- Unani
- Siddha
- Homeopathy

These systems contribute to **preventive healthcare, wellness promotion, and integrative medicine approaches.**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Special Healthcare Services:** AIIA Goa introduced new services focusing on

women's health and holistic well-being.

- **Ayurveda-Based Care:** Treatments based on **traditional Ayurvedic principles and therapies.**
- **Preventive Healthcare:** Emphasis on **lifestyle management, nutrition, and preventive medicine.**
- **Women's Health Focus:** Addresses issues such as **reproductive health, hormonal balance, and lifestyle disorders.**
- **Research and Education:** AIIA supports **academic research and training in Ayurvedic medicine.**
- **Integration with Modern Medicine:** Encourages **evidence-based integration of Ayurveda with conventional healthcare systems.**
- **Public Awareness:** Promotes awareness about **Ayush therapies and wellness practices.**
- **Accessible Healthcare:** Supports the government's objective of **affordable and inclusive healthcare delivery.**

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA):**
 - Premier institute for **Ayurveda education, research, and treatment.**
- Administrative Ministry:**
 - Ministry of Ayush.
- AYUSH Systems:**
 - Ayurveda
 - Yoga & Naturopathy
 - Unani
 - Siddha
 - Homeopathy
- Ayurveda Principles:**

- A. Balance of **three doshas – Vata, Pitta, Kapha.**
- V. **International Women's Day:**
- A. Observed annually on **8 March.**
- VI. **Focus of AYUSH:**
- A. **Preventive healthcare**
- B. **Holistic wellness**
- C. **Lifestyle management**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. The All India Institute of Ayurveda functions under the Ministry of Ayush.
2. Ayurveda emphasizes the balance of three doshas—Vata, Pitta, and Kapha—for maintaining health.
3. AYUSH systems include Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

3.MSDE TO LEAD SESSION ON 'SKILLING IN THE CARE ECOSYSTEM' AT POST-BUDGET WEBINAR ON 'SABKA SAATH SABKA VIKAS'



सत्यमेव जयते

कौशल विकास और
उद्यमशीलता मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
SKILL DEVELOPMENT
AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- The Government of India is emphasizing **skill development in the care ecosystem** as part of its broader economic and social development strategy.
- During the Post-Budget Webinar, MSDE will lead discussions on **training, employment opportunities, and institutional frameworks for the care sector**, which includes services such as **healthcare support, elder care, disability care, and childcare.**
- With an ageing population, increasing urbanization, and rising demand for healthcare services, the **care economy is expected to generate significant employment opportunities.**
- The initiative also aims to **formalize and professionalize care work**, ensuring better training standards, job quality, and service delivery.
- By strengthening skills in this sector, the government seeks to **promote inclusive growth, enhance workforce participation—especially for women—and support social welfare systems.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Care Economy

The **care economy** refers to sectors involved in **providing care services to individuals**, including:

- **Healthcare and nursing services**
- **Elderly care**
- **Childcare**
- **Support services for persons with disabilities**

These services are essential for **human development, social welfare, and workforce productivity**.

Globally, the care economy is recognized as a **major employment generator**, particularly for women.

Skill Development in India

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship is responsible for promoting **vocational training, skill development programmes, and industry-aligned workforce training**.

Key initiatives include:

- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)
- National Skill Development Corporation
- Skill India Mission

These programmes aim to create a **skilled workforce aligned with emerging economic sectors**.

Post-Budget Webinars

The Government organizes **Post-Budget Webinars** to:

- Discuss **implementation strategies of Union Budget announcements**
- Engage **stakeholders from government, industry, and academia**
- Facilitate **policy coordination and effective execution**

These webinars help translate **budgetary policy proposals into actionable programmes**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Care Sector Focus:** The breakout session highlights the importance of **skilling for healthcare, elder care, childcare, and disability support services**.
- **Employment Generation:** The care economy has strong potential to **create large-scale employment opportunities**, particularly for women.
- **Skill Development:** Emphasis on **professional training and certification** for care workers.
- **Demographic Trends:** Rising **ageing population and healthcare needs** are increasing demand for trained caregivers.
- **Women Workforce Participation:** The sector can help increase **female labour force participation**.
- **Institutional Collaboration:** The initiative promotes cooperation among **government agencies**,

industry stakeholders, and training institutions.

- **Quality Care Services:** Skilled workers can improve **quality and accessibility of care services**.
- **Inclusive Growth:** Aligns with the government's development vision of **Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- I. **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE):**
 - A. Nodal ministry for **skill development and vocational training in India**.
- II. **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY):**
 - A. Flagship scheme for **short-term skill training and certification**.
- III. **National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC):**
 - A. Public-private partnership organization promoting **skill development initiatives**.
- IV. **Care Economy Includes:**
 - A. Healthcare services
 - B. Elder care
 - C. Childcare
 - D. Disability support services
- V. **Skill India Mission:**
 - A. Launched in **2015** to train millions of youth in **market-relevant skills**.
- VI. **Importance of Care Sector:**
 - A. Major **employment generator globally**
 - B. Supports **social welfare and human development**.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. The care economy includes sectors such as healthcare services, childcare, and elderly care.
2. The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship is responsible for implementing skill development programmes in India.
3. The Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana focuses on providing short-term skill training and certification.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (c)

4.MY Bharat to Launch Phase-2 of 'Viksit Bharat Yuva Connect' in Delhi



- Phase-2 of **Viksit Bharat Yuva Connect** will bring together **young citizens, students, volunteers, and policymakers** to discuss development priorities and encourage youth participation in governance.
- The programme is organised by Mera Yuva Bharat under the aegis of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
- The initiative provides a **platform for youth engagement, idea exchange, and collaborative problem-solving** related to national development goals.
- Through workshops, interactive sessions, and discussions, participants will contribute ideas related to **innovation, entrepreneurship, sustainability, governance, and community development**.
- The programme forms part of the broader effort to **mobilise India's demographic dividend** and encourage youth to actively contribute to the '**Viksit Bharat @2047**' vision.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

MY Bharat (Mera Yuva Bharat)

Mera Yuva Bharat was launched in **2023** to create a **technology-driven institutional framework for youth engagement**.

Key objectives:

- Encourage **youth participation in nation-building**
- Provide **volunteering opportunities**
- Build **leadership and civic responsibility among young citizens**

- Connect youth with **government programmes and initiatives**

MY Bharat aims to create a **national platform linking youth talent, community service, and development projects**.

Viksit Bharat Vision

The **Viksit Bharat @2047 vision** aims to transform India into a **developed nation by the centenary of independence in 2047**.

Focus areas include:

- Economic growth
- Technological advancement
- Social inclusion
- Sustainable development
- Strong governance institutions

Youth participation is considered **critical for achieving this long-term development goal**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Phase-2 Launch:** 'Viksit Bharat Yuva Connect' begins **9 March 2026 in Delhi**.
- **Organising Platform:** Initiative led by **MY Bharat under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports**.
- **Youth Engagement:** Programme aims to **connect young citizens with national development initiatives**.
- **Interactive Sessions:** Includes **workshops, discussions, and idea-sharing forums**.
- **Policy Inputs:** Youth participants can contribute **ideas and solutions for governance and development challenges**.

- **Nation-Building Focus:** Supports the vision of **Viksit Bharat by 2047**.
- **Volunteerism:** Encourages youth to participate in **community service and developmental activities**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

MY Bharat (Mera Yuva Bharat):

- Launched in **2023**
- Aims to create a **technology-based youth engagement platform**
- Operates under the **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports**

Objectives:

- Promote **volunteerism**
- Encourage **civic participation**
- Harness **India's demographic dividend**

Viksit Bharat @2047:

- National vision to make India a **developed country by 2047**
- Focus on **economic growth, innovation, sustainability, and social equity**

Importance of Youth in India:

- India has one of the **largest youth populations in the world**
- Youth engagement is vital for **economic growth, governance, and innovation**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat)**:

1. It is a platform launched to encourage youth participation in nation-building and volunteerism.
2. It functions under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
3. It aims to mobilise youth participation for achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

1. Indian Contingent Departs for Seychelles for Joint Military Exercise “LAMITIYE – 2026”



- The **Indian Army contingent** is participating in **Exercise LAMITIYE – 2026**, a **joint military training exercise between India and Seychelles**.
- The exercise focuses on **joint tactical operations, counter-insurgency practices, and coordination between military forces in complex operational environments**.
- Through such bilateral exercises, India seeks to **enhance strategic cooperation, improve operational capabilities, and strengthen security partnerships in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)**.
- The exercise also reflects India's commitment to **maritime security and defence engagement with island nations in the region**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Exercise LAMITIYE

- **LAMITIYE** means “**friendship**” in the local Creole language of Seychelles.

- It is a **bilateral military exercise between the Indian Army and Seychelles Defence Forces**.
- Conducted to improve **joint operational capabilities and military coordination**.

The exercise usually involves:

- Tactical training
- Joint planning exercises
- Counter-terrorism drills
- Humanitarian assistance scenarios

India–Seychelles Defence Cooperation

India and Seychelles share **strong maritime and defence ties**, especially in the **Indian Ocean Region**.

Areas of cooperation include:

- Maritime security
- Anti-piracy operations
- Coastal surveillance support
- Defence training and capacity building

India has been a **key security partner for Seychelles**, helping strengthen its **maritime domain awareness and defence capabilities**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- I. **Joint Exercise:** ‘LAMITIYE – 2026’ between India and Seychelles.
- II. **Indian Participation:** Conducted by the **Indian Army contingent**.
- III. **Location:** Hosted in **Seychelles**.

- IV. **Objective:** Enhance **interoperability and joint operational capabilities**.
- V. **Training Areas:**
- Counter-insurgency operations
 - Tactical coordination
 - Military planning
 - Operational readiness
- VI. **Strategic Importance:** Strengthens India's **defence engagement in the Indian Ocean Region**.
- VII. **Diplomatic Significance:** Reinforces **India-Seychelles friendship and security partnership**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Exercise LAMITIYE:

- Bilateral military exercise between **India and Seychelles**
- Focus on **joint tactical training and defence cooperation**

Seychelles:

- Island nation in the **Western Indian Ocean**
- Strategically located along important **maritime trade routes**

Indian Ocean Region (IOR):

- Critical for **global trade and energy routes**
- Key focus area of India's **maritime security strategy**

India's Defence Diplomacy Tools:

- Joint military exercises
- Capacity building for partner nations
- Maritime security cooperation

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **Exercise LAMITIYE**:

- It is a bilateral military exercise conducted between India and Seychelles.
- The term "Lamitiye" means "friendship" in the Creole language of Seychelles.
- The exercise aims to enhance interoperability and defence cooperation between the two countries.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
- 1 and 2 only
- 1 and 3 only
- 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (d)

2. Government Periodically Assesses Digital Adoption Among MSMEs Across Platforms



- The government regularly evaluates how **MSMEs are adopting digital tools and platforms** such as digital payments, e-commerce marketplaces, online accounting systems, and digital supply chain platforms.
- The assessment helps policymakers understand **how effectively small businesses are integrating digital technologies** into their operations.
- The findings guide the design and improvement of **government schemes aimed at enhancing digital capacity, improving productivity, and expanding market access for MSMEs**.
- Digital adoption enables MSMEs to **increase efficiency, access new markets, reduce operational costs, and improve competitiveness** in both domestic and international markets.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

MSME Sector in India

The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises oversees policies for the MSME sector.

MSMEs are crucial to the Indian economy because they:

- Contribute around **30% to India's GDP**
- Account for about **45% of exports**
- Employ **over 11 crore people**

Thus, digital transformation of MSMEs is essential for **economic growth and job creation**.

Digital Adoption in MSMEs

Digital adoption includes:

- **Digital payments (UPI, QR codes)**
- **Online marketplaces and e-commerce**
- **Digital bookkeeping and accounting**
- **Cloud-based business tools**
- **Digital supply chain platforms**

These technologies help MSMEs **expand business reach and improve operational efficiency**.

Government Initiatives Supporting Digitalisation

Several programmes promote MSME digitisation:

- Digital India
- Udyam Registration portal
- Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) Scheme
- Champions Portal for MSME support

These initiatives aim to **improve access to finance, markets, and technology** for small enterprises.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Periodic Assessment:** Government regularly evaluates digital adoption levels among MSMEs.
- **Policy Support:** Data helps design better **digital capacity-building policies**.
- **Digital Tools Adoption:** Includes **digital payments, e-commerce**

platforms, and online business management tools.

- **Economic Impact:** Digitisation improves **productivity, transparency, and market access.**
- **Government Schemes:** Several initiatives support **MSME digitisation and digital infrastructure.**
- **Competitiveness:** Digital integration helps MSMEs compete in **domestic and global markets.**

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

MSME Classification (India):

Category	Investment Limit	Turnover Limit
Micro Enterprise	Up to ₹1 crore	Up to ₹5 crore
Small Enterprise	Up to ₹10 crore	Up to ₹50 crore
Medium Enterprise	Up to ₹50 crore	Up to ₹250 crore

Key Digital MSME Support Platforms:

- **Udyam Registration Portal** – MSME registration system
- **Champions Portal** – grievance redressal and support
- **Digital India Initiative** – digital infrastructure and services

- **RAMP Scheme** – World Bank-assisted MSME competitiveness programme

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **MSMEs in India**:

1. MSMEs contribute significantly to India's GDP and exports.
2. Digital adoption among MSMEs includes the use of digital payments, e-commerce platforms, and cloud-based tools.
3. The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises periodically assesses digital adoption among MSMEs.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

3. PM Vishwakarma and MSME Schemes Support Women Artisans and Entrepreneurs



- The government has been implementing multiple initiatives aimed at **empowering women artisans, traditional craft workers, and women entrepreneurs**.
- The PM Vishwakarma Yojana focuses on supporting **traditional artisans and craftspeople**, including many women involved in crafts such as weaving, pottery, tailoring, carpentry, and handicrafts.
- Alongside this, MSME sector schemes provide **credit access, training, entrepreneurship support, and market linkages**, helping women establish and expand their businesses.
- These initiatives aim to **strengthen women's economic participation, preserve traditional crafts, and promote inclusive economic growth**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

PM Vishwakarma Yojana

The PM Vishwakarma Yojana was launched in **2023** to support **traditional artisans and craftspeople** belonging to the informal sector.

Key objectives:

- Preserve **traditional crafts and skills**
- Provide **financial and technological support**
- Improve **product quality and productivity**
- Facilitate **market access for artisans**

Many women artisans engaged in traditional occupations benefit from the scheme.

MSME Schemes for Women Entrepreneurs

The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises implements several programmes encouraging **women entrepreneurship**.

Important schemes include:

- Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP)
- Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE)
- Udyam Registration portal

These initiatives provide:

- **Credit support**
- **Entrepreneurship training**
- **Technology upgradation**
- **Market access opportunities**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Women Empowerment:** Government schemes are promoting **women artisans and entrepreneurs**.
- **PM Vishwakarma Support:** Provides **skill training, financial assistance, and modern tools** to artisans.
- **Traditional Craft Preservation:** Supports crafts such as **weaving, pottery, carpentry, tailoring, and handicrafts**.
- **Credit Access:** MSME programmes help women obtain **loans and financial assistance**.
- **Skill Development:** Training programmes improve **productivity and entrepreneurial capabilities**.
- **Market Linkages:** Initiatives help artisans connect with **domestic and global markets**.
- **Inclusive Growth:** Enhances **women's economic participation and rural livelihoods**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

PM Vishwakarma Yojana:

- Launched in **September 2023**
- Supports **traditional artisans and craftspeople**
- Provides **skill training, toolkit incentives, and credit support**

Benefits under the scheme:

- Skill training stipend
- Toolkit incentive
- Collateral-free loans
- Digital transaction incentives

- Marketing support

Importance for Women:

- Encourages **women's entrepreneurship**
- Supports **rural and traditional livelihoods**
- Promotes **inclusive economic development**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **PM Vishwakarma Yojana**:

1. It aims to support traditional artisans and craftspeople in India.
2. It provides skill development training and financial assistance.
3. It exclusively targets urban entrepreneurs.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

4. The Digital Blueprint for Ease of Doing Business



- The **Digital Blueprint for Ease of Doing Business** aims to transform India's regulatory ecosystem by **digitising government processes, reducing paperwork, and simplifying business approvals**.
- Through the use of **online portals, single-window clearance systems, and digital documentation**, the government seeks to create a **transparent, efficient, and investor-friendly business environment**.
- The blueprint supports **startups, MSMEs, and investors** by reducing administrative burdens and improving access to government services.
- The initiative aligns with broader national programmes such as Digital India and Startup India.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Ease of Doing Business Reforms

India has undertaken significant reforms to improve the **business environment and attract investments**.

These reforms focus on:

- **Reducing regulatory complexity**
- **Digitising approvals and licenses**
- **Improving transparency in governance**
- **Promoting entrepreneurship and innovation**

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade plays a key role in **policy reforms and business facilitation**.

Digital Governance Initiatives

Key digital platforms include:

- National Single Window System – a portal for **central and state approvals for businesses**
- Udyam Registration – online MSME registration system
- Startup India portal – support and recognition for startups
- Digital India – broader digital infrastructure initiative

These platforms aim to **integrate government services and improve accessibility for businesses**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Digital Transformation:** Business-related government services are increasingly delivered **online through integrated portals**.
- **Single-Window System:** The **National Single Window System** simplifies approvals and clearances.
- **Reduced Compliance Burden:** Digitisation reduces **paperwork and regulatory delays**.

- **Support for Startups and MSMEs:** Digital systems make it easier for small businesses to **register and operate**.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Digital governance improves **tracking and monitoring of approvals**.
- **Investment Promotion:** Reforms aim to attract **domestic and foreign investment**.
- **Integration Across Levels:** Coordination between **central and state governments** is being strengthened.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT):

- Works under the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**
- Responsible for **industrial policy, investment promotion, and ease of doing business reforms**

National Single Window System (NSWS):

- Digital platform for **business approvals and clearances**
- Integrates **central ministries and state departments**

Ease of Doing Business Goals:

- Simplify regulatory processes
- Reduce compliance burden
- Encourage entrepreneurship
- Improve investment climate

Related Initiatives:

- Digital India
- Startup India

- Make in India

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding the **National Single Window System (NSWS)**:

1. It is a digital platform designed to facilitate approvals and clearances required by businesses.
2. It integrates services of multiple central ministries and state governments.
3. It is implemented by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

5.Prime Minister Narendra Modi Addresses Post-Budget Webinar on “Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas – Fulfilling Aspirations of People”



- The Prime Minister highlighted the importance of **effective implementation of the Union Budget initiatives** to ensure inclusive growth and development.
- The webinar brought together **government officials, industry representatives, experts, and stakeholders** to discuss strategies for translating budget proposals into **actionable programmes**.
- During his address, the Prime Minister emphasized **cooperation between government, industry, and society** to achieve the vision of **inclusive and sustainable development**.
- He also stressed the role of **innovation, digital governance, and citizen participation** in fulfilling the aspirations of the people and achieving the goal of a **developed India (Viksit Bharat)**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Post-Budget Webinars

The Government of India organises **Post-Budget Webinars** each year after the Union Budget to:

- Discuss **policy priorities announced in the budget**
- Facilitate **stakeholder consultations**
- Ensure **effective and timely implementation of schemes**
- Encourage **public-private collaboration**

These webinars serve as a platform for **policy dialogue and feedback**.

Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas

The phrase “**Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas**” reflects the government’s development philosophy of **inclusive growth and equal opportunities for all sections of society**.

It emphasizes:

- Social inclusion
- Economic empowerment
- Regional development
- Good governance

The approach aims to ensure that **development benefits reach every segment of the population**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- I. **Prime Minister’s Address:** Narendra Modi addressed the Post-Budget Webinar.
- II. **Theme:** “Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas – Fulfilling Aspirations of People.”
- III. **Objective:** Discuss **implementation strategies for Union Budget announcements**.
- IV. **Stakeholder Participation:** Involved **government officials, industry representatives, and experts**.
- V. **Focus Areas:**
 - A. Inclusive development
 - B. Innovation and technology
 - C. Efficient governance
 - D. Public-private collaboration
- VI. **Development Vision:** Aligns with the goal of **Viksit Bharat by 2047**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Post-Budget Webinars:

- Conducted annually after the **Union Budget**
- Facilitate **policy implementation discussions**
- Encourage **stakeholder participation**

Answer: (b)

Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas:

- Development philosophy emphasizing **inclusive growth**
- Focus on **social equity and economic opportunity**

Viksit Bharat @2047:

- Vision to transform India into a **developed country by the centenary of independence**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **Post-Budget Webinars in India:**

1. They are organised to discuss the implementation of announcements made in the Union Budget.
2. They involve participation from government officials, industry representatives, and other stakeholders.
3. They are conducted before the presentation of the Union Budget.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

1.OFFICER TRAINEES OF INDIAN REVENUE SERVICE (IT) CALL ON THE PRESIDENT



- Officer trainees of the **Indian Revenue Service (Income Tax)** met the President of India during their training period.
- The President addressed the trainees and emphasized the **importance of integrity, transparency, and dedication in public administration.**
- As members of the IRS, these officers will play a critical role in **tax administration, revenue collection, and enforcement of direct tax laws.**
- Such interactions are designed to **instill constitutional values, ethical governance, and a sense of responsibility among newly recruited civil servants.**
- The initiative also highlights the importance of **efficient tax administration for economic development and fiscal stability.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Indian Revenue Service (Income Tax)

The Indian Revenue Service (Income Tax) is one of the **Group A civil services of the Government of India.**

Key functions:

- Administration of **direct tax laws**
- Enforcement of **income tax regulations**
- Detection and prevention of **tax evasion**
- Implementation of government **revenue policies**

IRS officers serve primarily in the Income Tax Department under the Central Board of Direct Taxes.

Training of IRS Officers

After selection through the Union Public Service Commission Civil Services Examination, IRS officers undergo training at the:

- National Academy of Direct Taxes (NADT)

The training includes:

- Tax laws and administration
- Public finance
- Investigation techniques
- Ethical governance and public administration

Role of Direct Taxes in Governance

Direct taxes such as **income tax and corporate tax** form a major component of **government revenue.**

Efficient tax administration ensures:

- **Fiscal stability**
- **Funding for development programmes**
- **Equitable distribution of tax burden**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Civil Service Interaction:** IRS (IT) officer trainees met the President of India at Rashtrapati Bhavan.
- **Training Programme:** The meeting is part of the **orientation and training of newly recruited officers**.
- **Ethical Governance:** The President emphasized **integrity, transparency, and commitment to public service**.
- **Role of IRS:** Officers are responsible for **administering and enforcing direct tax laws**.
- **Institutional Training:** IRS officers undergo professional training at the **National Academy of Direct Taxes (NADT)**.
- **Public Finance Importance:** Efficient tax administration strengthens **government revenue and economic governance**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Indian Revenue Service (IRS):

- One of the **Group A civil services** of India
- Responsible for **direct tax administration**

Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT):

- Statutory body under the **Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance**

- Supervises **income tax administration**

Training Institution:

- National Academy of Direct Taxes

Recruitment:

- Through the **Civil Services Examination conducted by the UPSC**

Direct Taxes Include:

- Income Tax
- Corporate Tax

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding the **Indian Revenue Service (Income Tax)**:

1. It is a Group A civil service responsible for administering direct tax laws in India.
2. Officers of the service are recruited through the Civil Services Examination conducted by the Union Public Service Commission.
3. Their training is conducted at the National Academy of Direct Taxes in Nagpur.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

2. CABINET APPROVES EXTENSION OF JAL JEEVAN MISSION TILL DECEMBER 2028 UNDER JJM 2.0



- The Government of India has extended the **Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)** to ensure sustained access to **safe and adequate drinking water through Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs) in rural areas**.
- The new phase, **JJM 2.0**, will focus on improving **water source sustainability, water quality monitoring, infrastructure maintenance, and community participation**.
- The mission will also strengthen **institutional mechanisms, digital monitoring systems, and capacity building at local levels**.
- The extension reflects the government's commitment to **universal access to safe drinking water and improved public health outcomes in rural India**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)

Jal Jeevan Mission was launched in **August 2019** with the objective of providing **Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs)** to every rural household.

Key objectives include:

- Provide **adequate and safe drinking water** to rural households
- Ensure **water quality monitoring**
- Promote **community participation in water management**
- Improve **health and sanitation outcomes**

The mission is implemented by the Ministry of Jal Shakti.

Need for JJM 2.0

Although significant progress has been made, challenges remain:

- **Source sustainability**
- **Water quality issues**
- **Maintenance of water infrastructure**
- **Institutional capacity at local levels**

JJM 2.0 aims to address these issues through **structural reforms and improved governance mechanisms**.

Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC)

An **FHTC** ensures that every rural household receives:

- **Regular supply of potable water**
- Through **pipelined water connections directly to the household**

This reduces the burden on **women and children who traditionally fetch water from distant sources.**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Mission Extension:** Jal Jeevan Mission extended **up to December 2028.**
- **JJM 2.0 Framework:** Focus on **structural reforms in rural drinking water supply systems.**
- **Enhanced Outlay:** Increased financial allocation to strengthen implementation.
- **Water Sustainability:** Emphasis on **sustainable water sources and groundwater management.**
- **Infrastructure Maintenance:** Strengthening **operation and maintenance of water supply systems.**
- **Community Participation:** Encourages **local governance institutions and community involvement.**
- **Digital Monitoring:** Use of **technology and data platforms for monitoring water supply systems.**
- **Public Health Benefits:** Safe drinking water helps reduce **water-borne diseases.**

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Jal Jeevan Mission (2019):

- Launched by the **Ministry of Jal Shakti**
- Goal: **Har Ghar Jal – tap water to every rural household**

Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC):

- Household-level **pipled drinking water supply**

Implementation Mechanism:

- Collaboration between **Central Government, State Governments, and Panchayati Raj Institutions**

Key Focus Areas:

- Water quality monitoring
- Source sustainability
- Community participation
- Infrastructure management

Related Initiative:

- Atal Bhujal Yojana – groundwater management programme

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding the **Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)**:

1. It aims to provide Functional Household Tap Connections to rural households.
2. The mission is implemented by the Ministry of Jal Shakti.
3. It focuses exclusively on urban drinking water supply systems.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

3. SECOND ADVANCE ESTIMATES OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION (2025–26) RELEASED



सत्यमेव जयते

कृषि एवं किसान
कल्याण मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
AGRICULTURE AND
FARMERS WELFARE

- The **Second Advance Estimates** present revised projections of production for major crops such as **rice, wheat, pulses, oilseeds, sugarcane, and cotton** for the agricultural year **2025–26**.
- These estimates are based on **crop-cutting experiments, satellite data, field reports from states, and weather conditions during the crop season**.
- The estimates help the government evaluate **food security, supply-demand balance, and price stability**, while also guiding **policy decisions related to procurement, storage, and agricultural trade**.
- They are part of a series of progressive estimates released during the year to ensure **accurate assessment of agricultural output**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Agricultural Production Estimates in India

The government releases **four stages of crop production estimates** every year:

1. **First Advance Estimates** – issued before the harvest season
2. **Second Advance Estimates** – based on improved data during crop growth
3. **Third Advance Estimates** – revised estimates closer to harvest completion
4. **Final Estimates** – released after complete data verification

These estimates are prepared by the **Directorate of Economics and Statistics** under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

Cropping Seasons in India

India has three main cropping seasons:

Kharif Crops

- Sown during **June–July (monsoon season)**
- Harvested during **September–October**

Examples: Rice, maize, cotton, groundnut.

Rabi Crops

- Sown during **October–December (winter season)**
- Harvested during **March–April**

Examples: Wheat, mustard, barley, gram.

Zaid Crops

- Grown between **March and June**
- Examples: Watermelon, cucumber, vegetables.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Production Estimates:** Second Advance Estimates released for **major crops in 2025–26**.
- **Crop Coverage:** Includes **foodgrains, oilseeds, sugarcane, cotton, and other key crops**.
- **Data Sources:** Based on **state government reports, crop surveys, satellite data, and weather analysis**.
- **Policy Significance:** Helps guide **procurement, storage planning, and food security strategies**.
- **Market Impact:** Influences **price policies, export–import decisions, and agricultural trade**.
- **Agricultural Planning:** Supports **evidence–based policymaking in the agriculture sector**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Agricultural Year in India:

- Runs from **July to June**

Four Production Estimates Released:

1. First Advance Estimates
2. Second Advance Estimates
3. Third Advance Estimates
4. Final Estimates

Major Crop Groups in Estimates:

- Foodgrains (rice, wheat, coarse cereals, pulses)
- Oilseeds
- Commercial crops (cotton, sugarcane, jute)

Prepared by:

- Directorate of Economics & Statistics

- Under the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**

Importance:

- Supports **food security planning**
- Helps determine **Minimum Support Price (MSP) procurement strategies**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **crop production estimates in India**:

1. The Ministry of Agriculture releases multiple estimates of crop production during the agricultural year.
2. Second Advance Estimates are released after the First Advance Estimates but before the final estimates.
3. These estimates help the government plan procurement and food security policies.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (c)

4.IICA–DGR CONDUCT FOURTH BATCH OF DIRECTORS’ CERTIFICATION IN CORPORATE GOVERNANCE FOR DEFENCE

OFFICERS



- The certification programme focuses on **equipping defence officers with knowledge of corporate governance, regulatory frameworks, boardroom responsibilities, and ethical leadership.**
- It helps transitioning defence personnel **adapt their leadership experience to the corporate sector,** enabling them to serve as **independent directors or board members in companies.**
- The initiative reflects the government's effort to **support the resettlement and professional integration of defence personnel after their service.**
- By promoting structured training in governance practices, the programme also contributes to **strengthening corporate accountability and board-level leadership in Indian companies.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA)

Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs is an autonomous institution under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

Key functions:

- Research and training in **corporate governance and corporate law**
- Capacity building for **directors and corporate professionals**
- Policy advisory related to **corporate regulation**

The institute is located in **Manesar, Haryana.**

Directorate General Resettlement (DGR)

Directorate General Resettlement operates under the Ministry of Defence.

Objectives:

- Facilitate **resettlement of retired defence personnel**
- Provide **skill development and employment opportunities**
- Support transition from **military to civilian careers**

Corporate Governance in India

Corporate governance refers to the **system of rules, practices, and processes by which companies are directed and controlled.**

Key elements include:

- **Board oversight**
- **Accountability and transparency**
- **Ethical business practices**
- **Protection of shareholder interests**

Good corporate governance enhances **investor confidence and sustainable business practices**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Training Programme:** Fourth batch of the **Directors' Certification Programme in Corporate Governance** conducted.
- **Organising Institutions:** Programme jointly organised by **IICA and the Directorate General Resettlement**.
- **Target Group:** **Serving and retired defence officers** transitioning to civilian careers.
- **Skill Development:** Provides training in **corporate law, governance frameworks, and board responsibilities**.
- **Resettlement Support:** Helps defence personnel **secure leadership roles in the corporate sector**.
- **Governance Strengthening:** Encourages **ethical leadership and professional board practices in companies**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA):

- Autonomous institution under the **Ministry of Corporate Affairs**
- Located in **Manesar, Haryana**
- Focus areas: **corporate governance, corporate law, and capacity building**

Directorate General Resettlement (DGR):

- Works under the **Ministry of Defence**

- Supports **rehabilitation and employment of retired defence personnel**

Corporate Governance:

- Framework for **directing and controlling companies**
- Emphasizes **accountability, transparency, and ethical management**

Importance:

- Improves **corporate accountability**
- Strengthens **investor trust and financial stability**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding the **Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA)**:

1. It is an autonomous institution functioning under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.
2. It focuses on research, training, and capacity building in areas related to corporate governance.
3. It functions under the Ministry of Defence.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

5. INTEGRATION OF AI IN NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT



- Artificial Intelligence is being integrated into India's disaster management framework to **enhance prediction, monitoring, and response to natural and man-made disasters**.
- AI-powered systems can analyze **large datasets from satellites, weather models, sensors, and historical disaster records** to improve **early warning mechanisms**.
- Technologies such as **machine learning, drones, remote sensing, and real-time data analytics** are helping authorities make faster and more accurate decisions during emergencies.
- The integration supports India's goal of building a **resilient disaster management system that minimizes loss of life, infrastructure damage, and economic disruption**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

National Disaster Management Framework

India's disaster management system is governed by the Disaster Management Act.

Key institutional mechanisms include:

- National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)
- National Disaster Response Force (NDRF)
- State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs)

The framework focuses on **preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery**.

Role of Artificial Intelligence in Disaster Management

AI technologies can assist in several stages of disaster management:

Early Warning Systems

- Predict floods, cyclones, landslides, and earthquakes through **data modelling and pattern recognition**.

Risk Assessment

- Identify **vulnerable regions and populations** using geospatial analysis.

Emergency Response

- AI-enabled drones and robotics assist in **search and rescue operations**.

Damage Assessment

- Satellite imagery and machine learning help assess **infrastructure damage and relief requirements**.

Technological Tools Used

- **Remote sensing satellites**
- **Geographic Information Systems (GIS)**
- **Machine learning algorithms**
- **Drones and robotics**
- **Real-time data analytics platforms**

These technologies enable **data-driven disaster governance**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **AI Integration:** Artificial Intelligence is being integrated into **national disaster management systems**.
- **Improved Forecasting:** AI helps enhance **early warning and predictive modelling** for disasters.
- **Data Analytics:** Large datasets from **satellites, sensors, and weather models** are analysed for decision-making.
- **Rapid Response:** AI-powered tools assist in **search and rescue and emergency operations**.
- **Risk Mapping:** Geospatial technologies identify **high-risk disaster-prone areas**.
- **Institutional Framework:** NDMA and other agencies are exploring **technology-driven disaster management solutions**.
- **Resilience Building:** Supports the goal of **minimizing loss of life and infrastructure damage**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Disaster Management Act, 2005:

- Provides the **legal framework for disaster management in India**

Key Institutions:

- National Disaster Management Authority
- National Disaster Response Force

Types of Disasters Covered:

- Natural disasters (floods, cyclones, earthquakes)
- Man-made disasters (industrial accidents, chemical hazards)

Technologies Used in Disaster Management:

- Remote sensing
- GIS mapping
- Artificial Intelligence
- Drones and robotics

Importance:

- Enables **data-driven decision making**
- Improves **early warning and emergency preparedness**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **Artificial Intelligence in disaster management**:

1. Artificial Intelligence can help improve early warning systems by analysing large datasets from weather and satellite sources.

2. AI-based drones and robotics can assist in search and rescue operations during disasters.
3. Artificial Intelligence eliminates the need for institutional disaster management authorities.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

systems and promoting medical value travel.

1. INDIA TAKES A SIGNIFICANT STEP TO STRENGTHEN COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH IN TRADITIONAL MEDICINE



- The Government of India is promoting **collaborative research in traditional medicine** to improve scientific evidence, innovation, and integration with modern healthcare systems.
- The initiative encourages cooperation between **national research institutions, universities, and international partners** to explore the therapeutic potential of traditional medical systems such as **Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy**.
- Strengthening research collaboration will help develop **evidence-based treatment protocols, standardized formulations, and quality control mechanisms**.
- The initiative also aligns with India's broader objective of **positioning traditional medicine as an important component of global healthcare**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Traditional Medicine Systems in India

India has a rich tradition of indigenous medical systems collectively referred to as **AYUSH**, which includes:

- **Ayurveda**
- **Yoga and Naturopathy**
- **Unani**
- **Siddha**
- **Homeopathy**

These systems emphasize **holistic healthcare, preventive medicine, and natural therapies**.

The sector is governed by the Ministry of AYUSH.

Research and Evidence-Based Validation

For global acceptance, traditional medicine requires:

- **Scientific validation of treatments**
- **Clinical trials and pharmacological research**
- **Standardization of herbal medicines**
- **Quality assurance and safety evaluation**

Collaborative research helps combine **traditional knowledge with modern scientific methods**.

Global Recognition of Traditional Medicine

International organizations such as the World Health Organization is increasingly recognizing the role of traditional medicine in healthcare systems.

India has also established the WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine to promote **global research and policy cooperation** in this field.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Research Collaboration:** Strengthening partnerships among **research institutions and universities**.
- **Scientific Validation:** Promotes **evidence-based research in traditional medicine systems**.
- **AYUSH Integration:** Focus on systems such as **Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Yoga, and Homeopathy**.
- **Global Outreach:** Enhances **international collaboration and knowledge exchange**.
- **Healthcare Innovation:** Supports development of **standardized herbal formulations and therapies**.
- **Medical Value Travel:** Strengthens India's position as a **global hub for traditional medicine and wellness**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Ministry of AYUSH:

- Established in **2014**

- Responsible for **policy, regulation, and promotion of traditional medicine systems**

WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine:

- Located in **Jamnagar, Gujarat**
- Launched in **2022**
- Promotes **research, policy collaboration, and global knowledge sharing**

Major Traditional Medicine Systems in India:

- Ayurveda
- Yoga & Naturopathy
- Unani
- Siddha
- Homeopathy

Importance of Research:

- Ensures **safety and efficacy of traditional medicines**
- Enables **integration with modern healthcare systems**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **traditional medicine in India**:

1. The Ministry of AYUSH is responsible for promoting traditional medicine systems in India.
2. The WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine is located in Jamnagar, Gujarat.
3. AYUSH includes Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

2. NUCLEAR ENERGY MISSION: GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE TO EXPAND NUCLEAR POWER CAPACITY



- India is advancing its **Nuclear Energy Mission** to significantly increase nuclear power generation as part of the country's long-term clean energy strategy.

- Nuclear energy is considered a **reliable base-load source of electricity** that can complement renewable energy sources such as solar and wind.
- The mission focuses on **developing new nuclear power plants, deploying indigenous reactor technologies, and strengthening domestic manufacturing capabilities.**
- It also supports India's climate commitments by **reducing dependence on fossil fuels and lowering greenhouse gas emissions.**
- The initiative aligns with the government's broader goal of achieving **energy security, sustainable development, and net-zero emission targets.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

India's Nuclear Energy Programme

India's nuclear power programme is managed by the Department of Atomic Energy and operated largely through the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited.

The programme follows a **three-stage nuclear power strategy** proposed by Homi J. Bhabha.

Stage 1

- Uses **Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs)**
- Fuel: Natural uranium
- Produces plutonium as a by-product

Stage 2

- Uses **Fast Breeder Reactors (FBRs)**
- Utilizes plutonium from Stage 1

Stage 3

- Uses **Thorium-based reactors**
- Exploits India's large thorium reserves

Importance of Nuclear Energy

Nuclear energy plays a crucial role in:

- **Low-carbon electricity generation**
- **Energy diversification**
- **Stable base-load power supply**

Unlike solar or wind energy, nuclear plants provide **continuous electricity irrespective of weather conditions**.

India's Climate Commitments

Nuclear power contributes to India's commitments under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

It supports India's goals of:

- **Reducing carbon intensity**
- Expanding **non-fossil fuel energy capacity**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Mission Objective:** Expand **nuclear power capacity in India**.
- **Implementing Agency:** Managed by the **Department of Atomic Energy**.
- **Clean Energy Role:** Nuclear power helps reduce **carbon emissions**.

- **Energy Security:** Provides **reliable base-load electricity supply**.
- **Technology Development:** Focus on **indigenous reactor technologies such as PHWRs**.
- **Long-term Strategy:** Part of India's **three-stage nuclear power programme**.
- **Climate Relevance:** Supports **low-carbon energy transition and climate commitments**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Department of Atomic Energy (DAE):

- Established in **1954**
- Directly under the **Prime Minister's Office**

Major Nuclear Power Operator:

- Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited

India's Nuclear Fuel Resources:

- **Limited uranium reserves**
- **Large thorium reserves (monazite sands in coastal regions)**

Important Nuclear Power Plants in India:

- Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant
- Tarapur Atomic Power Station
- Kakrapar Atomic Power Station

Fast Breeder Reactor:

- Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC

MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **India's Nuclear Energy Programme**:

1. India's nuclear power programme follows a three-stage strategy involving uranium and thorium fuel cycles.
2. Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) form the first stage of India's nuclear programme.
3. Nuclear power generation produces zero greenhouse gas emissions during electricity production.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

3. NEW DELHI TO HOST GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON WOMEN IN AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS (GCWAS-2026)



- The **Global Conference on Women in Agri-Food Systems (GCWAS-2026)** aims to bring together **policy makers, researchers, international organizations, and agricultural stakeholders** to discuss strategies for empowering women in agriculture.
- The event will focus on **women's participation across the agri-food value chain**, including farming, food processing, marketing, and agribusiness entrepreneurship.
- It seeks to address **gender disparities in access to land, finance, technology, and markets**, which often limit women's economic potential in the agricultural sector.
- The conference will also promote **knowledge sharing, policy dialogue, and international cooperation** to strengthen gender equality in food systems.
- Strengthening women's role in agriculture is crucial for **food security, rural development, and sustainable livelihoods**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Women in Agriculture in India

Women constitute a significant share of the agricultural workforce in India.

Key roles include:

- Crop cultivation and harvesting
- Livestock management
- Food processing and storage

- Participation in **self-help groups and rural enterprises**

However, women farmers often face challenges such as:

- Limited **land ownership**
- Restricted **access to credit and technology**
- Lower participation in **decision-making processes**

Agri-Food Systems

An **agri-food system** includes all activities related to:

- **Agricultural production**
- **Processing**
- **Distribution**
- **Consumption of food**

Strengthening women's participation across this value chain improves **productivity, nutrition outcomes, and rural economic development**.

Global Importance of Gender Equality in Agriculture

International institutions such as the The Food and Agriculture Organization emphasises that **empowering women farmers can significantly improve agricultural productivity and food security**.

Gender-inclusive policies are also linked with achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly **SDG-2 (Zero Hunger)** and **SDG-5 (Gender Equality)**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Global Conference:** GCWAS-2026 to be held in **New Delhi from 12–14 March 2026**.
- **Focus Area:** Empowering **women in agri-food systems and agricultural value chains**.
- **Stakeholder Participation:** Involvement of **policy makers, researchers, international organizations, and farmers**.
- **Gender Equality:** Addressing barriers such as **limited access to land, credit, and technology**.
- **Knowledge Exchange:** Platform for **sharing best practices, research insights, and policy innovations**.
- **Food Security Link:** Women's empowerment in agriculture contributes to **sustainable food systems and rural livelihoods**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Women in Agriculture (India):

- Women constitute **a significant portion of the agricultural workforce**
- Often engaged in **subsistence farming, livestock management, and food processing**

Agri-Food Systems Include:

- Agricultural production
- Food processing
- Distribution and marketing
- Consumption

Relevant International Organizations:

- Food and Agriculture Organization
- International Fund for Agricultural Development

Relevant Sustainable Development Goals:

- **SDG-2:** Zero Hunger
- **SDG-5:** Gender Equality

Policy Importance:

- Enhances **food security**
- Promotes **inclusive rural development**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **women in agri-food systems**:

1. Agri-food systems include activities related to agricultural production, processing, distribution, and food consumption.
2. Empowering women farmers can contribute to improved agricultural productivity and food security.
3. The Sustainable Development Goals include targets related to gender equality and zero hunger.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (c)

4.INDIA READY TO MEET ANY UNPRECEDENTED DEMAND FOR COAL



- The Government of India has emphasized that the country maintains **sufficient coal production, stock levels, and logistics capacity** to meet any sudden rise in coal demand.
- Coal remains a **critical energy source for electricity generation**, with the majority of India's thermal power plants relying on coal-based fuel.
- To prevent supply disruptions, the government has strengthened **coal production, transportation infrastructure, and stock monitoring systems**.
- Measures include improved **coal evacuation through railways, higher domestic production, and better coordination with power utilities**.
- Ensuring adequate coal availability is essential for **energy security, grid stability, and uninterrupted power supply**, especially during peak electricity demand periods.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Coal in India's Energy Mix

Coal is the **dominant source of electricity generation in India**.

Key characteristics:

- Accounts for **a major share of power generation**
- Used primarily in **thermal power plants**
- Supports **industrial sectors such as steel and cement**

India possesses some of the **largest coal reserves in the world**, making domestic coal production crucial for energy security.

Major Institutions in Coal Sector

Coal Production

- Coal India Limited – largest coal producer in the world
- Singareni Collieries Company Limited – major coal producer in Telangana

Policy and Regulation

- The Ministry of Coal oversees coal sector policies and development.

Coal Supply Chain

Coal supply involves multiple stages:

1. **Mining and production**
2. **Transportation through railways and road networks**
3. **Stocking at power plants**

4. Electricity generation in thermal plants

Efficient logistics is critical to avoid **coal shortages at power plants**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Supply Preparedness:** India is prepared to meet **any unprecedented demand for coal**.
- **Power Sector Support:** Ensures **continuous fuel supply to thermal power plants**.
- **Production Growth:** Focus on increasing **domestic coal production**.
- **Logistics Strengthening:** Improved **coal transportation via rail networks**.
- **Stock Monitoring:** Regular monitoring of **coal stocks at power plants**.
- **Energy Security:** Ensures **reliable electricity supply during peak demand periods**.
- **Industrial Importance:** Coal supports **power generation, steel, and cement industries**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Coal India Limited (CIL):

- Public sector company under the **Ministry of Coal**
- One of the **largest coal producers globally**

Major Coal-Producing States in India:

- Jharkhand
- Odisha
- Chhattisgarh
- West Bengal

- Madhya Pradesh

Types of Coal in India:

- **Anthracite** – highest carbon content
- **Bituminous** – commonly used in power plants
- **Lignite** – lower grade coal

Importance of Coal:

- Major source of **thermal power generation**
- Supports **energy security and industrial growth**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding the **coal sector in India**:

1. Coal remains a major source of electricity generation in India.
2. Coal India Limited is one of the largest coal-producing companies in the world.
3. The Ministry of Coal is responsible for policy and development of the coal sector.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

5. INDIAN NAVAL SHIP TRIKAND VISITS PORT LOUIS, MAURITIUS TO STRENGTHEN MARITIME COOPERATION



- The visit of **INS Trikand**, a stealth frigate of the Indian Navy, to Mauritius reflects India's commitment to strengthening **maritime diplomacy and regional security cooperation**.
- During the port call, naval personnel engage in **professional interactions, joint activities, and goodwill engagements with the Mauritian authorities and navy**.
- Such visits support India's broader vision of **Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR)** and enhance interoperability among friendly maritime forces.
- The engagement also reinforces **India-Mauritius strategic partnership**, particularly in areas such as **maritime security, capacity building, and humanitarian cooperation**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

INS Trikand

INS Trikand is a **Talwar-class stealth frigate** of the Indian Navy.

Key features:

- Equipped with **advanced sensors and weapon systems**
- Designed for **anti-air, anti-surface, and anti-submarine warfare**
- Part of India's **blue-water naval capabilities**

India–Mauritius Maritime Cooperation

India and Mauritius share close historical and strategic relations.

Areas of cooperation include:

- **Maritime security**
- **Hydrographic surveys**
- **Coastal surveillance systems**
- **Capacity building and training**

Mauritius is a key partner in India's **Indian Ocean maritime strategy**.

SAGAR Doctrine

India's maritime policy framework is guided by the concept of **Security and Growth for All in the Region**.

Objectives include:

- Ensuring **regional maritime security**
- Strengthening **economic cooperation in the Indian Ocean**
- Supporting **capacity building of partner nations**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Naval Deployment:** INS Trikand visited **Port Louis, Mauritius** during operational deployment.
- **Maritime Diplomacy:** Aims to enhance **defence cooperation and naval partnerships**.
- **Joint Engagements:** Includes **professional interactions and goodwill activities** with Mauritian authorities.
- **Strategic Partnership:** Reinforces **India–Mauritius defence and maritime relations**.
- **Regional Security:** Supports India's **SAGAR vision for the Indian Ocean Region**.
- **Operational Presence:** Demonstrates the **Indian Navy's capability and presence in the IOR**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

INS Trikand

- **Class:** Talwar-class stealth frigate
- **Role:** Multi-role warship capable of **anti-air, anti-surface, and anti-submarine operations**

Indian Ocean Region (IOR)

- Strategically important for **global trade and energy routes**

SAGAR Doctrine

- Announced in **2015**
- Framework for **India's maritime cooperation in the Indian Ocean**

India–Mauritius Relations

- Mauritius hosts **a large population of Indian origin**
- Strong cooperation in **security, development, and maritime surveillance**

PadhAI–GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **India's maritime strategy**:

1. The SAGAR doctrine focuses on promoting security and cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region.
2. Talwar-class frigates of the Indian Navy are multi-role warships capable of anti-submarine warfare.
3. Mauritius is located in the Indian Ocean and is a strategic partner for India's maritime cooperation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

1. FREEDOM OF SPEECH IN PARLIAMENT SUBJECT TO RULES: LOK SABHA SPEAKER



- The **Lok Sabha Speaker clarified that parliamentary freedom of speech is not absolute and must operate within the procedural rules of the House.**
- While Members of Parliament enjoy constitutional protection for their speeches in Parliament, such privileges are governed by **rules of procedure, discipline, and authority of the presiding officer.**
- The statement reinforces the importance of **maintaining order, decorum, and accountability during parliamentary debates.**
- It also highlights the balance between **parliamentary privilege and institutional responsibility**, ensuring that debates remain **constructive and within constitutional norms.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Freedom of Speech in Parliament

The Constitution provides special protection to legislators under Article 105.

Key provisions include:

- **Freedom of speech in Parliament**
- **Immunity from legal proceedings for statements made in the House**
- Protection for **votes and parliamentary actions**

However, this freedom is **subject to the rules and procedures of the House.**

Parliamentary Privileges

Parliamentary privileges are special rights enjoyed by Members of Parliament to enable them to perform their duties effectively.

These include:

- **Freedom of speech in Parliament**
- **Freedom from arrest in certain civil cases during sessions**
- **Control over internal proceedings**

Privileges are derived from:

- Article 105 (for Parliament)
- Article 194 (for State Legislatures)

Role of the Speaker

The Om Birla presides over proceedings of the Lok Sabha.

Key responsibilities include:

- Maintaining **order and discipline in the House**
- Interpreting **rules of procedure**

- Regulating **debates and discussions**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Speaker's Clarification:** Freedom of speech in Parliament is **subject to procedural rules**.
- **Constitutional Protection:** MPs enjoy privileges under **Article 105 of the Constitution**.
- **Not Absolute:** Parliamentary speech must adhere to **rules of the House and authority of the Speaker**.
- **Institutional Discipline:** Ensures **orderly conduct of debates and legislative functioning**.
- **Democratic Accountability:** Balances **legislative freedom with parliamentary responsibility**.
- **Presiding Authority:** The Speaker plays a key role in **regulating discussions and enforcing rules**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Article 105 – Parliamentary Privileges

- Freedom of speech in Parliament
- Immunity from court proceedings for statements made in the House

Article 194

- Similar privileges for **State Legislatures**

Speaker of Lok Sabha

- Presiding officer of the **Lower House of Parliament**
- Responsible for **maintaining order and enforcing rules**

Rules of Procedure

- Govern **debates, discussions, and legislative conduct**

Key Principle

- Parliamentary privileges are **not absolute and must be exercised within constitutional and procedural limits**.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **parliamentary privileges in India**:

1. Freedom of speech in Parliament is provided under Article 105 of the Constitution.
2. Parliamentary privileges allow Members of Parliament to speak without any procedural limitations in the House.
3. Similar privileges for State Legislatures are provided under Article 194 of the Constitution.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

2. PRESERVATION OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE



- Intangible Cultural Heritage refers to **living cultural traditions and practices passed down through generations**, including performing arts, rituals, festivals, and traditional knowledge systems.
- The Government of India is undertaking initiatives to **identify, document, preserve, and promote such heritage through cultural institutions, research programs, and international collaboration**.
- India is also actively participating in global efforts to protect ICH under the framework of the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**.
- Safeguarding intangible heritage strengthens **cultural identity, community participation, and sustainable tourism**, while also preserving traditional knowledge for future generations.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)

Intangible Cultural Heritage includes **non-physical aspects of culture** transmitted across generations.

Major categories include:

- **Oral traditions and expressions**
- **Performing arts**
- **Social practices, rituals, and festivals**
- **Traditional craftsmanship**
- **Knowledge concerning nature and the universe**

The global framework for safeguarding ICH is the

UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

India and UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List

India has several elements inscribed on the **UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity**, including:

- Kutiyattam
- Ramlila
- Vedic Chanting
- Durga Puja

These traditions represent the **diversity of India's cultural heritage**.

Institutional Mechanisms

The preservation of cultural heritage in India is coordinated by the Ministry of Culture through institutions such as:

- Sangeet Natak Akademi
- Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts

These institutions work on **documentation, research, and promotion of traditional cultural practices.**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Cultural Preservation:** Government initiatives focus on safeguarding **intangible cultural traditions.**
- **UNESCO Framework:** India participates in the **2003 UNESCO Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage.**
- **Diverse Heritage:** Includes **performing arts, rituals, festivals, and traditional knowledge.**
- **Institutional Support:** Cultural bodies document and promote heritage practices.
- **Community Participation:** Preservation relies on **local communities and practitioners.**
- **Tourism and Identity:** Cultural heritage contributes to **cultural tourism and national identity.**

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)

- Refers to **living traditions and cultural practices**

UNESCO Convention

- **Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage – 2003**

Indian Institutions for Cultural Preservation

- Sangeet Natak Akademi

- Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts

Examples from India on UNESCO ICH List

- Kutiyattam
- Ramlila
- Vedic Chanting
- Durga Puja

Importance

- Preserves **traditional knowledge systems**
- Strengthens **cultural diversity and identity**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH):**

1. Intangible Cultural Heritage includes practices such as rituals, festivals, and performing arts.
2. The UNESCO Convention for safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage was adopted in 2003.
3. Intangible Cultural Heritage refers only to physical monuments and archaeological structures.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

3. PENSION TO SENIOR ARTISTS UNDER CULTURAL WELFARE SCHEME



- The Government of India provides **pension and financial assistance to senior artists** who have dedicated their lives to the preservation and promotion of art forms but face financial difficulties in old age.
- The scheme supports practitioners from various fields including **classical music, dance, theatre, folk arts, literature, and traditional crafts**.
- It serves as a social security measure recognizing the **contribution of artists in safeguarding India's cultural heritage**.
- The initiative also encourages continued engagement of artists in **cultural transmission and mentoring younger generations**.
- Through this welfare scheme, the government aims to **preserve artistic**

traditions while ensuring dignity and financial security for senior cultural practitioners.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Financial Assistance for Veteran Artists Scheme

The pension support is provided under the **Scheme for Financial Assistance for Veteran Artists** implemented by the Ministry of Culture.

Key features:

- Monthly financial assistance to **artists aged 60 years or above**
- Beneficiaries must have **significant contribution in the field of art and culture**
- Intended for artists facing **financial hardship**

Scope of the Scheme

The scheme covers artists from diverse cultural domains:

- **Classical and folk music**
- **Dance and theatre**
- **Traditional crafts and visual arts**
- **Literature and cultural scholarship**

It recognizes the role of artists in **preserving both tangible and intangible cultural heritage**.

Cultural Welfare in India

India's cultural welfare initiatives aim to:

- Protect **traditional art forms**
- Provide **financial security to cultural practitioners**
- Encourage **intergenerational transfer of cultural knowledge**

Such initiatives help sustain **cultural diversity and heritage preservation**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Financial Assistance:** Pension provided to **senior artists in financial distress**.
- **Implementing Ministry:** Managed by the **Ministry of Culture**.
- **Eligibility:** Artists aged **60 years and above with notable contributions to arts**.
- **Cultural Coverage:** Includes **music, dance, theatre, literature, and traditional crafts**.
- **Heritage Preservation:** Supports practitioners who safeguard **India's cultural traditions**.
- **Social Security:** Ensures **dignity and financial stability for veteran artists**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Scheme Name

- **Financial Assistance for Veteran Artists**

Implementing Authority

- Ministry of Culture

Eligibility

- Age **60 years or above**

- Demonstrated contribution to **arts and culture**
- Facing **financial hardship**

Purpose

- Provide **monthly financial assistance**
- Support preservation of **traditional art forms**

Cultural Significance

- Encourages **continuity of artistic traditions**
- Recognizes contributions of **senior cultural practitioners**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding the **Financial Assistance for Veteran Artists scheme**:

1. It provides pension support to senior artists facing financial hardship.
2. The scheme is implemented by the Ministry of Culture.
3. Only classical musicians are eligible under the scheme.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

4. DEEP-SEA MINING: GOVERNMENT RESPONSE IN PARLIAMENT



- Deep-sea mining involves the exploration and extraction of **valuable minerals from the ocean floor**, including polymetallic nodules rich in metals such as **nickel, cobalt, copper, and manganese**.
- India has been granted exploration rights for a large area in the **Central Indian Ocean Basin** by the International Seabed Authority.
- The Government is developing **deep-sea technologies such as remotely operated vehicles, submersibles, and mining systems** to explore these resources.
- These minerals are critical for **clean energy technologies, electronics, and advanced manufacturing**, making deep-sea mining strategically important for resource security.
- However, the initiative also requires careful consideration of **marine ecosystem protection and environmental sustainability**.

Deep Ocean Mission

The **Deep Ocean Mission** was launched to explore and harness the potential of **deep ocean resources**.

Major objectives include:

- Development of **deep-sea mining technology**
- Exploration of **polymetallic nodules**
- Advancement of **underwater robotics and ocean observation systems**
- Study of **deep-sea biodiversity**

The mission is implemented by the Ministry of Earth Sciences.

Polymetallic Nodules

Polymetallic nodules are **potato-shaped mineral deposits found on the deep ocean floor**.

They contain valuable metals such as:

- **Nickel**
- **Cobalt**
- **Copper**
- **Manganese**

These minerals are essential for **batteries, renewable energy technologies, and electronics manufacturing**.

International Seabed Authority (ISA)

The International Seabed Authority regulates **mineral-related activities in international seabed areas beyond national jurisdiction**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

It operates under the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Parliamentary Response:** Government outlined progress in **deep-sea mining exploration**.
- **Strategic Programme:** Implemented under the **Deep Ocean Mission**.
- **Exploration Rights:** India holds exploration rights in the **Central Indian Ocean Basin**.
- **Mineral Resources:** Focus on **polymetallic nodules containing critical minerals**.
- **Technology Development:** Includes **deep-sea vehicles, robotics, and mining systems**.
- **Energy Transition Link:** Minerals support **renewable energy technologies and battery manufacturing**.
- **Environmental Concerns:** Need to ensure **marine ecosystem protection**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Deep Ocean Mission

- Launched in **2021**
- Implemented by the **Ministry of Earth Sciences**

Polymetallic Nodules

- Found at depths of **4,000–6,000 meters**
- Rich in **nickel, cobalt, copper, and manganese**

International Seabed Authority (ISA)

- Established under **UNCLOS**
- Regulates mining in **international seabed areas**

Central Indian Ocean Basin

- Area allocated to **India for polymetallic nodule exploration**

Importance

- Source of **critical minerals**
- Supports **green energy technologies**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **deep-sea mining**:

1. Polymetallic nodules found on the seabed contain metals such as nickel, cobalt, and manganese.
2. The International Seabed Authority regulates mineral-related activities in areas beyond national jurisdiction.
3. India's Deep Ocean Mission is implemented by the Ministry of Earth Sciences.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

5. STRENGTHENING FOOD PROCESSING SECTOR THROUGH MOFPI SCHEMES: OVER 13 LAKH EMPLOYMENT GENERATED



- The Government of India has implemented multiple schemes through the **Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI)** to boost the **food processing sector, enhance value addition, and reduce post-harvest losses.**
- These initiatives focus on **developing modern infrastructure such as Mega Food Parks, cold chains, and food processing units**, thereby improving the efficiency of agricultural supply chains.
- The schemes have collectively contributed to **generating more than 13 lakh employment opportunities across the country**, particularly benefiting **farmers, rural entrepreneurs, and small businesses.**
- Strengthening the food processing sector also supports **income diversification for farmers, increased exports, and improved food security.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI)

The Ministry of Food Processing Industries is responsible for **policy formulation and development of the food processing sector in India.**

Key objectives include:

- Increasing **value addition to agricultural produce**
- Reducing **post-harvest losses**
- Promoting **food processing infrastructure**
- Enhancing **employment and rural entrepreneurship**

Major MoFPI Schemes

Several flagship schemes support the sector:

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana

- Focuses on **integrated cold chains, Mega Food Parks, and agro-processing clusters.**

Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme

- Supports **micro food processing enterprises** and **self-help groups.**

These schemes aim to strengthen the **farm-to-fork value chain.**

Importance of Food Processing Sector

The sector plays a crucial role in:

- **Increasing farmers' income**
- **Reducing food wastage**
- **Boosting exports of processed food**
- **Creating rural employment opportunities**

It also supports **agriculture–industry linkage** and contributes to **value addition in the agri-economy**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Infrastructure Development:** Expansion of **Mega Food Parks, cold chains, and food processing units**.
- **Employment Generation:** Over **13 lakh jobs created** through MoFPI schemes.
- **Value Addition:** Enhances **processing of agricultural produce**.
- **Farmer Benefits:** Provides **better market access and higher incomes for farmers**.
- **Rural Entrepreneurship:** Encourages **micro food enterprises and self-help groups**.
- **Supply Chain Strengthening:** Improves **post-harvest management and food logistics**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI)

- Responsible for **development of the food processing sector**

Key Schemes

- Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana

- Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme

Mega Food Park Scheme

- Provides **modern infrastructure for food processing clusters**

Importance of Food Processing

- Reduces **post-harvest losses**
- Promotes **value addition to agricultural produce**
- Boosts **agri-based exports**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding the **food processing sector in India**:

1. The Ministry of Food Processing Industries implements schemes to promote infrastructure such as Mega Food Parks and cold chains.
2. The Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) scheme supports micro food processing units.
3. Food processing helps reduce post-harvest losses and increase value addition to agricultural produce.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

1. NXT 2026 CONCLAVE EMERGING AS A KEY PLATFORM FOR POLICY DIALOGUE, INNOVATION AND GLOBAL COOPERATION: LOK SABHA SPEAKER



- The **NXT 2026 Conclave** is gaining recognition as a significant forum for **dialogue on emerging technologies, governance challenges, and global collaboration**.
- The event brings together **policy makers, industry leaders, innovators, and international stakeholders** to discuss solutions for contemporary global issues.
- Key themes include **technology-driven governance, innovation ecosystems, digital transformation, and international partnerships**.
- Such platforms facilitate **knowledge exchange, policy coordination, and collaborative solutions to shared global challenges**.

- The conclave also reflects India's growing role as a **hub for international dialogue on technology, governance, and innovation**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Policy Conclaves and Global Dialogue

Policy conclaves are platforms that facilitate:

- **Interaction between policymakers and experts**
- **Exchange of ideas on governance and development**
- **International collaboration on emerging global issues**

These forums help generate **innovative policy solutions and strengthen diplomatic engagement**.

Role of Innovation in Governance

Innovation-driven policymaking focuses on:

- **Adoption of emerging technologies**
- **Digital transformation of governance systems**
- **Public-private collaboration**

Such approaches enhance **efficiency, transparency, and service delivery** in governance.

India's Role in Global Policy Platforms

India has increasingly hosted major international forums such as:

- G20 Summit 2023

- Raisina Dialogue

These platforms strengthen India's role in **global governance and international cooperation**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Policy Platform:** NXT 2026 Conclave is emerging as a **major forum for policy dialogue and innovation**.
- **Speaker's Statement:** Remarks made by the **Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla**.
- **Global Participation:** Brings together **policy makers, innovators, and international stakeholders**.
- **Innovation Focus:** Discussions on **technology, governance, and digital transformation**.
- **International Cooperation:** Encourages **collaborative approaches to global challenges**.
- **Strategic Importance:** Enhances India's role as a **hub for global policy discussions**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Lok Sabha Speaker

- Presiding officer of the **Lower House of Parliament**
- Responsible for **maintaining order and regulating debates**

Policy Conclaves

- Platforms for **dialogue among governments, industry, and academia**

Examples of Major Global Forums Hosted by India

- Raisina Dialogue
- G20 Summit 2023

Importance of Innovation Platforms

- Promote **policy experimentation and global cooperation**
- Support **technology-driven governance**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **policy conclaves and international forums**:

1. Policy conclaves serve as platforms for dialogue among policymakers, experts, and industry leaders.
2. Such forums facilitate knowledge exchange and international cooperation on global challenges.
3. They are exclusively limited to domestic policy discussions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

2.STATUS OF AATMANIRBHARTA MISSION IN PULSES



सत्यमेव जयते

कृषि एवं किसान
कल्याण मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
**AGRICULTURE AND
FARMERS WELFARE**

- The **Aatmanirbharta Mission in Pulses** focuses on increasing domestic production of pulses through **enhanced productivity, improved seed varieties, and expansion of cultivation areas.**
- The mission aims to reduce India's dependence on imports of pulses while ensuring **nutritional security and stable supply of protein-rich food.**
- Key measures include **procurement support, price incentives, research on high-yield varieties, and promotion of pulses cultivation in suitable regions.**
- The initiative also supports farmers by **improving market access, strengthening procurement mechanisms, and stabilizing prices through Minimum Support Price (MSP) policies.**
- Achieving self-reliance in pulses is crucial for **food security, agricultural sustainability, and income enhancement for farmers.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Importance of Pulses in India

Pulses are an essential component of the Indian diet as a major **source of plant-based protein.**

Key characteristics:

- Rich in **protein, fibre, and micronutrients**
- Improve **soil fertility through nitrogen fixation**
- Require **relatively less water compared to many other crops**

India is both the **largest producer and consumer of pulses globally.**

Major Pulse Crops in India

Important pulses grown in India include:

- **Gram (Chickpea)**
- **Tur/Arhar (Pigeon pea)**
- **Urad (Black gram)**
- **Moong (Green gram)**
- **Masoor (Lentil)**

These crops are cultivated mainly during the **Rabi and Kharif seasons.**

Policy Support for Pulses

The government supports pulse production through:

- **Minimum Support Price (MSP)**
- **Procurement mechanisms**
- **Distribution under food security programmes**

Procurement is undertaken by agencies such as National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Mission Objective:** Achieve **self-reliance in pulses production.**
- **Production Boost:** Focus on **higher productivity and expanded cultivation area.**
- **Seed Development:** Promotion of **improved and high-yielding seed varieties.**
- **Farmer Support:** MSP and procurement mechanisms to ensure **price stability.**
- **Import Reduction:** Reduce dependence on **pulse imports.**
- **Nutritional Security:** Pulses provide **protein-rich food for the population.**
- **Soil Health:** Pulse crops improve **soil fertility through nitrogen fixation.**

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Major Pulses in India

- Gram (Chickpea)
- Tur/Arhar (Pigeon pea)
- Moong (Green gram)
- Urad (Black gram)
- Masoor (Lentil)

Nitrogen Fixation

- Pulses host **Rhizobium bacteria** in root nodules
- Helps improve **soil fertility**

Key Procurement Agency

- National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India

Policy Tools

- **Minimum Support Price (MSP)**
- **Price support schemes**
- **Research on improved seed varieties**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **pulses cultivation in India:**

1. Pulses help improve soil fertility through nitrogen fixation.
2. India is one of the largest producers and consumers of pulses in the world.
3. Pulses are primarily grown only during the Kharif season.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

3. FIRST EXPORT OF GI-TAGGED JOHA RICE FROM ASSAM TO UK AND ITALY FACILITATED BY APEDA



- The export of **Joha rice**, a traditional aromatic rice variety from Assam, marks an important milestone in promoting **Geographical Indication (GI) products from Northeast India**.
- Facilitated by APEDA, the export strengthens **global market access for region-specific agricultural products** while ensuring authenticity and quality through GI certification.
- The move also supports **farmer collectives, producer organisations, and exporters** in the region.
- Promoting GI-tagged products internationally enhances **India's agri-exports, rural livelihoods, and brand value of indigenous agricultural produce**.
- This step aligns with broader efforts to **diversify agricultural exports and integrate small farmers into global value chains**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Joha Rice

Joha rice is a **short-grain aromatic rice variety traditionally grown in Assam**.

Key features:

- Distinct **fragrance and soft texture**
- Popular in **traditional Assamese cuisine**
- Cultivated mainly in **Upper Assam regions**

Joha rice received **Geographical Indication (GI) status** due to its **unique regional characteristics**.

Geographical Indication (GI) Tag

A **Geographical Indication** identifies goods that originate from a specific region where **quality, reputation, or characteristics are linked to the geographical origin**.

GI tags in India are governed under the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999.

Examples of GI-tagged products include:

- Darjeeling Tea
- Basmati Rice

Role of APEDA

The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority operates under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Its functions include:

- **Promotion of agricultural exports**
- **Quality certification and export standards**
- **Market development for Indian agri-products**

APEDA plays a crucial role in promoting **GI-tagged agricultural products** internationally.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **First Export:** GI-tagged **Joha rice** exported to the **UK and Italy**.
- **Facilitating Agency:** Export facilitated by **APEDA**.
- **Regional Product:** Joha rice is a **traditional aromatic rice from Assam**.
- **GI Promotion:** Enhances global visibility of **Geographical Indication products**.
- **Farmer Benefits:** Improves **income opportunities for farmers and producer groups**.
- **Export Diversification:** Supports **expansion of India's agricultural exports**.
- **Northeast Focus:** Promotes **agricultural products from the Northeast region**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

GI Law in India

- Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999

GI Definition

- Products whose **quality or reputation is linked to a specific geographical origin**

Joha Rice

- **Aromatic rice variety from Assam**
- Known for **distinct fragrance and soft texture**

Export Promotion Body

- Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority

Examples of GI Products

- Darjeeling Tea
- Basmati Rice

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **Geographical Indication (GI) tagged agricultural products**:

1. A GI tag identifies products whose qualities or reputation are linked to a specific geographical origin.
2. The Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 governs GI registration in India.
3. APEDA plays a role in promoting export of GI-tagged agricultural products.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

4.C-DOT ORGANISES DEMO DAY FOR 18 STARTUPS UNDER 'SAMARTH' INCUBATION PROGRAM (COHORT-II)



- The **Samarth Incubation Program** by C-DOT aims to **promote innovation and entrepreneurship in telecom and information technology sectors**.
- Under Cohort-II, **18 startups presented their technological solutions** during the Demo Day, highlighting advancements in areas such as **telecommunications, digital infrastructure, and emerging technologies**.
- The initiative provides **mentorship, technical support, infrastructure, and networking opportunities** to startups.
- Such programs strengthen India's **telecom innovation ecosystem**, encourage **indigenous technology development**, and support the country's push towards **digital self-reliance**.
- The platform also connects startups with **industry leaders, investors, and policymakers**, accelerating the commercialization of innovative technologies.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT)

The Centre for Development of Telematics is a **telecom technology development centre of the Government of India**.

It functions under the Department of Telecommunications.

Key roles include:

- Development of **indigenous telecom technologies**
- Research in **next-generation communication systems**
- Promotion of **telecom innovation and startups**

Samarth Incubation Program

The **Samarth Program** is a startup incubation initiative by C-DOT aimed at:

- Supporting **early-stage technology startups**
- Providing **mentorship and infrastructure**
- Facilitating **industry collaboration and funding opportunities**

Focus areas include:

- **Telecom technologies**
- **5G and next-generation networks**
- **Artificial Intelligence and IoT applications**
- **Digital infrastructure solutions**

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

C-DOT

- Established in **1984**
- Autonomous telecom R&D centre under the Department of Telecommunications

Samarth Incubation Program

- Startup incubation initiative for **telecom and digital technology startups**

Focus Areas

- **Telecommunications**
- **5G technologies**
- **IoT applications**
- **Artificial Intelligence**

Purpose of Incubation

- Promote **innovation and technology commercialization**
- Support **startup ecosystem development**

Startup Incubation in India

Incubation programs play a key role in strengthening the **startup ecosystem** by offering:

- **Technical guidance and mentorship**
- **Access to research facilities**
- **Investor and industry networking**
- **Commercialization support**

These initiatives contribute to **innovation-driven economic growth and technology development.**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Organising Institution:** Demo Day organised by **C-DOT**.
- **Program:** Cohort-II of the **Samarth Incubation Program**.
- **Startup Participation:** **18 startups showcased telecom and ICT innovations.**
- **Innovation Focus:** Solutions related to **telecom, digital infrastructure, and emerging technologies.**
- **Startup Support:** Provides **mentorship, infrastructure, and networking opportunities.**
- **Strategic Goal:** Promote **indigenous telecom innovation and digital self-reliance.**
- **Industry Linkages:** Connects startups with **investors, industry experts, and policymakers.**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding the **Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT)**:

1. C-DOT functions under the Department of Telecommunications.
2. The Samarth Incubation Program aims to support startups working in telecom and digital technologies.

3. C-DOT primarily regulates telecom tariffs in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

5.PROGRESS OF SCHEME ON ENHANCEMENT OF COMPETITIVENESS IN INDIAN CAPITAL GOODS SECTOR



DEPARTMENT FOR PROMOTION OF
INDUSTRY AND INTERNAL TRADE
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

- The scheme aims to **strengthen India's capital goods sector by improving technology development, innovation, and manufacturing capabilities.**

- Capital goods such as **machinery, equipment, and industrial tools** are essential for the growth of manufacturing and infrastructure sectors.
- Through initiatives such as **technology development funds, skill development, and research support**, the government seeks to enhance **domestic production and reduce dependence on imports.**
- The program also promotes **industry-academia collaboration, testing facilities, and standards development** to boost competitiveness.
- Strengthening the capital goods sector contributes to **industrial growth, job creation, and the development of a resilient manufacturing ecosystem.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Capital Goods Sector

Capital goods refer to **machines, equipment, and tools used to produce other goods and services.**

Examples include:

- Industrial machinery**
- Electrical equipment**
- Machine tools**
- Heavy engineering products**

The sector acts as a **backbone for manufacturing and infrastructure development.**

National Capital Goods Policy, 2016

The scheme aligns with the objectives of the National Capital Goods Policy, 2016.

Key goals of the policy include:

- Increasing the **share of capital goods sector in manufacturing**
- Expanding **exports of capital goods**
- Promoting **technology development and innovation**
- Enhancing **skill development in engineering sectors**

Importance for Industrial Growth

A strong capital goods sector enables:

- **Technological self-reliance**
- **Reduced import dependency**
- **Growth of domestic manufacturing**
- **Support for sectors such as energy, infrastructure, and transport**

It also contributes to initiatives such as **Make in India and industrial modernization**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Scheme Objective:** Enhance **competitiveness of the Indian capital goods sector**.
- **Implementing Department:** Managed by **DPIIT under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry**.
- **Technology Development:** Supports **R&D and innovation in industrial equipment**.
- **Industry–Academia Collaboration:** Encourages **joint research and skill development**.

- **Infrastructure Support:** Development of **testing facilities and technology centers**.
- **Import Reduction:** Promotes **domestic manufacturing of capital goods**.
- **Economic Impact:** Strengthens **manufacturing ecosystem and industrial growth**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Capital Goods

- Goods used for **producing other goods or services**
- Examples: **machinery, equipment, machine tools**

Key Policy

- National Capital Goods Policy, 2016

Implementing Authority

- Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade

Importance

- Supports **manufacturing and infrastructure sectors**
- Enhances **technological capability and industrial productivity**

PadhAI–GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding the **capital goods sector**:

1. Capital goods are machines and equipment used to produce other goods and services.
2. The National Capital Goods Policy, 2016 aims to promote innovation and increase exports of capital goods.
3. The capital goods sector has no linkage with infrastructure development.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

1. FIRST NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON COLD WATER FISHERIES TO BE HELD IN SRINAGAR



- The upcoming **National Conference on Cold Water Fisheries** will bring together **scientists, policymakers, fisheries experts, and industry stakeholders** to deliberate on the development of this specialized sector.
- Cold water fisheries primarily involve species such as **trout and other fish adapted to low-temperature aquatic ecosystems** found in mountainous regions.
- The conference aims to promote **sustainable aquaculture practices, research collaboration, and value chain development** in cold water fisheries.
- Strengthening this sector can enhance **livelihood opportunities for communities in Himalayan states,**

while also improving **nutritional security and regional economic development.**

- The initiative aligns with broader efforts to promote **blue economy and sustainable fisheries management in India.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Cold Water Fisheries

Cold water fisheries refer to **fish species and aquaculture systems that thrive in low-temperature freshwater ecosystems,** usually found in **mountainous and high-altitude regions.**

Key characteristics:

- Water temperatures generally **below 20°C**
- Located in **Himalayan rivers, streams, and lakes**
- Require **specialized hatcheries and breeding techniques**

Common species include:

- **Rainbow Trout**
- **Brown Trout**

Geographical Distribution in India

Cold water fisheries are mainly found in:

- **Jammu & Kashmir**
- **Himachal Pradesh**
- **Uttarakhand**
- **Arunachal Pradesh**
- **Sikkim**

These regions possess **cold streams, rivers, and high-altitude lakes** suitable for such aquaculture.

Institutional Framework

Development of cold water fisheries involves collaboration between:

- Department of Fisheries
- Indian Council of Agricultural Research
- State fisheries departments and research institutions.

Research institutions under ICAR support **breeding technologies, hatchery development, and scientific management of fish resources.**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **First-of-its-Kind Event:** National conference dedicated to **cold water fisheries development.**
- **Organising Authority:** Conducted by the **Department of Fisheries, Government of India.**
- **Location:** Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir.
- **Sector Focus:** Development of **trout farming and cold water aquaculture.**
- **Stakeholder Participation:** Scientists, policymakers, industry experts, and farmers.
- **Regional Development:** Enhances **livelihood opportunities in Himalayan states.**
- **Sustainability Focus:** Promotes **scientific aquaculture and ecosystem conservation.**

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Cold Water Fisheries

- Aquaculture practiced in **low-temperature freshwater ecosystems**

Common Cold Water Fish Species

- **Rainbow Trout**
- **Brown Trout**

Major Regions in India

- **Jammu & Kashmir**
- **Himachal Pradesh**
- **Uttarakhand**
- **Arunachal Pradesh**
- **Sikkim**

Key Institution

- Indian Council of Agricultural Research

Importance

- Supports **livelihoods in hill regions**
- Enhances **nutritional security and rural income**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **cold water fisheries in India:**

1. Cold water fisheries are primarily practiced in high-altitude regions with low water temperatures.
2. Rainbow trout is a commonly cultured species in cold water fisheries.

3. Cold water fisheries are mainly concentrated in India's coastal regions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

2. GOVERNMENT REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO PEACE, STABILITY AND DIALOGUE IN LADAKH



- The Government emphasized its commitment to **peaceful governance and dialogue-based engagement in Ladakh**.
- Maintaining **law and order, stability, and mutual trust** is considered essential to facilitate **constructive discussions with local stakeholders and community representatives**.
- The approach includes **administrative reforms, development initiatives, and continuous engagement with local communities**.

- Ensuring stability in Ladakh is strategically significant due to its **sensitive geographical location and socio-cultural diversity**.
- The government's efforts aim to balance **regional development, democratic participation, and national security considerations**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Ladakh as a Union Territory

Ladakh became a **Union Territory without legislature in 2019** following the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019.

Key features:

- Administered by a **Lieutenant Governor**
- Directly governed by the **Central Government**

The UT includes two main districts:

- **Leh**
- **Kargil**

Local Governance Structure

Local administration in Ladakh involves:

- **Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC)** in Leh and Kargil
- District-level governance institutions
- Community organisations and civil society groups

These institutions play an important role in **local development planning and grassroots governance**.

Strategic Importance of Ladakh

Ladakh holds significant importance due to:

- **High-altitude Himalayan geography**
- Proximity to **international borders**
- Rich **cultural and ecological heritage**

Stability in the region is vital for **national security and socio-economic development**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Government Commitment:** Focus on **peace, stability, and mutual trust in Ladakh**.
- **Dialogue Approach:** Encouragement of **constructive engagement with stakeholders**.
- **Administrative Context:** Ladakh functions as a **Union Territory under central administration**.
- **Local Governance:** Role of **Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils**.
- **Strategic Importance:** Region has **geopolitical and national security significance**.
- **Development Focus:** Emphasis on **inclusive development and community participation**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Union Territory Status

- Ladakh created under the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019

Administrative Structure

- Governed by a **Lieutenant Governor**
- No legislative assembly

Local Institutions

- **Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (Leh)**
- **Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (Kargil)**

Strategic Significance

- High-altitude region bordering **China and Pakistan**
- Important for **national security and Himalayan ecology**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **Ladakh**:

1. Ladakh became a Union Territory following the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019.
2. Ladakh has a legislative assembly similar to Delhi and Puducherry.
3. Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils function at the district level.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 3 only
(b) 1 only

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

Answer: (a)

3.REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON TELE-LAW PROGRAMME UNDER DISHA SCHEME HELD IN CHENNAI



- The workshop focused on improving the implementation of the **Tele-Law Programme**, which provides **legal advice to citizens through digital platforms and Common Service Centres (CSCs)**.
- Tele-Law aims to bridge the **gap between legal institutions and rural or remote populations** by enabling access to lawyers via **video conferencing and digital communication**.
- Officials, legal experts, and stakeholders discussed **best practices, challenges, and strategies to expand legal service outreach**.
- The initiative promotes **access to justice, legal awareness, and inclusive governance**, particularly for **marginalized and rural communities**.
- Strengthening Tele-Law contributes to **digital governance and equitable**

legal empowerment across the country.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Tele-Law Programme

The **Tele-Law Programme** was launched by the Department of Justice.

It enables citizens to obtain **legal advice from panel lawyers through video conferencing at Common Service Centres**.

Key objectives:

- Improve **access to legal services**
- Support **legal awareness and empowerment**
- Assist **economically weaker and marginalized section**

DISHA Scheme

The **DISHA Scheme** stands for **Designing Innovative Solutions for Holistic Access to Justice**.

It integrates multiple legal empowerment initiatives such as:

- **Tele-Law Programme**
- **Nyaya Bandhu (Pro Bono Legal Services)**
- **Legal literacy and awareness programs**

The scheme aims to **strengthen justice delivery through digital tools and institutional collaboration**.

Common Service Centres (CSCs)

Common Service Centres serve as **digital access points in rural and remote areas**.

They provide services such as:

- **e-Governance services**
- **Digital payments**
- **Legal consultations through Tele-Law**

CSCs play a crucial role in **bridging the digital divide and improving public service delivery**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Event:** Regional Workshop on the **Tele-Law Programme**.
- **Location:** Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
- **Implementing Authority:** Department of Justice.
- **Scheme:** Conducted under the **DISHA Scheme**.
- **Digital Legal Access:** Provides **legal advice via video conferencing at CSCs**.
- **Target Beneficiaries:** Rural citizens, marginalized communities, and economically weaker sections.
- **Governance Impact:** Enhances **access to justice through digital governance tools**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

DISHA Scheme

- **Designing Innovative Solutions for Holistic Access to Justice**
- Implemented by the **Department of Justice**

Tele-Law Programme

- Legal advice delivered through **Common Service Centres (CSCs)**
- Uses **video conferencing and digital platforms**

Common Service Centres (CSCs)

- Part of the **Digital India initiative**
- Provide **digital services in rural areas**

Other Justice Initiatives

- **Nyaya Bandhu (Pro Bono Legal Services Programme)**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding the **Tele-Law Programme**:

1. It provides legal advice to citizens through digital platforms at Common Service Centres.
2. The programme is implemented by the Department of Justice.
3. It primarily focuses on providing legal services only in urban areas.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

4. GRAMODYOG VIKAS YOJANA: KVIC'S INITIATIVE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES



- The **Gramodyog Vikas Yojana (GVY)** focuses on strengthening the **Khadi and Village Industries (KVI)** sector by improving **production capacity, technology adoption, and market access**.
- It supports artisans and rural entrepreneurs through **modern equipment, skill development, and infrastructure assistance**.
- The scheme seeks to enhance **employment generation in rural areas** while preserving **traditional crafts and local industries**.
- Promotion of village industries contributes to **inclusive economic growth, rural development, and self-reliance**.
- The initiative also aligns with broader national goals such as **Atmanirbhar Bharat and rural entrepreneurship development**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)

The Khadi and Village Industries Commission is a **statutory body established under the Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act, 1956**.

It functions under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.

Key functions:

- Promotion of **Khadi and village industries**
- **Skill development and training for artisans**
- **Financial assistance and infrastructure support**
- Marketing and promotion of **Khadi products**

Gramodyog Vikas Yojana (GVY)

The **Gramodyog Vikas Yojana** is an umbrella scheme covering several initiatives to support the **village industries sector**.

Key objectives:

- **Modernization of production units**
- **Capacity building of artisans**
- **Promotion of rural enterprises**
- **Improvement in product quality and competitiveness**

The scheme aims to create **sustainable livelihood opportunities in rural areas**.

Importance of Khadi and Village Industries

The KVI sector plays a crucial role in:

- **Employment generation in rural areas**
- **Promotion of traditional crafts**
- **Balanced regional development**
- **Support to micro and small enterprises**

It also contributes to **sustainable and eco-friendly production practices**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Implementing Agency:** KVIC under the Ministry of MSME.
- **Scheme:** Gramodyog Vikas Yojana (GVY).
- **Sector Focus:** Development of **Khadi and Village Industries**.
- **Technology Upgradation:** Provision of **modern tools and equipment**.
- **Skill Development:** Training programs for **artisans and entrepreneurs**.
- **Rural Employment:** Supports **livelihood opportunities in rural areas**.
- **Cultural Preservation:** Promotes **traditional crafts and indigenous industries**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Khadi

- Hand-spun and handwoven cloth traditionally produced using a **charkha (spinning wheel)**.

KVIC

- Khadi and Village Industries Commission

- Statutory body under the **Ministry of MSME**

KVIC Act

- **Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act, 1956**

Village Industries

Examples include:

- **Pottery**
- **Beekeeping**
- **Handmade paper**
- **Agro-based rural industries**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding the **Khadi and Village Industries sector in India**:

1. The Khadi and Village Industries Commission is a statutory body under the Ministry of MSME.
2. Gramodyog Vikas Yojana aims to promote modernization and development of village industries.
3. Khadi fabric is traditionally produced using power looms.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

5. INTER-MINISTERIAL BRIEFING HELD ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN WEST ASIA



विदेश मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Major countries include:

- Saudi Arabia
- Iran
- Israel
- United Arab Emirates
- Qatar

The region is strategically important due to **energy resources, maritime routes, and geopolitical dynamics.**

Importance of West Asia for India

West Asia holds significant importance for India in several areas:

Energy Security

- A large share of India's **crude oil and natural gas imports** comes from this region.

Indian Diaspora

- Millions of Indian workers reside in countries such as United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia.

Trade and Connectivity

- West Asia is a **key partner for trade, investment, and maritime connectivity.**

Inter-Ministerial Coordination

Inter-ministerial consultations involve coordination between multiple government departments, including:

- Ministry of External Affairs
- Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas

- The inter-ministerial briefing focused on evaluating **recent political, security, and economic developments in the West Asia region.**
- Officials from various ministries discussed **potential implications for India's strategic, economic, and diaspora interests.**
- West Asia remains critical for India due to its **energy supplies, trade linkages, and presence of a large Indian diaspora.**
- The consultation helps ensure **coordinated policy planning, diplomatic engagement, and contingency preparedness.**
- Such discussions highlight the importance of **whole-of-government approaches in addressing evolving geopolitical developments.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

West Asia (Middle East)

West Asia refers to a geopolitically significant region connecting **Asia, Europe, and Africa.**

- Ministry of Defence
- Ministry of Commerce and Industry

This ensures **coherent policy responses to international developments**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Government Consultation:** Inter-ministerial briefing held on **recent developments in West Asia**.
- **Coordinating Ministry:** Led by the **Ministry of External Affairs**.
- **Policy Objective:** Assess **strategic, economic, and security implications** for India.
- **Energy Linkages:** Region critical for **India's oil and gas imports**.
- **Diaspora Factor:** Large **Indian community in West Asian countries**.
- **Strategic Coordination:** Involves multiple ministries to ensure **integrated foreign policy response**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

West Asia

- Geopolitical region often referred to as the **Middle East**.

Importance for India

- **Energy imports**
- **Indian diaspora**
- **Trade and connectivity**

Key Indian Ministry

- Ministry of External Affairs

Strategic Significance

- Contains major **global energy reserves**
- Important **maritime trade routes**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **West Asia and India's strategic interests**:

1. West Asia is a major source of crude oil imports for India.
2. A large Indian diaspora resides in several West Asian countries.
3. The Ministry of External Affairs is responsible for coordinating India's foreign policy responses.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

to elect representatives to state legislatures.

1. SCHEDULE ANNOUNCED FOR GENERAL ELECTIONS TO LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLIES OF ASSAM, KERALA, TAMIL NADU, WEST BENGAL AND PUDUCHERRY



- The Election Commission has declared the **election schedule for five legislative assemblies**, initiating the democratic process of electing state governments.
- The elections will be conducted in **multiple phases using Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) with VVPAT systems**, ensuring transparency and integrity.
- The announcement activates the **Model Code of Conduct**, regulating political conduct during the election period.
- The process involves stages such as **notification, nomination filing, scrutiny, withdrawal, polling, and counting of votes**.
- These elections are a crucial component of **India's federal democratic system**, enabling citizens

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Election Commission of India

The Election Commission of India is an **independent constitutional authority responsible for conducting elections in India**.

It is established under **Article 324 of the Constitution of India**.

Key responsibilities include:

- Conducting **elections to Parliament and State Legislatures**
- Supervising **elections to the offices of President and Vice-President**
- Ensuring **free and fair electoral processes**

Model Code of Conduct (MCC)

The **Model Code of Conduct** is a set of **guidelines issued by the Election Commission** to regulate the conduct of political parties and candidates during elections.

Key provisions include:

- Restrictions on **government announcements or new schemes**
- Guidelines on **campaigning and public meetings**
- Prohibition of **misuse of official machinery for election purposes**

The MCC becomes effective **from the date of election schedule announcement**.

Election Process in India

The election process typically includes:

1. **Notification of Election**
2. **Filing of Nominations**
3. **Scrutiny of Nominations**
4. **Withdrawal of Candidature**
5. **Polling**
6. **Counting of Votes**
7. **Declaration of Results**

Voting is conducted using Electronic Voting Machine along with Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail for transparency.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Election Announcement:** Schedule declared by the **Election Commission of India**.
- **States Involved:** Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Puducherry.
- **MCC Enforcement:** **Model Code of Conduct** comes into force immediately.
- **Voting Technology:** Elections conducted using **EVMs and VVPAT systems**.
- **Phased Polling:** Elections may be conducted in **multiple phases for logistical and security reasons**.
- **Democratic Significance:** Ensures **periodic elections and democratic governance in states**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Article 324

- Empowers the **Election Commission of India** to supervise elections.

Election Commission of India

- Constitutional body
- Responsible for **conducting elections to Parliament and State Legislatures**

Voting Technology

- Electronic Voting Machine
- Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail

Model Code of Conduct

- Enforced **immediately after election schedule announcement**
- Ensures **fair election campaigning**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **elections in India**:

1. Article 324 of the Constitution provides for the establishment of the Election Commission of India.
2. The Model Code of Conduct comes into effect immediately after the election schedule is announced.
3. Electronic Voting Machines are used along with VVPAT systems in elections.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

2.GCWAS-2026 CONCLUDES WITH RENEWED GLOBAL COMMITMENT TO EMPOWER WOMEN IN AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS



- The **GCWAS-2026 conference** highlighted the critical role women play across the **agriculture and food value chain**, from production to processing and marketing.
- Participants emphasized the need for **gender-responsive policies, improved access to finance, technology, and capacity-building for women farmers and entrepreneurs.**
- Discussions also focused on strengthening **women-led cooperatives, farmer producer organisations, and rural enterprises.**
- The conference concluded with a renewed commitment to **integrating gender perspectives into agri-food**

systems, promoting inclusive growth, food security, and sustainable rural development.

- Such initiatives align with global efforts toward **equitable agricultural transformation and women's economic empowerment.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Women in Agri-Food Systems

Women constitute a significant share of the **agricultural workforce globally**, particularly in developing countries.

Their roles include:

- **Crop production and livestock management**
- **Post-harvest processing**
- **Food distribution and marketing**

Despite their contribution, women often face **limited access to land, credit, technology, and extension services.**

Agri-Food Systems

Agri-food systems refer to the **entire chain of activities involved in producing, processing, distributing, and consuming food.**

Components include:

- **Agricultural production**
- **Food processing and storage**
- **Transportation and marketing**
- **Consumption and nutrition**

Transforming these systems is essential for **sustainable development and food security.**

Global Frameworks Supporting Women in Agriculture

Efforts to empower women in agriculture align with global goals such as:

- Sustainable Development Goals
- SDG 5
- SDG 2

Promoting women's participation helps achieve **inclusive economic growth and sustainable agriculture**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Global Conference:** GCWAS-2026 held in **New Delhi**.
- **Primary Focus:** Empowering **women in agri-food systems**.
- **Policy Discussions:** Gender-responsive agricultural policies and programs.
- **Economic Empowerment:** Strengthening **women farmers, cooperatives, and rural entrepreneurs**.
- **Access to Resources:** Need for improved **credit, technology, and market access**.
- **Global Commitment:** Reinforces international collaboration for **gender-inclusive agriculture**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Agri-Food System

- Entire chain from **farm production to food consumption**

Women in Agriculture

- Play major roles in **crop cultivation, livestock rearing, and food processing**

Relevant SDGs

- SDG 5
- SDG 2

Importance

- Gender-inclusive agriculture improves **food security, productivity, and rural livelihoods**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **agri-food systems and women's participation**:

1. Agri-food systems include activities from agricultural production to food consumption.
2. Women play significant roles in agriculture but often face limited access to resources such as credit and land.
3. Promoting women's participation in agriculture contributes to achieving Sustainable Development Goals related to gender equality and food security.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (d)

3. BCCL ORGANISES INTERACTION WITH NRS LINKAGE AND CIL SWMA E-AUCTION CONSUMERS



- The interaction aimed to strengthen coordination between **coal suppliers and industrial consumers** under the **NRS linkage and SWMA e-auction systems**.
- Discussions focused on **coal supply management, allocation procedures, and operational challenges faced by consumers**.
- The initiative reflects efforts to enhance **transparency, efficiency, and responsiveness in coal distribution mechanisms**.
- Improving communication with consumers helps ensure **reliable coal supply for industries such as steel, power, and cement**.
- Such engagements are important for maintaining **energy security and smooth functioning of industrial supply chains**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL)

Bharat Coking Coal Limited is a subsidiary of Coal India Limited.

Key features:

- Major producer of **coking coal in India**
- Headquarters in **Dhanbad, Jharkhand**
- Supplies coal mainly to the **steel industry**

Non-Regulated Sector (NRS) Linkage

The **Non-Regulated Sector (NRS)** includes industries not covered under regulated coal allocation mechanisms.

Examples include:

- **Cement**
- **Steel (non-integrated plants)**
- **Textiles**
- **Brick kilns**

Coal supply to these sectors is facilitated through **linkage allocations and auction mechanisms**.

SWMA e-Auction

The **Single Window Mode Auction (SWMA)** is an **online coal auction platform** developed by Coal India Limited.

Key features:

- Transparent **electronic bidding process**

- Allocation of coal to **non-regulated sector consumers**
- Improved **efficiency and fairness in coal distribution**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Organising Company:** Interaction conducted by **BCCL**.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Meeting held with **NRS linkage consumers and SWMA e-auction participants**.
- **Coal Distribution Mechanism:** Focus on **linkage supply and e-auction systems**.
- **Operational Coordination:** Addressed **supply challenges and logistics issues**.
- **Industrial Importance:** Coal supplied to **steel, cement, and other industries**.
- **Transparency Goal:** Promotes **efficient and transparent coal allocation**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL)

- Subsidiary of Coal India Limited
- Major producer of **coking coal**

Coking Coal

- Used primarily in **steel manufacturing**

Non-Regulated Sector (NRS)

- Industries **not covered under regulated coal supply**

SWMA e-Auction

- **Single Window Mode Auction**
- Online coal allocation platform developed by **CIL**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **coal supply mechanisms in India**:

1. Bharat Coking Coal Limited is a subsidiary of Coal India Limited.
2. Coking coal is primarily used in steel production.
3. The SWMA e-auction system facilitates transparent allocation of coal to non-regulated sector consumers.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

4. WARFARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN; TRADITIONAL MAN-TO-MAN COMBAT GRADUALLY REDUCING: DR. JITENDRA SINGH



- Modern warfare is witnessing a major transformation with the **integration of advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence, drones, cyber capabilities, and space-based surveillance**.
- According to Dr. Jitendra Singh, the nature of conflict is shifting from **conventional battlefield engagements to technology-centric operations**.
- Technologies like **unmanned systems, cyber warfare tools, and satellite intelligence** are increasingly shaping defence strategies.
- This transformation underscores the need for **strong research ecosystems, indigenous defence technologies, and collaboration between scientific institutions and the armed forces**.
- Strengthening technological capabilities in defence is critical for

national security, strategic deterrence, and future warfare preparedness.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Changing Nature of Warfare

Traditional warfare primarily involved **direct military confrontation between soldiers on the battlefield**.

However, contemporary conflicts increasingly rely on:

- **Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs)**
- **Cyber warfare capabilities**
- **Artificial intelligence and automation**
- **Satellite-based surveillance**

These developments are collectively referred to as **technology-driven or network-centric warfare**.

Role of Emerging Technologies

Key technologies influencing modern warfare include:

Artificial Intelligence

- Decision support systems
- Autonomous weapons platforms

Cyber Warfare

- Protection of **critical digital infrastructure**
- Offensive cyber operations

Space Technology

- Satellite-based **communication, navigation, and surveillance**

India's defence technology ecosystem involves institutions such as the Defence Research and Development Organisation.

India's Defence Modernization

India has been promoting **indigenous defence technology development** under initiatives like:

- Atmanirbhar Bharat in defence manufacturing
- Strengthening collaboration between **research institutions, startups, and armed forces**

These efforts aim to **enhance strategic autonomy in defence technologies**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Minister's Statement:** Dr. Jitendra Singh highlighted the **technology-driven nature of modern warfare**.
- **Decline of Traditional Combat:** Direct man-to-man combat is **gradually decreasing**.
- **Emerging Technologies:** Greater use of **AI, drones, cyber warfare, and satellite systems**.
- **Strategic Importance:** Technology is central to **future military preparedness**.
- **Research Ecosystem:** Emphasis on **scientific innovation and defence R&D**.
- **Indigenous Capability:** Supports **self-reliance in defence technologies**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Modern Warfare Technologies

- **Artificial Intelligence**
- **Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs)**
- **Cyber warfare tools**
- **Satellite surveillance systems**

Key Defence R&D Institution

- Defence Research and Development Organisation

Strategic Concept

- **Network-Centric Warfare** – integration of information systems, sensors, and communication networks in military operations.

Policy Link

- Atmanirbhar Bharat in defence manufacturing.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **modern warfare**:

1. Modern warfare increasingly relies on technologies such as drones, artificial intelligence, and cyber capabilities.
2. Satellite-based systems play an important role in military communication and surveillance.
3. Traditional battlefield combat has completely disappeared in modern conflicts.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

5.NHAI TO REVISE FASTAG ANNUAL PASS FEE FROM 1 APRIL 2026 FOR FY 2026–27



- The revision of the FASTag annual pass fee is part of the government's efforts to **streamline electronic toll collection and improve highway user services**.
- FASTag uses **Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology** to enable automatic toll payment without stopping at toll plazas.
- Adjustments in the annual pass fee help maintain **efficient toll infrastructure operations and highway maintenance funding**.
- The initiative supports the broader objective of **digitisation of road**

transport services and reduction of congestion at toll plazas.

- It also contributes to improved **fuel efficiency, travel time reduction, and transparency in toll collection**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

FASTag System

The FASTag is an **electronic toll collection mechanism** introduced to facilitate **cashless toll payments on highways**.

Key features:

- Uses **RFID technology**
- Linked to **bank accounts or prepaid wallets**
- Allows **automatic deduction of toll charges**

FASTag is mandatory for vehicles on **national highways**.

National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)

The National Highways Authority of India operates under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

Key responsibilities include:

- **Development and maintenance of national highways**
- **Toll management and infrastructure development**

- Implementation of **digital toll collection systems**

Benefits of Electronic Toll Collection

Electronic tolling provides several advantages:

- **Reduced waiting time at toll plazas**
- **Lower fuel consumption and emissions**
- **Transparent and efficient toll collection**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Authority:** Revision announced by NHAI.
- **Effective Date:** 1 April 2026 for FY 2026–27.
- **Technology Used:** FASTag electronic toll collection system.
- **Digital Payment:** Enables **cashless toll transactions** using RFID.
- **Operational Efficiency:** Helps reduce **congestion at toll plazas**.
- **Infrastructure Support:** Generates funds for **highway maintenance and development**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

FASTag

- Electronic toll collection system based on **RFID technology**

Implementing Authority

- National Highways Authority of India

Parent Ministry

- Ministry of Road Transport and Highways

Advantages

- **Cashless toll payments**
- **Reduced travel time**
- **Lower fuel consumption**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **FASTag**:

1. FASTag uses Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology for electronic toll collection.
2. FASTag enables automatic deduction of toll charges without stopping vehicles at toll plazas.
3. The system is implemented by the National Highways Authority of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

1. 16TH REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES, LAW AND JUSTICE



- Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committees play a crucial role in **strengthening parliamentary oversight and accountability**.
- The **16th report** examines matters under ministries dealing with **personnel management, administrative reforms, and legal affairs**.
- Through detailed review and consultations, the committee provides **recommendations aimed at improving policy implementation, transparency, and institutional efficiency**.
- Such reports assist Parliament in **scrutinising government**

functioning and enhancing legislative deliberation.

- The committee system thus strengthens **democratic governance, evidence-based policymaking, and executive accountability**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committees (DRSCs)

Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committees were introduced in **1993** to enhance **parliamentary scrutiny of government policies and expenditure**.

They examine:

- **Demands for Grants of ministries**
- **Bills referred by Parliament**
- **Annual reports of ministries**
- **Policy issues and administrative performance**

Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice

This committee oversees ministries such as:

- Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions
- Ministry of Law and Justice

Key areas covered include:

- **Civil services administration**

- **Public grievance redressal mechanisms**
- **Legal and judicial affairs**
- **Administrative reforms**

Role of Parliamentary Committees

Parliamentary committees perform several important functions:

- **Detailed scrutiny of policies and legislation**
- **Improved legislative oversight**
- **Expert consultations and stakeholder engagement**
- **Bipartisan examination of governance issues**

They are often referred to as “**mini-Parliaments**” due to their detailed and technical review process.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Report Number:** 161st Report of the Standing Committee.
- **Committee Domain:** Personnel, Public Grievances, and Law & Justice.
- **Parliamentary Oversight:** Reviews policies and administrative functioning.
- **Governance Focus:** Addresses issues of **civil services, legal administration, and grievance redressal**.
- **Policy Recommendations:** Provides suggestions for **improving**

institutional efficiency and accountability.

- **Democratic Importance:** Strengthens **legislative scrutiny and transparency in governance.**

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committees (DRSCs)

- Introduced in **1993**
- Strengthen **legislative oversight**

Total DRSCs

- **24 committees** in Parliament

Composition

- Members from **Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha**

Key Functions

- Examine **Demands for Grants**
- Scrutinise **Bills and policies**
- Review **annual reports of ministries**

Relevant Ministries under the Committee

- Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions
- Ministry of Law and Justice

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committees (DRSCs)**:

1. DRSCs were introduced in India in 1993 to strengthen parliamentary oversight.
2. They examine Demands for Grants of ministries and may review bills referred to them.
3. They consist only of members from the Lok Sabha.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

2.ECI APPOINTS SPECIAL OBSERVER FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION TO THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ASSAM, 2026



- The Election Commission appoints **Special Observers during sensitive**

or high-stakes elections to reinforce oversight of the electoral process.

- The Special Observer will **supervise election preparations, law and order arrangements, and adherence to electoral guidelines** in Assam.
- Such appointments enhance **coordination among election officials, security agencies, and local administration.**
- The initiative helps address **logistical, administrative, or security concerns during elections.**
- It reflects the Commission's commitment to **maintaining electoral integrity and public trust in democratic institutions.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Election Commission of India

The Election Commission of India is a **constitutional body established under Article 324 of the Constitution of India.**

Its functions include:

- Conducting **elections to Parliament and State Legislatures**
- Supervising **Presidential and Vice-Presidential elections**
- Ensuring **free and fair electoral processes**

Role of Election Observers

Election observers are senior officers appointed by the **Election Commission** to monitor different aspects of the electoral process.

Types of observers include:

- **General Observers** – monitor overall election administration
- **Expenditure Observers** – monitor election spending
- **Police Observers** – oversee law and order arrangements
- **Special Observers** – appointed in sensitive or complex electoral situations

Their presence strengthens **transparency and compliance with election rules**.

Model Code of Conduct

The **Model Code of Conduct (MCC)** regulates the behaviour of **political parties and candidates during elections**.

It comes into force **immediately after the announcement of the election schedule**.

Key provisions include:

- Restrictions on **government announcements**
- Regulation of **campaign activities**
- Prevention of **misuse of official machinery**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Authority:** Appointment made by the **Election Commission of India**.
- **Election Concerned:** **Assam Legislative Assembly Election 2026**.
- **Role:** Special Observer to supervise **election management and compliance**.
- **Monitoring Function:** Ensures **law and order, electoral integrity, and transparency**.
- **Administrative Coordination:** Works with **election officials and security agencies**.
- **Democratic Significance:** Strengthens **free and fair electoral processes**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Article 324

- Provides for the **superintendence, direction, and control of elections** by the Election Commission.

Election Observers

- Appointed by the **Election Commission of India** to monitor elections.

Types of Observers

- **General Observer**
- **Expenditure Observer**
- **Police Observer**

- **Special Observer**

Model Code of Conduct

- Comes into force **from the date of election announcement.**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **election observers in India**:

1. Election observers are appointed by the Election Commission of India to monitor various aspects of the electoral process.
2. Special observers are generally appointed during elections that require additional monitoring due to administrative or security concerns.
3. The Election Commission derives its authority to conduct elections from Article 324 of the Constitution of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

3.INDIA'S CUMULATIVE EXPORTS REACH US\$ 790.86 BILLION DURING APRIL-FEBRUARY 2025-26



सत्यमेव जयते

वाणिज्य एवं
उद्योग मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
**COMMERCE
AND INDUSTRY**

- India's export performance during April-February 2025-26 shows **steady growth in both merchandise and services exports.**
- The increase reflects **expanding global demand for Indian goods and services**, including sectors such as **engineering goods, pharmaceuticals, IT services, and business services.**
- Growth in services exports, particularly in **IT and digital services**, continues to strengthen India's position in the global services market.
- Rising exports contribute to **foreign exchange earnings, economic growth, and employment generation.**
- The trend also supports India's broader goal of **enhancing its role in global trade and achieving higher export targets.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

India's Export Structure

India's exports are broadly divided into two categories:

Merchandise Exports

- I. Physical goods such as:
 - A. Engineering products
 - B. Petroleum products
 - C. Pharmaceuticals
 - D. Textiles
 - E. Agricultural commodities

Services Exports

- I. Intangible services such as:
 - A. **Information Technology (IT) services**
 - B. **Business process outsourcing (BPO)**
 - C. Financial and consulting services
 - D. Tourism and travel services

India is among the **world's leading exporters of IT and digital services.**

Role of Trade in Economic Growth

Exports play a crucial role in:

- **Enhancing foreign exchange reserves**
- **Promoting industrial production**
- **Generating employment**
- **Strengthening global economic integration**

Export growth is also aligned with India's strategy of becoming a **major global manufacturing and services hub.**

Government Initiatives to Boost Exports

Key initiatives include:

- Foreign Trade Policy
- Make in India
- Production Linked Incentive Scheme

These programs aim to **enhance competitiveness, increase manufacturing capacity, and expand export markets.**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Export Growth:** Cumulative exports reached **US\$ 790.86 billion** during April–February 2025–26.
- **Growth Rate:** Approximately **5.79% increase** compared to the previous year.
- **Export Components:** Includes both **merchandise and services exports.**
- **Major Contributors:** Engineering goods, pharmaceuticals, and **IT services.**
- **Economic Importance:** Supports **foreign exchange earnings and economic growth.**

- **Trade Strategy:** Strengthens India's integration into **global supply chains**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Merchandise Exports

- Export of **physical goods**

Services Exports

- Export of **intangible services such as IT and BPO**

Key Ministry

- Ministry of Commerce and Industry

Important Policy

- Foreign Trade Policy

Economic Significance

- Improves **balance of payments**
- Increases **foreign exchange reserves**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **India's exports**:

1. Merchandise exports refer to the export of physical goods.
2. Services exports include sectors such as information technology and business process outsourcing.

3. Growth in exports contributes to higher foreign exchange earnings for the country.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

4.MAJOR STEPS TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT TO DISCOURAGE AND MITIGATE CROP RESIDUE BURNING



- Crop residue burning, especially after the **paddy harvest in north India**, is a major contributor to **seasonal air pollution**.
- The government has implemented several initiatives to promote **in-situ and ex-situ management of crop residues**, including financial assistance for machinery and technological solutions.
- Programs encourage farmers to use **crop residue management**

equipment such as Happy Seeder, Super SMS, and mulchers instead of burning stubble.

- The government also promotes **biomass utilisation for bioenergy, composting, and industrial uses.**
- These interventions aim to protect **soil health, reduce air pollution, and support sustainable agricultural practices.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Crop Residue Burning

Crop residue burning refers to the **burning of leftover agricultural biomass such as paddy straw after harvest.**

It is prevalent mainly in states such as:

- Punjab
- Haryana
- Uttar Pradesh

Farmers burn residues to **quickly clear fields for the next cropping cycle.**

However, this practice causes:

- Severe **air pollution**
- Loss of **soil nutrients**
- Release of **greenhouse gases**

Crop Residue Management (CRM) Scheme

The government launched the **Crop Residue Management Scheme** to address stubble burning.

Key components include:

- **Subsidies for crop residue management machinery**
- Promotion of **in-situ residue management**
- Capacity building and **awareness programs for farmers**

The scheme is implemented mainly in **Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, and Delhi region.**

Technological Solutions

Examples of machinery used in residue management include:

- **Happy Seeder** – allows sowing crops without removing stubble
- **Super Straw Management System (Super SMS)** – spreads straw evenly
- **Mulchers and rotavators** – incorporate residue into soil

These technologies help improve **soil organic matter and soil fertility.**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Government Response:** Measures outlined in Parliament by the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.**

- **Primary Issue:** Crop residue burning causing **air pollution and environmental degradation**.
- **Key Scheme: Crop Residue Management (CRM) Scheme** providing subsidies for machinery.
- **Technological Solutions:** Use of **Happy Seeder, Super SMS, mulchers, and rotavators**.
- **Biomass Utilisation:** Promotion of **bioenergy production and composting** from agricultural waste.
- **Environmental Impact:** Helps reduce **air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Crop Residue Burning

- Burning of leftover **stubble after harvest**

Major Affected Region

- **Punjab–Haryana belt** of north India

Key Government Scheme

- **Crop Residue Management (CRM) Scheme**

Important Machinery

- **Happy Seeder**
- **Super Straw Management System (Super SMS)**

Environmental Impact

- Releases **PM2.5, carbon dioxide, and other pollutants**
- Causes **seasonal air pollution in northern India**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **crop residue management in India**:

1. Crop residue burning contributes to air pollution and loss of soil nutrients.
2. The Happy Seeder allows sowing crops without removing crop residues from the field.
3. The Crop Residue Management scheme promotes the use of agricultural machinery to manage stubble.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

5.COORDINATED EFFORTS OF GOVERNMENT, RBI AND NPCI ACCELERATE GROWTH IN DIGITAL PAYMENTS



- India has witnessed a **substantial rise in digital payment transactions**, driven by initiatives such as the **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** and improved digital infrastructure.
- Coordinated actions by the government, RBI, and NPCI have helped promote **secure, accessible, and low-cost digital payment systems**.
- The expansion of digital payment platforms has enabled **financial inclusion by integrating small businesses, street vendors, and rural populations into the formal financial system**.
- Digital payments also contribute to **greater transparency, reduced cash dependency, and improved efficiency in financial transactions**.
- These developments strengthen India's ambition of building a **robust digital economy**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Digital Payments Ecosystem in India

India's digital payment ecosystem includes multiple platforms such as:

- **UPI (Unified Payments Interface)**
- **IMPS (Immediate Payment Service)**
- **RuPay card network**
- **AePS (Aadhaar Enabled Payment System)**

These platforms enable **instant electronic fund transfers and cashless payments**.

Unified Payments Interface (UPI)

Unified Payments Interface is a **real-time digital payment system** developed by National Payments Corporation of India.

Key features:

- Instant **bank-to-bank transfers**
- **Mobile-based payments**
- Interoperable across banks and apps

UPI has become **one of the world's largest real-time payment systems**.

Institutional Roles

Government of India

- Promotes digital financial inclusion and infrastructure.

Reserve Bank of India

- Regulates payment systems and ensures **financial stability and security**.

NPCI

- Operates key digital payment platforms such as **UPI and RuPay**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Institutional Coordination:** Government, RBI, and NPCI jointly promoting digital payments.
- **Key Platform:** Rapid expansion of **UPI-based transactions**.
- **Financial Inclusion:** Digital payments integrating **small merchants and rural users**.
- **Transparency:** Reduced dependence on **cash transactions**.
- **Economic Impact:** Supports the growth of **India's digital economy**.
- **Technology Integration:** Mobile applications and QR-based payments widely adopted.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Unified Payments Interface (UPI)

- Real-time digital payment system
- Developed by National Payments Corporation of India

Regulator of Payment Systems

- Reserve Bank of India

NPCI

- Umbrella organization for **retail payments in India**
- Operates platforms such as **UPI, RuPay, and IMPS**

Digital Payment Benefits

- Financial inclusion
- Reduced cash handling
- Transparent transactions

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **digital payments in India**:

1. The Unified Payments Interface (UPI) enables instant bank-to-bank fund transfers through mobile platforms.
2. The National Payments Corporation of India operates key retail payment systems in India.
3. The Reserve Bank of India regulates payment and settlement systems in the country.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

1. AWARENESS AND ACCESSIBILITY OF FREE AYUSH MEDICINES



- The government is promoting **free distribution of AYUSH medicines** through public health facilities to enhance accessibility.
- Efforts include **integration of AYUSH systems into primary healthcare**, especially under national health programmes.
- Awareness campaigns are being conducted to inform citizens about the **availability and benefits of AYUSH treatments**.
- The initiative supports **preventive healthcare, wellness, and affordable treatment options**, particularly in rural and underserved areas.
- It also contributes to the broader goal of **strengthening traditional medicine systems alongside modern healthcare**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

AYUSH Systems of Medicine

Ministry of Ayush promotes traditional systems collectively known as **AYUSH**, which include:

- **Ayurveda**
- **Yoga & Naturopathy**
- **Unani**
- **Siddha**
- **Homeopathy**

These systems focus on **holistic health, prevention, and natural therapies**.

Integration with Public Health System

AYUSH services are integrated into:

- **Primary Health Centres (PHCs)**
- **Community Health Centres (CHCs)**
- **Government hospitals**

This integration aims to provide **affordable and accessible healthcare options**.

Government Initiatives

Key initiatives to promote AYUSH include:

- National AYUSH Mission
- Establishment of **AYUSH wellness centres**
- **Free distribution of medicines** through government facilities

These efforts enhance **reach, awareness, and utilisation of AYUSH services.**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Government Initiative:** Promoting **free AYUSH medicines through public health facilities.**
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Focus on educating people about **benefits of AYUSH systems.**
- **Healthcare Integration:** AYUSH services integrated into the primary **healthcare system.**
- **Accessibility:** Special focus on **rural and underserved populations.**
- **Preventive Care:** Emphasis on **wellness and holistic health approaches.**
- **Institutional Support:** Backed by the **Ministry of Ayush and National AYUSH Mission.**

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

AYUSH

- Stands for **Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Homeopathy**

Nodal Ministry

- Ministry of Ayush

Key Scheme

- National AYUSH Mission

Healthcare Integration

- AYUSH services available at **PHCs, CHCs, and government hospitals**

Objective

- Promote **preventive, promotive, and holistic healthcare**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **AYUSH systems in India:**

1. AYUSH includes Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy.
2. The National AYUSH Mission aims to improve access to AYUSH healthcare services.
3. AYUSH systems are completely separate from the public healthcare system in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

2. 1,111 CENTRAL OBSERVERS DEPLOYED FOR LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS IN 5 STATES/UTs AND BYE-ELECTIONS



- The Election Commission has appointed a large number of **Central Observers to oversee the conduct of elections** in various states and union territories.
- These observers are senior officials tasked with **monitoring election procedures, ensuring compliance with rules, and reporting irregularities.**
- The observers strengthen **administrative coordination, law and order management, and adherence to the Model Code of Conduct (MCC).**
- Their presence ensures **credibility, transparency, and accountability in the electoral process.**
- Such measures are crucial for maintaining **public trust in democratic institutions and electoral integrity.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Election Commission of India

The Election Commission of India is a **constitutional authority established under Article 324 of the Constitution of India.**

It is responsible for:

- Conducting **elections to Parliament and State Legislatures**
- Supervising **Presidential and Vice-Presidential elections**
- Ensuring **free and fair elections**

Role of Central Observers

Central Observers are appointed by the Election Commission to:

- Monitor **polling arrangements and election conduct**
- Ensure adherence to **electoral laws and guidelines**
- Report **violations or irregularities**
- Coordinate with **local administration and security agencies**

Types of Election Observers

- **General Observers** – oversee overall election process
- **Expenditure Observers** – monitor campaign spending
- **Police Observers** – ensure law and order

- **Special Observers** – deployed in sensitive areas

These observers act as the **eyes and ears of the Election Commission on the ground.**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Deployment:** 1,111 Central Observers appointed by the **Election Commission of India.**
- **Coverage:** Legislative Assembly elections in **multiple States/UTs and bye-elections.**
- **Primary Role:** Ensure **free, fair, and transparent elections.**
- **Monitoring Function:** Supervise **polling, security, and compliance with rules.**
- **MCC Enforcement:** Help ensure adherence to the **Model Code of Conduct.**
- **Democratic Significance:** Strengthens **credibility and accountability of elections.**

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Article 324

- Empowers the **Election Commission of India** to conduct elections.

Election Observers

- Appointed by the **ECI** to monitor elections.

Types of Observers

- General, Expenditure, Police, Special

Model Code of Conduct

- Comes into force **immediately after election announcement**

Function

- Ensures **free and fair electoral process**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **election observers in India:**

1. Election observers are appointed by the Election Commission of India to monitor the electoral process.
2. Expenditure observers monitor campaign spending during elections.
3. Police observers are responsible for ensuring law and order during elections.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

3.INDIA LEADS GLOBAL COCONUT PRODUCTION; GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES COCONUT PROMOTION SCHEME IN BUDGET 2026-27



- India continues to dominate global coconut production, with major cultivation in **coastal states such as Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh.**
- The proposed **Coconut Promotion Scheme** seeks to enhance **productivity, processing capacity, and market access** for coconut-based products.
- The scheme focuses on **value addition, export promotion, and strengthening farmer income.**
- It also aims to support allied sectors such as **coir, coconut oil, and food processing industries.**
- This initiative contributes to **agricultural diversification, rural**

livelihoods, and export-led growth in the agri-sector.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Coconut Cultivation in India

India is one of the **largest producers of coconuts globally**, with cultivation concentrated in:

- Kerala
- Tamil Nadu
- Karnataka
- Andhra Pradesh

Coconut is a **multi-purpose crop**, used for:

- Food (copra, oil)
- Industrial products (coir, fibre)
- Value-added products (cosmetics, beverages)

Coconut Development Board (CDB)

The Coconut Development Board functions under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

Key functions:

- Promoting **coconut cultivation and productivity**
- Supporting **processing and marketing**
- Encouraging **export of coconut products**

Economic Importance of Coconut Sector

The coconut sector contributes to:

- **Livelihoods of millions of farmers**
- Growth of **coir and agro-processing industries**
- **Export earnings** through coconut-based products

It plays a key role in **coastal rural economies**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Global Leadership:** India is the **largest producer of coconuts**.
- **New Scheme:** Coconut Promotion Scheme announced in **Budget 2026–27**.
- **Objective:** Enhance **productivity, value addition, and exports**.
- **Farmer Welfare:** Aims to increase **income of coconut farmers**.
- **Industrial Linkage:** Supports **coir, oil, and processing industries**.
- **Regional Importance:** Key crop in **coastal states**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Major Coconut Producing States

- Kerala
- Tamil Nadu
- Karnataka
- Andhra Pradesh

Nodal Body

- Coconut Development Board

Uses of Coconut

- Food (oil, copra)
- Fibre (coir)
- Industrial and cosmetic products

Economic Role

- Supports **rural livelihoods and export sector**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding the **coconut sector in India**:

1. India is one of the leading producers of coconuts globally.
2. The Coconut Development Board functions under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
3. Coconut cultivation in India is mainly concentrated in coastal states.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

4.HQ IDS ORGANISES SECOND NICHE TECHNOLOGY NEXUS (NTN) SEMINAR ON 'COGNITIVE SPECTRUM OPERATIONS AND QUANTUM TECHNOLOGIES' IN NEW DELHI



- The NTN Seminar focused on the role of **advanced technologies such as cognitive spectrum operations and quantum technologies in modern warfare.**
- Cognitive spectrum operations involve **dynamic and intelligent management of the electromagnetic spectrum** to enhance communication and electronic warfare capabilities.
- Quantum technologies, including **quantum computing, communication, and cryptography**, are expected to revolutionize **secure communication and data processing in defence systems.**
- The seminar highlighted the importance of **integrating**

cutting-edge research with military strategy.

- Such initiatives strengthen India's efforts towards **technological superiority, strategic autonomy, and defence modernization.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS)

The Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff supports the Ministry of Defence in promoting **jointness among the Armed Forces.**

Key roles include:

- Facilitating **tri-service integration**
- Supporting **defence planning and coordination**
- Promoting **technology-driven military transformation**

Cognitive Spectrum Operations

Cognitive spectrum operations refer to the **intelligent and adaptive use of the electromagnetic spectrum.**

Key aspects:

- Dynamic allocation of frequencies
- Avoidance of signal interference
- Enhanced **electronic warfare capabilities**

This is crucial in **modern network-centric warfare environments**.

Quantum Technologies in Defence

Quantum technologies include:

- **Quantum computing** – high-speed computation
- **Quantum communication** – ultra-secure communication
- **Quantum cryptography** – secure encryption systems

India is promoting quantum research under initiatives like the National Quantum Mission.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Organiser:** Seminar conducted by HQ IDS.
- **Theme:** Focus on **Cognitive Spectrum Operations and Quantum Technologies**.
- **Technology Focus:** Integration of **AI, spectrum management, and quantum systems**.
- **Defence Application:** Enhances **communication, cybersecurity, and electronic warfare**.
- **Strategic Importance:** Supports **future warfare readiness and technological superiority**.
- **Policy Link:** Aligns with **National Quantum Mission and defence modernization efforts**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

HQ IDS

- Supports **tri-service integration** in Indian Armed Forces
- Functions under Ministry of Defence

Cognitive Spectrum Operations

- Intelligent management of **electromagnetic spectrum**

Quantum Technologies

- **Quantum computing**
- **Quantum communication**
- **Quantum cryptography**

Key Initiative

- National Quantum Mission

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **emerging defence technologies**:

1. Cognitive spectrum operations involve intelligent management of the electromagnetic spectrum.
2. Quantum communication enables highly secure data transmission using quantum principles.
3. Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff functions under the Ministry of Science and Technology.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

5. PRADHAN MANTRI KAUSHAL VIKAS YOJANA (PMKVY)



PMKVY is a flagship skill development scheme aimed at providing industry-relevant training to youth across India.

- It focuses on **short-term training, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), and special projects** to enhance employability.
- The scheme promotes **certification of skills aligned with industry standards**, improving job prospects.
- It also supports **entrepreneurship and self-employment**, particularly among rural and underprivileged populations.
- PMKVY contributes to building a **skilled workforce, boosting**

productivity, and supporting economic growth.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana is implemented by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

Launched in **2015**, it aims to:

- Provide **skill training to youth**
- Improve **employability and productivity**
- Align training with **industry requirements**

Key Components

Short-Term Training (STT)

- Training in various job roles
- Includes **soft skills, digital literacy, and financial literacy**

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

- Certification of **existing skills of workers**

Special Projects

- Focus on **specific sectors, regions, or vulnerable groups**

Institutional Framework

The scheme is implemented through:

- National Skill Development Corporation
- Sector Skill Councils (SSCs)
- Training centres across India

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Flagship Scheme:** PMKVY for **skill development and employment generation**.
- **Target Group:** Youth, especially **unemployed and school dropouts**.
- **Training Components:** STT, RPL, and Special Projects.
- **Certification:** Industry-recognized **skill certification**.
- **Economic Impact:** Enhances **employability and productivity**.
- **Institutional Support:** Implemented through **NSDC and training partners**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

Launch Year

- **2015**

Nodal Ministry

- Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

Implementing Agency

- National Skill Development Corporation

Key Components

- Short-Term Training (STT)
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- Special Projects

Objective

- Enhance **employability through skill development**

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)**:

1. PMKVY aims to provide industry-relevant skill training to youth.
2. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) certifies the existing skills of workers.
3. The scheme is implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

1. CABINET APPROVES SMALL HYDRO POWER (SHP) DEVELOPMENT SCHEME FOR FY 2026-27 TO FY 2030-31



नवीन एवं
नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
**NEW AND
RENEWABLE ENERGY**

सत्यमेव जयते

- The Government of India has sanctioned a dedicated Small Hydro Power (SHP) scheme with a budget of ₹2,584.60 crore for the five-year period from 2026-27 to 2030-31 to promote renewable energy.
- The scheme targets **installation of SHP projects (1-25 MW)** totalling around **1,500 MW** capacity.
- **Central financial assistance** will be provided to incentivise projects, especially in **hilly, North Eastern and border regions**.
- It is expected to attract **about ₹15,000 crore of investment**, boost **clean energy generation** and **local employment**, and strengthen decentralised power supply.

- The scheme also supports preparation of **Detailed Project Reports (DPRs)** for future projects, creating a pipeline for long-term growth.
- SHP projects minimise land acquisition and transmission requirements, making them suitable for **remote and rural areas**.
- The strategy aligns with national goals of **renewable energy expansion, employment generation, and sustainable rural development**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

What are Small Hydro Power (SHP) Projects?

Small Hydro Power refers to **hydropower installations with capacity between 1 and 25 MW** that generate electricity by harnessing river or canal flows without large dams or reservoirs.

Why SHP Matters for India

- SHP is a **renewable, low-carbon energy source** that complements solar and wind.
- It creates **local employment** and **energy access** in hilly and remote regions where grid expansion is challenging.

- Such projects often require **minimal transmission infrastructure**, reducing losses and costs.

Policy Evolution

Previously, SHP development focused on older schemes and guidelines that aimed to promote such projects; however, a **fresh, structured and higher budget scheme** has now been approved to give a renewed push.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Financial Outlay:** ₹2,584.60 crore over FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31.
- **Capacity Target:** ~1,500 MW of new SHP installations.
- **Assistance in North East & Border Areas:** ₹3.6 crore per MW or **30% of project cost**, capped at ₹30 crore per project.
- **Assistance in Other States:** ₹2.4 crore per MW or **20% of project cost**, capped at ₹20 crore per project.
- **Investment Potential:** Expected **₹15,000 crore investment** in the SHP sector.
- **Employment Generation:** ~51 lakh person-days of employment during construction with additional jobs in operations.
- **DPR Support:** ₹30 crore allocated for preparation of detailed project reports for future SHP projects.

- **Environmental & Social Benefits:** Minimal land impact, little community displacement, reduced transmission losses, and socio-economic upliftment in remote areas.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- I. **SHP Definition:** Small Hydro Power projects with capacity **1–25 MW**.
- II. **Scheme Period:** **FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31**.
- III. **Outlay:** **₹2,584.60 crore**.
- IV. **Assistance Levels:**
 - A. **North East/Border:** Up to **₹3.6 Cr/MW or 30% cost** — cap ₹30 Cr.
 - B. **Other States:** Up to **₹2.4 Cr/MW or 20% cost** — cap ₹20 Cr.
- V. **Target Capacity:** **~1,500 MW**.
- VI. **Investment Attraction:** **~₹15,000 crore**.
- VII. **Employment Impact:** **~51 lakh person-days** during construction.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding the recently approved Small Hydro Power (SHP) Development Scheme:

1. The SHP Development Scheme targets installation of approximately 1,500 MW of small hydro capacity.

2. Central financial assistance under the scheme is higher (as a percentage of project cost) for projects in North Eastern and border districts compared to other states.
3. The scheme prohibits the use of indigenous plant and machinery to promote international technology standards.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

2. AYUSH SERVICES EXPAND IN RURAL ODISHA WITH INCREASED DOCTORS, CAMPS AND TELE-CONSULTATION



- The Odisha Government has appointed **1,111 AYUSH medical officers** — 584 Ayurvedic, 525 Homoeopathic and 2 Unani — to

enhance service delivery in **rural and tribal areas**.

- Expansion includes **AYUSH health camps** and **tele-consultation (Tele-AYUSH)** integrated with the national **e-Sanjeevani** platform.
- Training programmes — **induction and refresher courses** — are underway for AYUSH doctors and assistants to improve healthcare outreach.
- Tele-AYUSH hubs in medical colleges support spoke dispensaries, helping remote patients access specialist advice.
- The initiative strengthens **traditional medicine systems** and enhances healthcare penetration where allopathic access is limited.
- Expansion aligns with broader goals to integrate **preventive, promotive and accessible** AYUSH services alongside mainstream healthcare mechanisms. (Inferred)
- The policy move reflects efforts to improve **health equity** and boost rural health infrastructure. (Inferred)

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

What is AYUSH?

AYUSH refers to traditional and alternative medical systems in India — **Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homoeopathy** — promoted

for **holistic healthcare** and preventive medicine.

AYUSH in India's Health System

- AYUSH has been integrated within national health frameworks like the **National AYUSH Mission** to strengthen traditional medicine institutions and service delivery.
- Telemedicine platforms like **e-Sanjeevani** have been used to expand specialist access, including AYUSH consultations in remote locations.

Tele-AYUSH

Tele-consultation bridges geographical barriers, linking **hub centres (medical colleges)** with multiple **spoke AYUSH dispensaries**, enhancing service reach without physical infrastructure expansion.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Appointment Drive:** 1,111 AYUSH medical officers deployed in rural & tribal Odisha.
- **Specialisation Spread:** Includes Ayurvedic (584), Homoeopathic (525) and Unani (2) practitioners.
- **Tele-Consultation:** Tele-AYUSH operational on the **e-Sanjeevani** platform connecting dispensaries to hub centres.

- **Training Programs:** Induction and refresher training for AYUSH staff to improve quality & integration.
- **Health Camps:** Increased outreach through periodic AYUSH health camps in rural settings. (Implicit from expansion)
- **State Responsibility:** Primary implementation by Odisha Government, supported by national schemes where applicable.
- **Accessibility Impact:** Bolsters healthcare availability in underserved regions with limited allopathic workforce. (Inferred)

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **AYUSH Systems:** Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Homoeopathy.
- **Tele-AYUSH:** Telemedicine initiative connecting AYUSH dispensaries with specialist hubs via **e-Sanjeevani**.
- **Rural & Tribal Focus:** Priority to underserved districts with healthcare gaps.
- **Training Types:** Induction and refresher programmes for medical officers and assistants.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding the expansion of AYUSH services in rural Odisha:

1. The Government of Odisha has appointed more than 1,000 AYUSH medical officers to strengthen rural healthcare.
2. Tele-AYUSH services in the state are linked with the national telemedicine platform e-Sanjeevani.
3. The central government directly funds all appointments of AYUSH medical officers in Odisha.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

3. PARLIAMENT QUESTION: DEVELOPMENT OF SATELLITE LAUNCH FACILITIES IN INDIA



- India currently operates **two main satellite launch pads** at Indian Space Research Organisation's Satish Dhawan Space Centre — one for small Launch Vehicles (PSLV/SSLV) and the second for heavier vehicles like GSLV and LVM3.
- The Government has approved and **financially sanctioned a "Third Launch Pad" project** at Sriharikota to support future missions including heavier & human-rated vehicles; geotechnical surveys and preparatory work are underway.
- Civil works, propulsion & fluid systems, and operational commissioning are planned through **2028–29** to make the new pad fully functional.
- Separately, the **Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) Launch Complex at Kulasekarapattinam**

(Tamil Nadu) is being constructed to provide additional orbital access, especially for small satellites and polar orbit launches.

- Kulasekarapattinam site will enhance **payload capacity for SSLV class vehicles** compared to Sriharikota by offering a direct trajectory over sea, improving efficiency for small satellite missions.
- Post-commissioning of Kulasekarapattinam, launched by private entities and NGEs (Non-Government Entities) in the SSLV category are envisaged from this facility.
- The expansion of launch infrastructure positions India to meet **increasing domestic and commercial launch demands**, supports strategic programmes like human spaceflight, and fosters industry participation. (Inferred)

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Launch Infrastructure in India

- India's satellite launch operations are centred on the **Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC), Sriharikota**, where two operational launch pads support various launch vehicles developed by ISRO — ranging from **Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV)** to **Geosynchronous**

Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) and **Launch Vehicle Mk III (LVM3)**.

Need for Expanded Launch Capabilities

- With **growing satellite deployment** requirements — including commercial, scientific, navigation, remote sensing and future human spaceflight missions — India is expanding its **launch infrastructure** to increase launch cadence, reduce schedule bottlenecks and support a broader class of vehicles.

Role of Private Sector and New Players

- Under reforms in the space sector (e.g., through Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre and space policy reforms), **private launch providers** and **NGEs** are being enabled to use launch facilities and conduct missions, expanding India's space economy.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Third Launch Pad (TLP) Status:** Financial sanction received in **March 2025**; topographical surveys completed; multiple work packages identified for construction.

- **Timelines:** Civil works by **May 2028**, propellant and fluid systems by **July 2028**, launch facilities by **September 2028**, and commissioning by **March 2029**.
- **Indian Industry Participation:** Tenders to involve **Indian private players and MSMEs**, promoting “Make in India” principles in infrastructure development.
- **Kulasekarapattinam Complex:** Targeted commissioning in **FY 2026-27**, with land acquisition largely complete and site preparation ongoing.
- **Enhanced Payload Capability:** SSLV payload capability to **Sun-Synchronous Polar Orbits (SSPO)** is significantly better from Kulasekarapattinam than Sriharikota, enabling smaller satellites to be launched more efficiently.
- **Private Launches:** SSLV and similar small launch vehicles from NGEs planned post-commissioning of the new spaceport.
- **Strategic Outcome:** Lays the groundwork to support **increased launch cadence, commercial launch service growth**, and **next-generation space missions**.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC), Sriharikota:** India’s primary

orbital launch site with two operational launch pads.

- **Third Launch Pad:** New facility sanctioned in **March 2025**; commissioning expected by **2028-29**.
- **Kulasekarapattinam SSLV Launch Complex:** Dedicated facility for **Small Satellite Launch Vehicle missions**; aimed for commissioning in **FY 2026-27**.
- **Payload Advantage:** Kulasekarapattinam’s location allows **~300 kg payload to polar orbits** for SSLV, compared to lower capacity from Sriharikota.
- **Launch Cadence Goals:** India plans to expand launch frequency to meet commercial and strategic space needs. (Inferred)

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding the development of satellite launch facilities in India:

1. The third satellite launch pad at Sriharikota was financially sanctioned in 2025 and is expected to be commissioned by 2029.
2. Kulasekarapattinam launch complex will primarily serve heavy lift launch vehicles such as GSLV and LVM3.

3. The Kulasekarapattinam facility enhances payload capacity to Sun-Synchronous Polar Orbits for Small Satellite Launch Vehicle missions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

4. STRENGTHENING PASSENGER FACILITATION IN INDIAN AVIATION



- The Indian government has introduced **new aviation norms** focused on strengthening passenger facilitation across domestic airline operations.
- Under DGCA directives, airlines must allocate a **minimum of 60 % seats free of additional seat-selection charges**, preventing hidden costs during booking.

- Airlines are required to **seat passengers travelling on the same PNR together**, preferably in adjacent seats, to improve group/family travel experience.
- Regulations also emphasize **transparent policies** for carriage of **sports equipment, musical instruments, pets** and clearer **passenger rights communication**.
- The push for fair access and transparency comes as India's aviation market grows rapidly in domestic demand and seeks to improve overall travel convenience.
- The directives align with broader efforts to improve passenger experience, reduce grievances, and standardise practices across airlines.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Passenger Facilitation in Aviation

- Passenger facilitation refers to all measures that **make air travel easier, fairer and more predictable** for flyers — from pricing transparency to seating, baggage, disability support and grievance redressal.

Why New Rules Now?

- In recent years, a surge in **ancillary charges** (e.g., paid seat selection), **passenger complaints about**

transparency, and rising air travel demand has prompted regulators to intervene to ensure that **basic travel services remain fair and accessible**.

DGCA's Regulatory Role

- The **Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)** is the statutory regulator for civil aviation in India responsible for passenger rights enforcement, airline behaviour oversight, and safety standards.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Free Seat Allocation:** Airlines must make **at least 60 % of seats free of extra seat-selection charges** on domestic flights.
- **Same-PNR Seating:** Passengers booked under the same PNR (e.g., families or groups) must be seated together, preferably adjacent.
- **Policy Transparency:** Carriers must adopt **transparent and passenger-friendly policies** for carrying pets, sports gear and musical instruments.
- **Display of Passenger Rights:** Airlines must **prominently display passenger rights** on digital and physical platforms (website, app, booking portal, counters).
- **Regional Accessibility:** Key entitlements should be

communicated in **regional languages** to broaden awareness.

- **Grievance Redressal:** Strengthened mechanisms to address issues like **delays, cancellations, denied boarding** under passenger rights framework.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Passenger Name Record (PNR):** Unique identifier for a flight booking used to link passenger details.
- **DGCA:** The Indian civil aviation regulator empowered to direct airline passenger-friendly norms.
- **Seat-Selection Fee:** Ancillary charge often levied by airlines to allow passengers to choose specific seats outside base fare.
- **Passenger Facilitation:** Measures ensuring ease, transparency and fairness in air travel services and bookings.
- **Sports Equipment & Pets:** Now covered under transparent carriage norms subject to operational safety.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding the recent passenger facilitation measures in Indian aviation:

1. The DGCA has mandated that airlines make at least 60 % of seats available free of seat selection charges on domestic flights.
2. Passengers booked under the same Passenger Name Record (PNR) must be seated together if they request it.
3. The directive restricts airlines from carrying sports equipment or pets under any conditions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

5. WHITE REVOLUTION 2.0



- **White Revolution 2.0** builds on India's original dairy transformation (Operation Flood) to modernise and expand cooperative dairy systems.

- The initiative aims to **increase milk procurement by dairy cooperatives by about 50 %**, targeting around **1,007 lakh kg per day by 2028-29**.
- It focuses on **creating and strengthening dairy cooperative societies** (DCS, M-PACS, etc.) across uncovered panchayats and villages.
- **Women's empowerment, employment generation and sustainable dairy value chains** are core components of the programme.
- Infrastructure improvements — automatic milk collection units, testing equipment, chilled storage — are planned to improve quality and value addition.
- The initiative is being implemented through the **Ministry of Cooperation**, with NDDB playing a central role in early funding and coordination.
- White Revolution 2.0 addresses structural challenges including **unorganised market share**, regional disparities and supply chain gaps in India's dairy sector.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Original White Revolution (Operation Flood)

- The original White Revolution — **Operation Flood** — was a dairy development programme launched in the 1970s that transformed India into the **world's largest milk producer** by organising rural milk producers into cooperatives and modernising processing and marketing.

Need for Revitalisation

- Despite growth, the dairy sector faces challenges such as low cooperative coverage, quality concerns, and a large unorganised market share.
- White Revolution 2.0 seeks to address these by strengthening cooperative infrastructure and outreach.

Institutional Framework

- **Ministry of Cooperation:** Oversees policy, SOPs and implementation.
- **National Dairy Development Board (NDDB):** Coordinates expansion of cooperatives and early funding.
- **Dairy Cooperatives:** Primary units for milk procurement, processing and marketing.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Milk Procurement Target:** Increase to about **1,007 lakh kg/day by 2028-29** ($\approx 50\%$ rise).
- **Cooperative Expansion:** Form and strengthen **$\sim 75,000$ new dairy cooperative societies and 46,422 existing ones**; projected **coverage across villages**.
- **Multi-purpose PACS & Societies:** Planned establishment of **~ 1.2 lakh DCS & M-PACS** linked to milk routes.
- **Women Empowerment:** Focus on integrating women dairy farmers into organised systems to enhance incomes.
- **Infrastructure Support:** Investment in milk collection units, testing labs and bulk coolers to boost quality and reduce losses.
- **Banking & Credit:** Initiatives like **RuPay Kisan Credit Cards** and micro-ATMs at cooperative societies to support finances.
- **Sustainability & Circularity:** Emphasis on efficient resource use, cattle health and expanded procurement transparency.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **White Revolution:** India's dairy transformation via Operation Flood (1970s) that made India the world's largest milk producer.

- **White Revolution 2.0:** Initiative to modernise and expand cooperative dairy sector with targets by **2028-29**.
- **Milk Procurement Target: ~1,007 lakh kg/day** dairy cooperative procurement.
- **Cooperatives:** Dairy Cooperative Societies (DCS), Multi-Purpose PACS & district cooperatives.
- **NDDB:** National Dairy Development Board — key coordinating agency.
- **RuPay Kisan Credit Card & Micro-ATMs:** Financial inclusion tools for farmers.

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

Answer: (b)

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements about White Revolution 2.0:

1. It aims to increase milk procurement by dairy cooperative societies by around 50 % by 2028-29.
2. The National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) is playing a role in funding and coordinating the initiative.
3. The programme seeks to reduce women's participation in dairy cooperatives in favour of mechanised processes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

1.COAL PLAYING IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE ENERGY SECURITY OF THE COUNTRY



- Coal continues to remain the backbone of India's energy sector, contributing the largest share in electricity generation.
- The government has reiterated its focus on enhancing domestic production to meet rising industrial and power demands.
- Despite global shifts toward renewable energy, coal remains critical for base-load power stability.
- India aims to balance energy security with climate commitments through cleaner coal technologies.
- Reduced reliance on imports strengthens economic resilience and energy independence.
- Policy thrust reflects the dual objective of growth and sustainability in the energy sector.
- The development has implications for infrastructure, environmental governance, and economic planning.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Constitutional & Policy Framework

- Energy falls under the **Concurrent List**, enabling both Centre and States to legislate.
- Key policy initiatives include National Electricity Policy and Integrated Energy Policy.

Coal Sector in India

- India is the second-largest coal producer globally.
- Dominated by Coal India Limited.
- Major coal reserves located in Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and West Bengal.

Energy Security Concept

- Refers to uninterrupted availability of energy at affordable prices.
- Coal ensures **base-load power**, unlike intermittent renewables like solar and wind.

Environmental Considerations

- Coal combustion contributes to greenhouse gas emissions.
- India promotes **clean coal technologies** such as supercritical and ultra-supercritical plants.

International Context

- Global energy crisis (post-pandemic, geopolitical tensions) has revived coal usage worldwide.
- India balances commitments under the Paris Agreement with domestic energy needs.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Production Push:** Government targeting record coal output to meet domestic demand.
- **Import Reduction:** Focus on reducing coal imports to save foreign exchange.
- **Institutional Mechanism:** Commercial coal mining opened to private sector participation.
- **Strategic Significance:** Coal ensures grid stability and supports industrial growth.
- **Environmental Impact:** High emissions remain a concern despite cleaner technologies.
- **Challenges:** Land acquisition issues, environmental clearances, and logistics bottlenecks.
- **Way Forward:** Transition toward renewable energy while improving coal efficiency and adopting carbon capture technologies.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Article 246:** Distribution of legislative powers (Union, State, Concurrent Lists).
- **Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015:** Enables allocation of coal mines.
- **Commercial Mining:** Introduced in 2020 for private players.
- **India's Coal Share:** ~70% of electricity generation.
- **Largest Producer:** Coal India Limited.
- **Clean Coal Tech:** Supercritical & ultra-supercritical thermal plants.
- **Paris Agreement Goal:** Limit global warming to well below 2°C.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Coal provides base-load power which is not dependent on weather conditions.
2. Commercial coal mining in India is restricted only to public sector companies.
3. Coal-based energy contributes significantly to India's electricity generation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

2.DEVELOPMENT OF MUSEUMS IN INDIA: PRESERVING HERITAGE AND PROMOTING CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

- The government is undertaking large-scale initiatives to modernize museums and make them more interactive and accessible.
- Emphasis is being laid on digitization, virtual galleries, and use of emerging technologies like AR/VR.
- Museums are being repositioned as cultural hubs contributing to tourism, education, and soft power.
- Development of theme-based and national museums reflects efforts to showcase India's diverse heritage.
- Public-private partnerships and capacity building are being encouraged.
- The initiative strengthens cultural governance while contributing to economic growth via tourism.
- It also enhances India's global cultural footprint and heritage diplomacy.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Institutional Framework

- Museums in India are administered by the Ministry of Culture.
- Key institutions include the National Museum and Indian Museum.
- Autonomous bodies and state

governments also manage several regional museums.

Historical Evolution

- Museum development in India dates back to the colonial period (e.g., Indian Museum, 1814).
- Post-independence, museums became tools for nation-building and heritage preservation.

Role of Museums

- Preservation and conservation of artifacts.
- Promotion of education, research, and public awareness.
- Platforms for cultural exchange and diplomacy.

Technological Integration

- Adoption of digital archives, virtual tours, and interactive exhibits.
- Enhances accessibility, especially for younger audiences and global visitors.

International Linkages

- Collaboration with global institutions for exhibitions and knowledge exchange.
- Aligns with UNESCO conventions on cultural heritage protection.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Digital Transformation:** Integration of AR/VR, virtual tours, and online collections.
- **Infrastructure Upgrade:** Modernization of existing museums and development of new ones.
- **Cultural Preservation:** Focus on safeguarding tangible and intangible heritage.
- **Tourism Boost:** Museums as key drivers of cultural tourism and local economies.
- **Institutional Mechanism:** Central schemes supporting state and autonomous museums.
- **Challenges:** Funding constraints, lack of skilled manpower, and low visitor engagement.
- **Way Forward:** Public-private partnerships, capacity building, and global collaborations.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Indian Museum, Kolkata:** Oldest museum in India (est. 1814).
- **National Museum:** Located in New Delhi.
- **UNESCO Convention (1972):** Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage.
- **Museology:** Study of museum management and curation.
- **Virtual Museums:** Digital platforms showcasing artifacts online.

- **Key Scheme:** Museum Grant Scheme by Ministry of Culture.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Museums in India are exclusively managed by the central government.
2. Digital technologies like AR/VR are being used to enhance museum accessibility.
3. Museums play a role in cultural diplomacy and tourism promotion.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

3.WEATHER FORECASTING FOR AGRARIAN STATES: STRENGTHENING CLIMATE-RESILIENT AGRICULTURE

climate-resilient agriculture and food security.

- It also supports efficient resource use, including water, fertilizers, and crop planning.
- The effort reflects governance focus on farmer welfare and disaster risk reduction.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Institutional Framework

- The India Meteorological Department operates under the Ministry of Earth Sciences.
- Agro-meteorological services are delivered under the **Gramin Krishi Mausam Sewa (GKMS)**.

Agro-Meteorological Advisory Services (AAS)

- Provide district-level weather forecasts and crop-specific advisories.
- Disseminated through SMS, mobile apps, radio, and extension services.

Scientific Basis

- Use of satellite observations, Doppler Weather Radars, and numerical weather prediction models.
- Integration with climate models for seasonal forecasting.



- The government is strengthening weather forecasting systems to support agriculture-dependent states.
- Agro-meteorological advisories are being disseminated to farmers for informed decision-making.
- Improved forecasting helps mitigate risks from extreme weather events like droughts, floods, and unseasonal rains.
- Integration of technology, satellite data, and mobile platforms enhances outreach and precision.
- The initiative contributes to

Role in Agriculture

- Helps farmers decide sowing, irrigation, harvesting, and pest control.
- Reduces crop losses and enhances productivity.

Climate Change Context

- Increasing frequency of extreme weather events necessitates robust forecasting systems.
- Supports India's adaptation strategies under global climate frameworks.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Institutional Mechanism:** IMD and Ministry of Earth Sciences lead forecasting initiatives.
- **Technological Integration:** Use of satellites, radars, and AI-based models for precision forecasting.
- **Farmer Outreach:** Advisories disseminated via SMS, apps, and mass media platforms.
- **Strategic Significance:** Enhances resilience of agrarian states against climate variability.
- **Economic Impact:** Reduces crop losses and improves farm incomes.
- **Challenges:** Last-mile connectivity, language barriers, and limited awareness among farmers.

- **Way Forward:** Strengthening local-level forecasting, improving accuracy, and expanding digital access.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **India Meteorological Department (IMD):** Established in 1875.
- **Ministry of Earth Sciences:** Nodal ministry for weather and climate services.
- **Gramin Krishi Mausam Sewa (GKMS):** Provides agro-advisories to farmers.
- **Doppler Weather Radar:** Tracks precipitation and storm movement.
- **Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP):** Mathematical models for forecasting.
- **Monsoon Forecasting:** Crucial for India's agriculture (over 50% rain-fed area).

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Agro-meteorological advisories are aimed at helping farmers make crop-related decisions.
2. The India Meteorological Department functions under the Ministry of Agriculture.
3. Doppler Weather Radars are used in weather forecasting.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

4.QR CODE-ENABLED IDENTITY CARDS & DIGITALLY TRACEABLE FOOD PACKETS IN INDIAN RAILWAYS



- Indian Railways has launched a digital verification mechanism for catering staff and food services onboard trains.
- QR code-enabled identity cards allow passengers to verify authorised vendors in real time.
- Digitally traceable food packets ensure accountability across the catering supply chain.
- The move aims to eliminate unauthorised vendors, improving hygiene and passenger trust.
- It aligns with broader digital governance initiatives and service delivery reforms.
- Enhances consumer protection and strengthens regulatory oversight in public transport systems.

- Reflects a shift towards technology-driven transparency and accountability in public services.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Institutional Framework

- Catering services in railways are managed by the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation.
- Policy governed under railway catering policies and service standards.

Need for Reform

- Persistent issues of unauthorised vendors and substandard food quality.
- Lack of traceability and accountability in catering supply chains.

Digital Governance Push

- QR codes enable quick verification and authentication.
- Integration with mobile platforms supports real-time passenger feedback.

Consumer Protection Angle

- Ensures hygienic food and verified service providers.
- Strengthens grievance redressal mechanisms.

Technological Basis

- Use of QR codes for identity verification and supply chain tracking.

- Enables data-driven monitoring and enforcement.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Digital Verification:** QR code-enabled ID cards for authorised catering staff.
- **Traceability Mechanism:** Food packets digitally tagged for supply chain tracking.
- **Institutional Mechanism:** Implemented by Indian Railways and IRCTC.
- **Consumer Protection:** Ensures hygienic and verified food services.
- **Transparency:** Real-time verification reduces fraud and malpractice.
- **Challenges:** Implementation across a vast railway network and ensuring compliance.
- **Way Forward:** Integration with passenger apps, stricter enforcement, and awareness campaigns.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Indian Railways:** One of the world's largest rail networks.
- **IRCTC:** Handles catering, tourism, and online ticketing services.
- **QR Code:** Machine-readable code storing information for quick access.
- **Digital India Initiative:** Promotes e-governance and digital service delivery.

- **Consumer Protection Act, 2019:**

Safeguards consumer rights in India.

- **Traceability:** Ability to track product movement across supply chain stages.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. QR code-enabled identity cards can help verify authorised service providers in real time.
2. IRCTC is responsible for managing catering services in Indian Railways.
3. Digitally traceable food packets eliminate the need for any regulatory oversight.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

5. REDUCTION OF CARBON EMISSIONS IN PORT OPERATIONS: TOWARDS GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE MARITIME INFRASTRUCTURE



सत्यमेव जयते

पत्तन, पोत परिवहन
एवं जलमार्ग मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
**PORTS, SHIPPING
AND WATERWAYS**

- India is actively working to decarbonize its port operations through adoption of green technologies and renewable energy.
- Initiatives include electrification, use of shore power, and transition to cleaner fuels.
- Ports play a crucial role in trade; hence sustainable operations have both economic and environmental significance.
- The move supports India's climate goals while improving efficiency and reducing operational costs.
- Enhances global competitiveness of Indian ports by aligning with international sustainability standards.
- Promotes innovation in logistics, infrastructure, and energy use within the maritime sector.
- Reflects integrated governance approach combining economic growth with environmental sustainability.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Institutional Framework

- Ports are governed by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- Major ports operate under the **Major Port Authorities Act, 2021**.

Green Port Concept

- Focus on reducing carbon footprint through energy efficiency and renewable energy adoption.
- Includes waste management, pollution control, and sustainable logistics.

Key Initiatives

- **Shore Power Supply:** Ships use onshore electricity instead of onboard fossil fuels.
- **Electrification:** Replacement of diesel equipment with electric alternatives.
- **Renewable Energy:** Solar and wind energy installations at ports.

International Linkages

- Aligned with International Maritime Organization goals for emission reduction.
- Supports commitments under the Paris Agreement.

Environmental Significance

- Ports contribute to air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Decarbonization reduces

environmental impact and improves coastal ecosystem health.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Energy Transition:** Shift towards renewable energy and electrification in port operations.
- **Technological Adoption:** Use of shore power and energy-efficient equipment.
- **Institutional Mechanism:** Governed under the Ministry of Ports and Major Port Authorities Act.
- **Strategic Significance:** Enhances sustainability and global competitiveness of ports.
- **Environmental Impact:** Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution.
- **Challenges:** High initial investment, technological gaps, and infrastructure limitations.
- **Way Forward:** Increased investment, policy incentives, and international collaboration.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Major Port Authorities Act, 2021:** Provides autonomy to major ports.
- **Shore Power (Cold Ironing):** Supplying electricity to docked ships from shore.
- **International Maritime Organization**

(IMO): Regulates global shipping standards.

- **Green Ports:** Ports adopting sustainable and eco-friendly practices.
- **India's Climate Goal:** Net-zero emissions target by 2070.
- **Renewable Energy in Ports:** Solar rooftops, wind installations.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Shore power allows ships to switch off their engines while docked and use electricity from the port.
2. The Major Port Authorities Act, 2021 provides complete control of ports to private entities.
3. Green port initiatives aim to reduce the environmental impact of port operations.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

1.COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF AGRICULTURE SECTOR: FOCUS ON CROP LOSS, INSURANCE & FARMER SUPPORT



- The Union Agriculture Minister conducted a comprehensive review to assess challenges in crop damage reporting and farmer compensation mechanisms
- Key concern highlighted was **delays in insurance claim settlement**, impacting farmer resilience
- The government stressed **technology-driven crop assessment** for accuracy and transparency
- Focus on improving implementation of

Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana

- Reinforced need for **timely financial assistance** to mitigate agrarian distress
- The move reflects a governance push toward **farmer-centric service delivery and accountability**
- Broader implication: strengthens rural economy stability and reduces vulnerability to climate risks

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Crop Insurance Framework in India

- Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (launched 2016)
- Provides **financial support to farmers against crop loss due to natural calamities, pests, diseases**
- Premium shared by **Centre, States, and Farmers**
- Uses **technology like remote sensing, drones, and satellite imagery**

Institutional Mechanism

- Implemented through **State Governments + Insurance Companies**
- Monitored by Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare
- Claims depend on **Crop Cutting Experiments (CCEs)**

Key Issues in Implementation

- Delay in conducting CCEs
- Data discrepancies

- Late release of state share
- Low awareness among farmers

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Institutional Mechanism:** Strengthening Centre-State coordination for faster claim processing
- **Technology Integration:** Push for satellite-based crop loss assessment to reduce delays
- **Financial Provision:** Ensuring timely release of insurance claims and disaster relief funds
- **Farmer Welfare:** Emphasis on direct and prompt assistance to affected farmers
- **Strategic Significance:** Enhances agricultural resilience against climate variability
- **Challenges:** Administrative delays, data accuracy issues, and uneven state participation
- **Way Forward:**
 - I. Digitization of crop surveys
 - II. Real-time monitoring systems
 - III. Awareness campaigns for farmers
 - IV. Accountability mechanisms for insurers and states

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **PMFBY Launch Year:** 2016
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare
- **Premium Structure:**
 - I. Kharif: 2% (farmer share)
 - II. Rabi: 1.5%
 - III. Commercial/Horticulture: 5%
- **Key Feature:** No upper limit on government subsidy
- **CCEs (Crop Cutting Experiments):** Primary method for yield estimation
- **Technology Use:** Remote sensing, GPS, drones
- **Related Scheme:**
 - I. Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana
- **Disaster Coverage:** Prevented sowing, post-harvest losses, localized calamities

Padh-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Under PMFBY, there is a cap on the maximum subsidy provided by the government.
2. Crop Cutting Experiments are used for estimating crop yield under PMFBY.

3. PMFBY covers post-harvest losses due to natural calamities.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

2.INDIA–BHUTAN STRENGTHEN POSTAL COOPERATION



- India and Bhutan have taken steps to modernize and strengthen postal collaboration, particularly in cross-border mail and parcel delivery
- The partnership emphasizes **efficient logistics, digital integration, and service reliability**
- It aligns with India's **Neighbourhood First Policy**, reinforcing regional cooperation
- Improved postal connectivity is expected to **boost trade, e-commerce, and communication access** in border regions

- Reflects a governance approach focused on **infrastructure diplomacy and service delivery enhancement**

- Enhances Bhutan's access to broader global postal networks via India
- Broader implication: Strengthens regional integration and economic linkages in South Asia

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

India–Bhutan Relations

- Long-standing **special diplomatic and economic partnership**
- Cooperation spans **hydropower, trade, education, and connectivity**
- Guided by mutual trust and strategic alignment

Postal Cooperation Framework

- India Post plays a key role in **international mail exchange and logistics**
- Bhutan's postal system integrates with regional and global networks through partnerships

Institutional Mechanism

- Department of Posts under Ministry of Communications
- Works in coordination with Bhutan Post and international postal bodies

International Linkage

- Governed by standards of Universal Postal Union (UPU)
- UPU ensures **global interoperability and standardization of postal services**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Institutional Mechanism:** Strengthening collaboration between India Post and Bhutan Post
- **Connectivity Enhancement:** Improved cross-border mail and parcel delivery systems
- **Digital Integration:** Adoption of technology for tracking, sorting, and efficient logistics
- **Strategic Significance:** Supports India's Neighbourhood First and regional connectivity goals
- **Economic Impact:** Facilitates e-commerce growth and small business participation
- **People-to-People Contact:** Enhances communication access in remote and border areas
- **Challenges:** Terrain constraints, infrastructure gaps, and service standardization

Way Forward:

- I. Expansion of digital postal services
- II. Capacity building and training
- III. Integration with global logistics networks
- IV. Infrastructure upgrades in border regions

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

• Universal Postal Union (UPU):

- I. Established: 1874
- II. Headquarters: Bern, Switzerland
- III. UN specialized agency for postal services

• India Post:

- I. One of the world's largest postal networks
- II. Operates under Ministry of Communications

• Bhutan Capital: Thimphu

• **India-Bhutan Treaty:** Revised in 2007, strengthening sovereignty and cooperation

• **Neighbourhood First Policy:** Focuses on strengthening relations with immediate neighbors

• **Key Function of Postal Systems:** Mail delivery, financial inclusion, logistics support

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. The Universal Postal Union is a specialized agency of the United Nations.
2. India and Bhutan's postal cooperation is aimed only at traditional mail delivery services.
3. Improved postal connectivity can facilitate e-commerce growth in border regions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

3. DoSEL STRENGTHENS OPEN SCHOOLING VIA NIOS TO ACHIEVE 100% GER BY 2030



- The government is reinforcing the open schooling ecosystem to bring **every child into the education net**

- National Institute of Open Schooling will play a central role in providing **flexible and accessible education pathways**

- Targets children who are **dropouts, working, marginalized, or geographically isolated**

- Aligns with goals of National Education Policy 2020, particularly universal access and equity

- Focus on **digital learning, skill integration, and alternative education models**

- Governance focus: **inclusive policy design, last-mile delivery, and educational equity**

- Broader implication: critical for achieving **demographic dividend and human capital development**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)

- GER measures **total enrolment in a level of education as a percentage of eligible population**

- A key indicator for **access and inclusivity in education systems**

National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS)

- National Institute of Open Schooling is an autonomous institution under DoSEL

- Provides **open and distance learning**

(ODL) at secondary and senior secondary levels

- Caters to **diverse learners including adults and marginalized groups**

Policy Framework

- National Education Policy 2020 aims for **universalization of education from preschool to secondary level by 2030**

- Emphasizes **flexible learning pathways, multiple entry-exit, and vocational integration**

Need for Open Schooling

- Addresses **dropout rates, socio-economic barriers, and geographic constraints**
- Supports **lifelong learning and second-chance education**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Institutional Mechanism:** Strengthening role of NIOS as a national open schooling provider

- **Inclusion Focus:** Targeting out-of-school children, migrants, and disadvantaged groups

- **Digital Integration:** Leveraging online platforms for remote and flexible learning

- **Policy Alignment:** Supports NEP 2020 goal of universal school education

- **Strategic Significance:** Critical for achieving 100% GER and improving human capital

- **Challenges:** Digital divide, awareness gaps, quality assurance in open schooling

- **Way Forward:**

- I. Expansion of study centres and digital infrastructure
- II. Integration with skilling programs
- III. Community outreach and awareness campaigns
- IV. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **NIOS Established:** 1989

- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Education

- **Type:** Open and Distance Learning (ODL) institution

- **GER Definition:** Ratio of total enrolment to eligible age group population

- **NEP 2020 Target:** Universal school education by 2030

- **ODL Advantage:** Flexible pace, inclusive access, lifelong learning

- **Related Initiative:**

- I. Samagra Shiksha

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) measures enrolment relative to the eligible population in a given age group.
2. The National Institute of Open Schooling provides only vocational education programs.
3. National Education Policy 2020 aims for universal school education by 2030.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

4.SURAKSHA SANKALP KARYASHALA TO BOOST DISTRICT-LEVEL HIV RESPONSE IN HARYANA & DELHI



National AIDS Control Organisation
India's Voice against AIDS
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India
www.naco.gov.in

- The workshop aims to enhance **decentralized HIV response mechanisms** at the district level
 - Focus on **data-driven interventions, early detection, and treatment adherence**
 - Reinforces India's commitment to ending HIV/AIDS as a public health threat by 2030
 - Emphasizes **coordination among health officials, NGOs, and community stakeholders**
 - Aligns with the objectives of National AIDS Control Programme
 - Governance focus: **last-mile health delivery, capacity building, and accountability**
 - Broader implication: Strengthens public health systems and improves disease surveillance

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

HIV/AIDS in India

- Caused by Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) affecting the immune system
 - Spread through **unprotected sexual contact, infected blood, needles, and mother-to-child transmission**
 - Managed through **Antiretroviral Therapy (ART)**

Institutional Framework

- National AIDS Control Organisation under Ministry of Health
 - Implements National AIDS Control

Programme (launched 1992)

- Focus areas: **prevention, testing, treatment, and awareness**

International Linkage

- India is a signatory to global HIV targets under UNAIDS

- Target: **95-95-95 goals by 2030** (diagnosis, treatment, viral suppression)

Need for District-Level Focus

- HIV prevalence varies across regions
- District-level interventions ensure

localized and targeted strategies

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Institutional Mechanism:** Collaboration between MoHFW, NACO, state authorities, and NGOs

- **Decentralized Approach:** Focus on district-level planning and implementation

- **Data-Driven Strategy:** Use of surveillance data for targeted interventions

- **Public Health Significance:** Strengthens early detection, treatment adherence, and prevention

- **Strategic Goal:** Aligns with global commitment to eliminate HIV/AIDS by 2030

- **Challenges:** Social stigma, awareness gaps, uneven healthcare access

• Way Forward:

- I. Community engagement and awareness campaigns
- II. Expansion of ART centers
- III. Strengthening testing infrastructure
- IV. Monitoring and evaluation at district level

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **NACP Launch Year:** 1992

- **NACO:** Apex body for HIV/AIDS control in India

• **ART (Antiretroviral Therapy):**

Treatment that suppresses HIV replication

• **UNAIDS 95-95-95 Targets:**

- I. 95% diagnosed
- II. 95% on treatment
- III. 95% virally suppressed

- **HIV Transmission Modes:** Blood, sexual contact, mother-to-child

- **Legal Framework:** HIV/AIDS (Prevention and Control) Act, 2017

- **Key Indicator:** Prevalence rate among high-risk groups

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. National AIDS Control Programme in India was launched in the 1990s.
2. Antiretroviral Therapy completely cures HIV infection.
3. UNAIDS 95-95-95 targets aim at diagnosis, treatment, and viral suppression.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

5.INTER-MINISTERIAL BRIEFING ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN WEST ASIA



- The Government of India reviewed recent developments in West Asia to ensure **policy coherence and preparedness**

- Discussions centered on **regional instability, energy security, diaspora safety, and trade routes**
- Emphasized **whole-of-government approach** for crisis response and strategic planning
- Highlighted importance of safeguarding **Indian diaspora and critical economic interests**
- Reinforces India's balanced diplomatic engagement in a sensitive geopolitical region
- Governance focus: **inter-ministerial coordination, risk assessment, and contingency planning**
- Broader implication: Ensures resilience of India's foreign policy and economic stability amid global uncertainties

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

West Asia: Strategic Importance

- Includes countries like Saudi Arabia, Iran, Israel, United Arab Emirates
- Critical for **energy supplies, trade, and geopolitical stability**
- Hosts a large **Indian diaspora population**

India's Interests in West Asia

- **Energy Security:** Major source of crude oil and natural gas imports
- **Diaspora Welfare:** Millions of Indians working in the region
- **Trade & Connectivity:** Key maritime routes like Strait of Hormuz

- **Strategic Relations:** Balanced ties with multiple regional powers

Institutional Mechanism

- Led by Ministry of External Affairs
- Coordination with ministries like Defence, Petroleum, Commerce
- Inputs from intelligence and security agencies

Geopolitical Context

- Region often faces **conflicts, proxy wars, and shifting alliances**
- Impacts global **oil prices, supply chains, and security architecture**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Institutional Mechanism:** Inter-ministerial coordination for unified policy response
- **Strategic Assessment:** Review of geopolitical risks and emerging threats
- **Energy Security:** Monitoring impact on oil supply and pricing
- **Diaspora Protection:** Ensuring safety and contingency planning for Indian nationals
- **Economic Impact:** Safeguarding trade routes and supply chains
- **Challenges:** Regional instability, volatile alliances, external power competition

• Way Forward:

- I. Strengthening diplomatic engagement
- II. Diversifying energy sources
- III. Enhancing evacuation and crisis response mechanisms
- IV. Promoting regional stability through dialogue

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

• Strait of Hormuz:

- I. Critical chokepoint for global oil trade
- II. Connects Persian Gulf to Arabian Sea

• West Asia Importance for India:

- I. Major oil supplier
- II. Large Indian diaspora

- **Key Policy:** Strategic autonomy in foreign policy

• Evacuation Operations:

- I. Operation Ganga (example of crisis response model)

- **Major Import Dependency:** Crude oil from West Asia

- **Geopolitical Term:** Proxy war – indirect conflict between major powers

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. The Strait of Hormuz is a critical route for global oil transportation.
2. India follows a policy of exclusive alignment with one major power in West Asia.
3. West Asia hosts a significant Indian diaspora population.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

1. INDIA ACHIEVES 1 BILLION TONNE COAL PRODUCTION MILESTONE AGAIN, STRENGTHENING ENERGY SECURITY



- India has achieved **over 1 billion tonne coal production**, marking a significant milestone in its energy sector.
- The achievement highlights the country's **increasing self-reliance in coal**, reducing dependence on imports.
- Coal continues to play a **dominant role in India's energy mix**, especially in electricity generation.
- The milestone indicates improved **efficiency, capacity expansion, and policy push** in the coal sector.
- It strengthens **energy security**, ensuring reliable fuel supply for power, steel, and core industries.
- However, it also raises concerns regarding **environmental sustainability and climate commitments**.
- The development reflects the balancing act between **economic**

growth and clean energy transition.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Role of Coal in India's Energy Mix

- Coal accounts for **over 50% of India's energy needs** and around **70% of electricity generation**.
- India is among the **largest producers and consumers of coal globally**.

Institutional Framework

- **Ministry of Coal**: Nodal ministry for policy and regulation.
- **Coal India Limited**: World's largest coal producer contributing majority of output.
- Private sector participation has increased through **commercial coal mining reforms (2020 onwards)**.

Energy Security Concept

- Refers to **uninterrupted availability of energy sources at affordable prices**.
- Domestic coal production reduces vulnerability to **global supply shocks and price volatility**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Production Milestone:** India crosses **1 billion tonne coal output** again, sustaining growth trajectory.
- **Energy Security:** Reduces reliance on imports and ensures stable supply for thermal power plants.
- **Economic Significance:** Supports **core sectors** — power, steel, cement, and manufacturing.
- **Policy Push:** Reforms like **commercial mining, ease of doing business, and faster clearances** have boosted output.
- **Employment Impact:** Coal sector generates **direct and indirect employment**, especially in mining regions.
- **Environmental Concerns:** High coal dependency contributes to **carbon emissions and air pollution**.
- **Way Forward:** Transition towards **clean coal technologies**, renewables integration, and gradual decarbonisation.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Coal Share in Power:** ~70% of India's electricity generation.
- **Largest Producer:** Coal India Limited contributes ~75–80% of domestic production.
- **Commercial Mining Reform:** Introduced in **2020** to allow private participation.
- **Types of Coal (India):** Anthracite, Bituminous, Lignite (major share).

- **Energy Security:** Availability + affordability + reliability of energy supply.
- **Import Dependence:** Mainly for **coking coal** used in steel sector.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Coal contributes to more than two-thirds of India's electricity generation.
2. Commercial coal mining in India is restricted only to public sector companies.
3. Increasing domestic coal production can reduce vulnerability to global energy price fluctuations.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

2. MODERN-DAY WARFARE TRANSCENDS BORDERS: ROBUST MILITARY AND PREPARED CITIZENS ESSENTIAL FOR NATIONAL SECURITY



- The Defence Minister highlighted the **evolving nature of warfare**, extending beyond traditional battlefields into cyber, space and information domains.
- He stressed the need for a **robust and technologically advanced military** to tackle multi-dimensional threats.
- A key emphasis was on **civilian preparedness**, including awareness, resilience and participation in national security efforts.
- The statement reflects a shift towards **whole-of-nation approach** in defence preparedness.
- It underscores the importance of **hybrid warfare readiness**, including misinformation and psychological operations.

- The approach aligns with India's push for **self-reliance in defence (Atmanirbhar Bharat)** and modernisation of armed forces.
- It has implications for governance, internal security, and civil-military coordination.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Changing Nature of Warfare

- Traditional wars (land, sea, air) are now supplemented by **cyber warfare, space warfare, and information warfare**.
- Non-state actors and asymmetric threats have increased, blurring **war and peace distinctions**.

Hybrid Warfare

- Combines **conventional military force with cyber attacks, disinformation, economic pressure, and proxy actors**.
- Seen in global conflicts where **state and non-state actors operate simultaneously across domains**.

Civil Defence & Citizen Role

- Civilian participation includes **disaster preparedness, cybersecurity awareness, information verification, and resilience during crises**.

- Countries increasingly adopt a **“whole-of-society” defence model**.

India's Defence Reforms

- Focus on **theatre commands, indigenisation, and modernisation** of armed forces.
- Promotion of **domestic defence manufacturing ecosystem** under Atmanirbhar Bharat.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Multi-Domain Warfare:** Conflicts now span land, sea, air, cyber, and space domains.
- **Whole-of-Nation Approach:** Emphasis on synergy between military strength and civilian preparedness.
- **Technological Edge:** Importance of AI, drones, cyber defence, and space capabilities.
- **Citizen Awareness:** Need for informed citizens to counter misinformation and psychological warfare.
- **Strategic Autonomy:** Push for indigenous defence production to reduce external dependence.
- **Internal Security Linkage:** Blurring of external and internal threats requires coordinated response.
- **Way Forward:** Strengthen civil defence systems, cyber literacy, and military-civil cooperation.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Hybrid Warfare:** Combination of conventional and non-conventional methods (cyber, info, proxy war).
- **Cyber Warfare:** Attacks on digital infrastructure like power grids, banking systems.
- **Information Warfare:** Use of misinformation/propaganda to influence public opinion.
- **Atmanirbhar Bharat (Defence):** Policy for indigenous production of defence equipment.
- **Civil Defence:** Measures to protect civilians during emergencies and war situations.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Hybrid warfare includes the use of both conventional military force and non-military tools such as cyber attacks and misinformation.
2. In modern warfare, civilian preparedness has no significant role in national security.
3. Cyber and space domains are increasingly important in contemporary conflicts.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

3. INDIAN NAVY SET TO COMMISSION ITS LATEST STEALTH FRIGATE 'TARAGIRI'



- **INS Taragiri** is part of the advanced **Project 17A stealth frigate programme**, representing next-generation naval platforms.
- The commissioning reflects India's progress in **indigenous defence manufacturing** under Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- Equipped with **stealth features, modern weapons, and network-centric warfare systems**, it enhances operational readiness.
- It significantly boosts the Navy's capability in **blue-water operations** and maritime dominance.
- The warship will play a key role in safeguarding **Sea Lines of**

Communication (SLOCs) and regional stability.

- It strengthens India's position in the **Indian Ocean Region (IOR)** amid growing geopolitical competition.
- The development highlights synergy between **defence policy, industry, and technological advancement**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Project 17A

- Follow-on programme to **Shivalik-class (Project 17)** frigates.
- Involves construction of **7 advanced stealth frigates** with improved design and automation.
- Built by Indian shipyards including Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited and Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers.

What are Stealth Frigates?

- Warships designed to **reduce radar, infrared, and acoustic signatures**.
- Enable **surprise, survivability, and reduced detection** in combat situations.

Strategic Maritime Context

- India's maritime doctrine emphasises **sea control**,

deterrence, and safeguarding trade routes.

- Increasing presence of extra-regional powers in the **Indian Ocean Region** necessitates stronger naval capabilities.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Platform Type:** Advanced stealth guided-missile frigate under Project 17A.
- **Indigenisation:** High indigenous content supporting **Atmanirbhar Bharat in defence.**
- **Stealth Capability:** Reduced radar cross-section, enhanced survivability.
- **Combat Systems:** Equipped with **modern sensors, weapons, and electronic warfare systems.**
- **Operational Role:** Anti-air, anti-surface and anti-submarine warfare (multi-role).
- **Strategic Significance:** Enhances India's maritime security and regional influence in IOR.
- **Industrial Boost:** Promotes domestic shipbuilding ecosystem and defence manufacturing.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Project 17A:** Programme to build **7 stealth frigates** for the Indian Navy.
- **Predecessor: Shivalik-class frigates (Project 17).**

- **Shipbuilders:** Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited and Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers.
- **Frigate Role:** Medium-sized warship for **escort, patrol, and multi-role combat operations.**
- **Stealth Feature:** Reduction of **radar, acoustic and infrared signatures.**
- **Indian Ocean Region (IOR):** Critical for global trade and India's strategic interests.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Project 17A is a programme for building stealth frigates with improved design over earlier Shivalik-class ships.
2. Stealth frigates are designed to increase radar visibility to deter adversaries.
3. Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited and Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers are involved in constructing Project 17A ships.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

4. BHARAT INNOVATES DEEP-TECH PRE-SUMMIT INAUGURATED AT IIT BOMBAY



- The pre-summit aims to **accelerate India's deep-tech ecosystem** by bringing together academia, startups, investors and policymakers.
- Focus areas include **AI, quantum computing, semiconductors, space tech, and biotechnology**.
- It provides a platform for **early-stage startups to showcase innovations and secure funding support**.
- The initiative aligns with India's push for **technology-led economic growth and strategic autonomy**.
- It highlights the need to bridge the gap between **research and commercialization**.
- The summit promotes **public-private partnerships and innovation ecosystems**.
- It strengthens India's ambition to become a **global hub for deep-tech innovation**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

What is Deep-Tech?

- Deep-tech refers to technologies based on **advanced scientific research and engineering innovations**.
- Examples: Artificial Intelligence, Quantum Technologies, Robotics, Space Tech, Advanced Materials.

India's Innovation Ecosystem

- India has a growing startup ecosystem supported by initiatives like **Startup India, Digital India, and Atmanirbhar Bharat**.
- Institutions like IIT Bombay act as hubs for **research, incubation and innovation**.

Need for Deep-Tech Focus

- Deep-tech is critical for **strategic sectors (defence, semiconductors, space)**.
- Requires **long-term funding, skilled manpower, and strong R&D ecosystem**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Platform Creation:** Brings together startups, academia, investors, and policymakers.

- **Focus Areas:** AI, quantum tech, semiconductors, biotech, and space technologies.
- **Startup Support:** Enables funding access, mentorship, and scaling opportunities.
- **Research Commercialisation:** Bridges gap between lab innovation and market deployment.
- **Strategic Significance:** Enhances technological self-reliance and global competitiveness.
- **Collaboration Model:** Promotes academia-industry-government synergy.
- **Way Forward:** Strengthen funding, IP ecosystem, and global partnerships.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Deep-Tech:** Science-based innovations with high R&D intensity and long gestation period.
- **IIT Bombay:** Premier engineering institute and innovation hub in India.
- **Key Sectors:** AI, Quantum Computing, Semiconductors, Space Tech, Biotechnology.
- **Startup India:** Flagship initiative to promote entrepreneurship.
- **Atmanirbhar Bharat:** Policy push for self-reliance in strategic sectors.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Deep-tech innovations are primarily based on advanced scientific research and engineering.
2. Deep-tech startups generally require shorter development cycles compared to conventional startups.
3. Deep-tech sectors are crucial for strategic autonomy in areas like defence and semiconductors.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

5. NATIONAL ZOOLOGICAL PARK MARKS INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FORESTS WITH EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH AND PLANTATION DRIVE



- The event aimed to **sensitise students and visitors** about the importance of forests and biodiversity.
- Activities included **plantation drives, awareness sessions, and interactive outreach programmes**.
- It highlights the role of urban institutions like zoos in **environmental education and conservation advocacy**.
- The initiative aligns with India's commitment to **sustainable development and ecological balance**.
- Such programmes promote **community participation in conservation efforts**.
- It strengthens the integration of **education, conservation and citizen engagement**.
- The move reflects increasing emphasis on **public awareness as**

a tool for environmental governance.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

International Day of Forests

- Observed annually on **21 March**, proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly.
- Aims to raise awareness about the **importance of forests and sustainable management**.

Role of Zoological Parks in Conservation

- Modern zoos function as **centres for conservation, research and education**.
- They contribute to **biodiversity awareness, species protection and environmental education**.

Forests and Sustainability

- Forests provide **ecosystem services** — carbon sequestration, biodiversity habitat, water regulation.
- Central to achieving climate goals under frameworks like the **Paris Agreement**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Awareness Initiative:** Educational outreach programmes conducted for students and visitors.
- **Plantation Drive:** Tree plantation undertaken to promote green cover and ecological awareness.
- **Institutional Role:** National Zoological Park as a hub for conservation education.
- **Global Linkage:** Celebration aligned with International Day of Forests.
- **Community Participation:** Encourages citizen involvement in environmental protection.
- **Environmental Impact:** Promotes sustainable practices and biodiversity conservation.
- **Way Forward:** Strengthen urban environmental awareness programmes and eco-education.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **International Day of Forests:** Observed on **21 March**.
- **Declared By:** United Nations General Assembly.
- **Forest Functions:** Carbon sink, biodiversity habitat, climate regulation.
- **Zoological Parks:** Centres for **ex-situ conservation and environmental education**.
- **India's Forest Policy Goal:** Maintain **33% forest and tree cover**.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. International Day of Forests is observed on 21 March every year.
2. Zoological parks play no role in biodiversity conservation.
3. Forests contribute to carbon sequestration and climate regulation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

1. MINISTRY OF MINES TO ORGANISE NATIONAL DMF SUMMIT 2026



- The summit aims to **assess performance and impact of DMFs** across states and districts.
- It will bring together **state governments, district officials, and stakeholders** to share best practices.
- Focus areas include **improving transparency, utilisation efficiency, and community participation**.
- The initiative seeks to ensure that mining revenues translate into **inclusive development** in affected areas.
- It aligns with goals of **sustainable mining and social justice**.
- The summit reflects the government's push towards **good governance and accountability in resource management**.
- It also aims to address challenges such as **under-utilisation and fund diversion**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

What is District Mineral Foundation (DMF)?

- DMF is a **non-profit statutory trust** set up in mining districts to work for the **interest and benefit of persons affected by mining**.
- It is funded through contributions from **mining lease holders**.

Legal Basis

- Established under the **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957** (amended in 2015).
- Each state frames rules governing DMF functioning.

Objective of DMF

- Address **adverse impacts of mining** on environment, health, and livelihoods.
- Promote **sustainable development in mining-affected regions**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Summit Objective:** Review implementation and impact of DMF across India.
- **Stakeholder Platform:** Participation from states, districts, and policymakers.
- **Focus Areas:** Transparency, fund utilisation, and governance reforms.
- **Social Impact:** Welfare of mining-affected communities (health, education, livelihood).
- **Governance Reform:** Push towards accountability and outcome-based utilisation.
- **Challenges:** Under-utilisation of funds, lack of awareness, administrative bottlenecks.

- **Way Forward:** Strengthen monitoring, community participation, and digital tracking of funds.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **DMF:** District Mineral Foundation — statutory body at district level.
- **Legal Provision:** Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (2015 amendment).
- **Funding Source:** Contributions from mining companies (royalty-linked).
- **Objective:** Welfare of **mining-affected people and areas**.
- **Nature:** Non-profit trust with district-level implementation.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding District Mineral Foundations (DMFs):

1. DMFs are statutory bodies established under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957.
2. They are funded entirely by the central government budget.
3. DMFs aim to work for the welfare of mining-affected communities.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

2. INDIAN NAVAL SHIP TRIKAND CONCLUDES PORT CALL AT PORT VICTORIA, SEYCHELLES



- **INS Trikand**, a frontline stealth frigate, visited Seychelles as part of India's **mission-based deployment** in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).
- The port call involved **professional exchanges, joint interactions, and goodwill activities** with local authorities.
- It reinforces India's role as a **net security provider in the IOR**.
- The visit enhances **defence diplomacy and maritime cooperation** between India and Seychelles.
- It contributes to **capacity building, interoperability, and mutual trust**.
- Such engagements support **regional stability, anti-piracy efforts, and maritime security**.
- The initiative reflects India's broader vision of **SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region)**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

INS Trikand

- A **Talwar-class stealth frigate** equipped for **multi-role operations** including anti-air, anti-surface and anti-submarine warfare.

- Operates as part of India's forward naval deployments.

Mission-Based Deployment

- Indian Navy maintains **continuous presence in key maritime zones** to safeguard national interests and ensure security of Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs).

India-Seychelles Relations

- Seychelles is a key partner in the **Western Indian Ocean**, important for **maritime security cooperation, EEZ surveillance, and capacity building**.

SAGAR Doctrine

- India's maritime vision of **Security and Growth for All in the Region**, focusing on cooperative security and sustainable development in the IOR.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Strategic Visit:** Port call at Port Victoria strengthens bilateral maritime ties.
- **Defence Diplomacy:** Enhances cooperation between Indian Navy and Seychelles authorities.
- **Operational Role:** Supports mission-based deployments in IOR.
- **Security Dimension:** Contributes to anti-piracy, surveillance, and regional stability.
- **SAGAR Vision:** Reinforces India's commitment to cooperative maritime security.
- **Interoperability:** Facilitates joint exercises and knowledge exchange.

- **Geostrategic Importance:** Seychelles' location is critical in western Indian Ocean sea routes.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **INS Trikand:** Talwar-class stealth frigate of the Indian Navy.
- **Port Victoria:** Capital port of Seychelles.
- **SAGAR:** India's maritime doctrine – Security and Growth for All in the Region.
- **Mission-Based Deployment:** Continuous naval presence in key maritime zones.
- **IOR Importance:** Crucial for global trade and energy shipping routes.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. INS Trikand is a Talwar-class stealth frigate of the Indian Navy.
2. Seychelles is located in the Western Indian Ocean region.
3. SAGAR doctrine focuses only on military dominance in the Indian Ocean.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

3. GENERAL ELECTIONS AND BYE-ELECTIONS 2026: ASSURED MINIMUM FACILITIES AND VOTER ASSISTANCE AT ALL POLLING STATIONS



- The ECI has reiterated mandatory provision of **basic facilities at polling stations** to ensure smooth and inclusive voting.
- Key focus is on **voter convenience, accessibility, and dignity**, especially for elderly and Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).
- Measures include **drinking water, toilets, ramps, seating arrangements and proper signage**.
- Enhanced voter assistance mechanisms aim to improve **participation and reduce voter apathy**.
- The initiative reflects strengthening of **electoral governance and democratic inclusiveness**.
- It aligns with the principle of **free, fair, and accessible elections**.
- The move also supports **higher voter turnout and trust in electoral processes**.

- AMF refers to a set of **basic infrastructure and amenities** mandated at every polling station.
- Includes facilities for **comfort, accessibility, and ease of voting**.

Constitutional Framework

- Elections in India are governed under **Article 324 of the Constitution**, which vests superintendence, direction, and control in the Election Commission of India.

Inclusive Electoral Participation

- Focus on inclusion of **PwDs, senior citizens, women, and remote populations**.
- Use of measures like **volunteer assistance, transport support, and voter awareness campaigns**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **AMF Provision:** Mandatory facilities such as drinking water, toilets, ramps, and seating at all polling stations.
- **Accessibility Focus:** Special arrangements for **PwDs and elderly voters**.
- **Voter Assistance:** Help desks, signage, and volunteers for smooth navigation and support.
- **Inclusivity:** Ensures participation of marginalized and remote populations.
- **Governance Strengthening:** Enhances transparency and credibility of elections.
- **Turnout Impact:** Likely to improve voter turnout and reduce barriers to participation.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF)

- **Way Forward:** Integrate technology (apps, digital info) and strengthen last-mile delivery.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Article 324:** Empowers Election Commission of India to conduct elections.
- **AMF Components:** Drinking water, toilets, ramps, seating, signage, lighting.
- **PwD Support:** Wheelchairs, volunteers, priority voting.
- **Bye-Elections:** Elections held to fill vacant seats between general elections.
- **Free & Fair Elections:** Core principle of Indian democracy ensured by ECI.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Article 324 of the Constitution empowers the Election Commission of India to conduct elections.
2. Assured Minimum Facilities at polling stations include ramps and drinking water.
3. Bye-elections are conducted only after completion of the full term of a legislature.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

4.PRIME MINISTER REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO WATER CONSERVATION ON WORLD WATER DAY



- The Prime Minister highlighted the importance of **water conservation as a national priority**.
- Emphasis was laid on **community participation and Jan Andolan** for sustainable water use.
- The message reinforces ongoing initiatives like **rainwater harvesting, watershed management, and efficient irrigation**.
- It underscores the need to address **water scarcity and climate change impacts**.
- The initiative aligns with India's goals of **sustainable development and resource management**.
- It promotes behavioural change towards **responsible water usage**.
- The statement strengthens governance focus on **integrated water resource management**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

World Water Day

- Observed annually on **22 March**, declared by the United Nations.

- Focuses on raising awareness about **freshwater conservation and sustainable management**.

Water Stress in India

- India faces **high water stress**, with declining groundwater levels and uneven distribution.
- Increasing demand from agriculture, industry and urbanisation intensifies pressure.

Government Initiatives

- **Jal Jeevan Mission:** Ensures tap water supply to rural households.
- **Atal Bhujal Yojana:** Focuses on sustainable groundwater management.
- **Catch the Rain Campaign:** Promotes rainwater harvesting.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Leadership Message:** Narendra Modi calls for collective action on water conservation.
- **Jan Andolan Approach:** Emphasis on people's participation in water management.
- **Sustainability Focus:** Integration of conservation with climate resilience.
- **Policy Linkage:** Supports national missions on water security.
- **Behavioural Change:** Encourages efficient and responsible water use.
- **Environmental Impact:** Aims to reduce water scarcity and ecological stress.
- **Way Forward:** Strengthen local water governance and adopt modern irrigation techniques.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **World Water Day:** Observed on **22 March**.
- **Declared By:** United Nations.
- **Jal Jeevan Mission:** Rural tap water supply programme.
- **Atal Bhujal Yojana:** Groundwater management scheme.
- **Water Stress:** Situation where water demand exceeds availability or quality limits use.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. World Water Day is observed on 22 March every year.
2. Jal Jeevan Mission aims to provide piped drinking water to rural households.
3. Atal Bhujal Yojana focuses on surface water irrigation expansion.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

5. MINISTRY OF MINES TO LAUNCH SEVENTH TRANCHE OF AUCTION OF CRITICAL AND STRATEGIC MINERALS



- India is expanding auctions of **critical and strategic minerals** to secure supply chains for key industries.
- The 7th tranche builds on earlier rounds to enhance **private participation and exploration**.
- Focus minerals include those essential for **clean energy, electronics, defence, and high-tech manufacturing**.
- The move aims to reduce **import dependence**, especially for minerals like lithium, cobalt, and rare earth elements.
- It aligns with India's push for **energy transition and technological self-reliance**.
- The initiative strengthens **resource security and industrial competitiveness**.
- It also reflects policy reforms in mining governance and ease of doing business.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

What are Critical & Strategic Minerals?

- Minerals essential for **economic development and national security**,

with limited domestic availability and high import dependence.

- Examples: Lithium, cobalt, nickel, graphite, rare earth elements.

Legal & Policy Framework

- Governed under the **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957**.
- Recent amendments enable **auction of mineral blocks and private sector participation**.

Global Context

- Demand for critical minerals is rising due to **electric vehicles, renewable energy, and electronics manufacturing**.
- Countries are competing to secure supply chains amid geopolitical uncertainties.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Auction Tranche:** Launch of **7th round** of critical mineral block auctions.
- **Resource Security:** Reduces dependence on imports for strategic minerals.
- **Sectoral Impact:** Supports EVs, renewable energy, defence, and electronics industries.
- **Private Participation:** Encourages investment and advanced exploration.
- **Policy Reform:** Strengthens transparent and competitive allocation of resources.
- **Strategic Importance:** Enhances national security and technological capability.
- **Way Forward:** Develop processing capacity and global partnerships.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Critical Minerals:** Essential for modern technologies and energy transition.
- **Examples:** Lithium, cobalt, nickel, rare earth elements.
- **MMDR Act, 1957:** Governs mineral resources in India.
- **Auction System:** Transparent allocation of mining rights.
- **Import Dependence:** India relies heavily on imports for many critical minerals.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Critical minerals are essential for technologies like electric vehicles and renewable energy systems.
2. India is fully self-sufficient in the supply of critical minerals.
3. The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 governs mineral allocation in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

1. TRIBAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP THROUGH NSTFDC



- National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation is facilitating **income-generating activities** among Scheduled Tribes through financial assistance and training.
- It provides **concessional loans** for self-employment ventures in sectors like agriculture, handicrafts, MSMEs and services.
- The initiative aims to enhance **economic inclusion and livelihood diversification** among tribal communities.
- It supports **skill development and entrepreneurship training**, improving employability and productivity.
- Market linkage support helps integrate tribal products into **formal value chains**.
- The programme aligns with goals of **inclusive growth and tribal welfare**.

- It strengthens governance focus on **reducing regional and social disparities**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

About NSTFDC

- National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation is a **Government of India PSU** under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- Established to provide **financial assistance for economic development of Scheduled Tribes**.

Target Beneficiaries

- Scheduled Tribe individuals/groups living **below double the poverty line (as per norms)**.
- Focus on **remote and underdeveloped tribal regions**.

Operational Mechanism

- Funds are channelled through **State Channelising Agencies (SCAs)** and other implementing agencies.
- Emphasis on **credit-linked livelihood schemes and capacity building**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Financial Assistance:**
Concessional loans for

self-employment and entrepreneurship.

- **Skill Development:** Training programmes for capacity building and enterprise management.
- **Market Linkages:** Support for branding, marketing and value chain integration.
- **Inclusive Growth:** Focus on upliftment of Scheduled Tribes and reducing inequalities.
- **Institutional Framework:** Implemented through SCAs and partner organisations.
- **Livelihood Diversification:** Promotes non-farm and micro-enterprise activities.
- **Way Forward:** Strengthen digital access, financial literacy and market integration.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **NSTFDC:** PSU under Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- **Objective:** Economic development of Scheduled Tribes through concessional finance.
- **Funding Channel:** Through State Channelising Agencies (SCAs).
- **Target Group:** Scheduled Tribes (income-based eligibility).
- **Key Support:** Loans, training, and market linkage.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. NSTFDC provides concessional finance for self-employment among Scheduled Tribes.
2. It operates under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
3. NSTFDC directly lends to all beneficiaries without involvement of state agencies.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

2. 'MISSION SHAKTI' AIMS AT STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S SAFETY, SECURITY AND EMPOWERMENT



- **Mission Shakti** is an umbrella scheme integrating multiple programmes for **women's protection and empowerment**.
- It focuses on **preventing violence, providing support services, and**

promoting economic independence.

- The scheme combines components like **institutional support (One Stop Centres) and empowerment initiatives (skill, capacity building)**.
- It aims to ensure **convergence of schemes and efficient resource utilisation**.
- The initiative enhances **access to justice, healthcare, and rehabilitation services** for women.
- It supports broader goals of **gender equality and inclusive development**.
- It reflects governance emphasis on **women-led development**.

- **Samarthya:** Focuses on empowerment through **skill development, shelter homes, and capacity building**.

Need for the Scheme

- Persistent issues like **gender-based violence, low workforce participation, and socio-economic inequality** necessitate integrated interventions.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Umbrella Scheme:** Integrates multiple women-centric schemes under one framework.
- **Safety Component (Sambal):** Focus on protection, legal aid, and crisis support.
- **Empowerment Component (Samarthya):** Focus on skills, employment, and self-reliance.
- **Institutional Support:** One Stop Centres, Women Helplines, shelter homes.
- **Convergence Approach:** Ensures efficient use of resources across ministries and states.
- **Social Impact:** Promotes gender equality and women's participation in economy.
- **Way Forward:** Strengthen implementation, awareness, and last-mile delivery.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

About Mission Shakti

- Mission Shakti** is a centrally sponsored umbrella scheme launched to ensure **holistic development of women**.
- It has two major sub-schemes:
 - Sambal (Safety & Security)**
 - Samarthya (Empowerment)**

Key Components

- **Sambal:** Includes schemes like One Stop Centres, Women Helpline, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (safety-related).

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Mission Shakti:** Umbrella scheme for women's safety and empowerment.
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- **Sub-Schemes:** Sambal (safety) and Samarthya (empowerment).
- **Key Facilities:** One Stop Centres, Women Helpline.
- **Objective:** Protection + empowerment + inclusion of women.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Mission Shakti is an umbrella scheme for women's safety and empowerment.
2. It is implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
3. The scheme focuses only on safety and does not include empowerment measures.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

3.UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES



- **UNESCO World Heritage Sites** are locations of outstanding universal value recognised globally for cultural, natural, or mixed significance.
- India continues to expand its footprint on the World Heritage List, boosting **tourism and cultural diplomacy**.
- Recognition enhances **global visibility, funding opportunities, and conservation efforts**.
- It imposes obligations on countries to ensure **protection and sustainable management**.
- Heritage sites play a role in **local economic development and identity preservation**.
- Challenges include **over-tourism, urbanisation, and climate change impacts**.
- The concept integrates **culture, environment, and governance frameworks**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

What is a World Heritage Site?

- I. Sites designated by UNESCO for their **Outstanding Universal Value (OUV)**.
- II. Categories:
 - A. **Cultural** (monuments, cities, archaeological sites)
 - B. **Natural** (forests, mountains, biodiversity hotspots)
 - C. **Mixed** (both cultural and natural significance)

Legal Framework

- Governed by the **World Heritage Convention 1972**.
- Countries must protect and conserve listed sites.

India's Heritage Profile

- I. India has **40+ World Heritage Sites** (Cultural, Natural & Mixed).
- II. Examples:
 - A. Taj Mahal
 - B. Kaziranga National Park
 - C. Hampi

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Global Recognition:** Sites of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).
- **Categories:** Cultural, Natural, Mixed heritage.

- **Conservation Obligation:** Countries must protect and manage sites sustainably.
- **Tourism Boost:** Enhances global tourism and local economy.
- **Soft Power:** Strengthens cultural diplomacy and global image.
- **Challenges:** Over-tourism, climate change, encroachment, funding gaps.
- **Way Forward:** Sustainable tourism, community participation, and strong conservation frameworks.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **UNESCO:** UNESCO.
- **Convention Year:** 1972 World Heritage Convention.
- **Categories:** Cultural, Natural, Mixed.
- **India Sites:** 40+ World Heritage Sites.
- **OUV:** Outstanding Universal Value — key selection criteria.
- **Tentative List:** Sites proposed by countries before final inscription.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. UNESCO World Heritage Sites are selected based on their Outstanding Universal Value.
2. Only cultural sites can be included in the World Heritage List.

3. The World Heritage Convention was adopted in 1972.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

4.ECI ALLOTS DIGITAL VOUCHERS FOR FREE BROADCAST TIME ON DD & AIR



- The ECI has digitised the system of allocating free airtime to political parties for election campaigning.
- Digital vouchers replace the earlier manual allocation mechanism, ensuring efficiency and traceability.
- Recognised political parties receive equitable access to public broadcasting platforms.
- The reform strengthens the level playing field in electoral competition.
- Enhances transparency, reduces administrative delays, and minimises disputes.

- Supports free and fair elections by ensuring regulated media access.
- Reflects the broader push toward digital governance in electoral processes.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Constitutional Framework

- The Election Commission of India derives its authority from **Article 324** of the Constitution.
- Responsible for conducting free and fair elections in India.

Free Airtime Provision

- Recognised political parties are provided free airtime on state-owned broadcasters.
- Ensures equitable access to media, especially for parties with limited resources.

Public Broadcasters

- Doordarshan (television) and All India Radio (radio) are government-owned.
- Play a key role in disseminating election-related information.

Digital Governance

- Transition from manual to digital allocation enhances transparency and accountability.
- Reduces human intervention and potential biases.

Electoral Fairness

- Equal media access is essential for maintaining democratic integrity.
- Prevents dominance of financially stronger parties in campaign outreach.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Digital Reform:** Introduction of e-vouchers for airtime allocation.
- **Institutional Mechanism:** Managed by Election Commission of India.
- **Transparency:** Reduces discretion and enhances traceability.
- **Level Playing Field:** Ensures fair access to public broadcasting platforms.
- **Efficiency:** Faster and streamlined allocation process.
- **Challenges:** Digital literacy, system integration, and monitoring misuse.
- **Way Forward:** Strengthening digital infrastructure and expanding transparency measures.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Article 324:** Powers of Election Commission of India.
- **Recognised Parties:** Classified as National or State parties based on electoral performance.
- **Doordarshan:** India's public service

broadcaster (TV).

- **All India Radio (AIR):** National radio broadcaster.
- **Model Code of Conduct (MCC):** Regulates election campaigning.
- **Free Airtime:** Provided during elections for equitable campaigning.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. The Election Commission of India derives its powers from Article 324 of the Constitution.
2. Free airtime on public broadcasters is available only to national parties.
3. Digital vouchers aim to improve transparency in allocation of broadcast time.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

5. INDIA'S APPROACH TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ALIGNED WITH NATIONAL PRIORITIES



- India's AI strategy prioritizes inclusive development, ensuring benefits reach all sections of society.
- Emphasis on leveraging AI for sectors like agriculture, healthcare, education, and governance.
- The approach balances innovation with ethical considerations such as privacy, bias, and accountability.
- The government aims to position India as a global hub for AI talent and innovation.
- Focus on building indigenous capabilities and reducing technological dependence.
- Encourages public-private partnerships and research ecosystem development.
- Reflects a governance model integrating technology with socio-economic development goals.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Institutional Framework

- AI initiatives are led by NITI Aayog through the National Strategy for AI.
- Supported by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

National Strategy for AI

- Focus areas include healthcare, agriculture, education, smart cities, and mobility.
- Promotes "AI for All" approach ensuring inclusive benefits.

Ethical and Regulatory Aspects

- Emphasis on responsible AI—fairness, transparency, and accountability.
- Need for data protection and privacy frameworks.

Global Context

- AI is a key driver of economic growth and geopolitical competition.
- India aims to play a leadership role in global AI governance discussions.

Technological Basis

- AI includes machine learning, natural language processing, and data analytics.
- Requires robust data infrastructure and skilled workforce.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Inclusive Growth:** AI applications targeted at social sectors like health and agriculture.

- **Ethical AI:** Focus on fairness, accountability, and transparency.
- **Institutional Mechanism:** Led by NITI Aayog and MeitY.
- **Strategic Significance:** Positions India as a global AI innovation hub.
- **Economic Impact:** Enhances productivity and fosters new industries.
- **Challenges:** Data privacy concerns, skill gaps, and infrastructure limitations.
- **Way Forward:** Strengthening regulatory frameworks, investing in R&D, and promoting skill development.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **NITI Aayog:** Released National Strategy for AI (2018).
- **AI for All:** Inclusive AI development approach.
- **MeitY:** Nodal ministry for digital and IT policies.
- **Machine Learning:** Subset of AI enabling systems to learn from data.
- **Data Protection:** Key issue in AI governance (Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023).
- **Global AI Race:** Major players include USA, China, EU.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. India's AI strategy focuses on inclusive growth and sectoral applications like healthcare and agriculture.
2. NITI Aayog has played a role in formulating India's National Strategy for AI.
3. Artificial Intelligence eliminates the need for data governance and privacy frameworks.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

1. RAJYA SABHA CHAIRMAN'S RULING ON PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT IN THE HOUSE



- The Chairman issued a ruling on **procedural aspects governing statements made by the Prime Minister in the House.**
- It clarified the **scope of discussion, interventions, and members' rights** during such statements.
- The ruling reinforces the **authority of the Chair in maintaining order and decorum.**
- It highlights the balance between **executive accountability and procedural discipline** in Parliament.
- The decision strengthens **institutional clarity on parliamentary practices.**
- It reflects the importance of **rules-based functioning in legislative proceedings.**
- The ruling has implications for **legislative oversight and democratic functioning.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Role of the Rajya Sabha Chairman

- The Chairman (Vice-President of India) presides over the Upper House and ensures **smooth conduct of proceedings.**
- Responsible for **interpreting rules and giving rulings on procedural matters.**

Prime Minister's Statements in Parliament

- Statements made by the Prime Minister are part of **executive communication to the legislature.**
- These may or may not be followed by discussions depending on **rules and Chair's discretion.**

Rules of Procedure

- Governed by **Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha.**
- The Chairman's ruling becomes an **important precedent** for future proceedings.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Procedural Clarification:** Defines rules regarding discussion on PM's statement.
- **Authority of Chair:** Reinforces the Chairman's power to regulate debates.
- **Legislative Discipline:** Ensures orderly functioning of the House.
- **Executive Accountability:** Balances discussion with procedural norms.
- **Precedent Value:** Rulings serve as guidance for future parliamentary conduct.
- **Institutional Integrity:** Upholds sanctity of parliamentary processes.

- **Way Forward:** Continued adherence to rules for effective democratic functioning.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Chairman of Rajya Sabha:** Vice-President of India (ex-officio).
- **Article 64:** Vice-President acts as Chairman of Rajya Sabha.
- **Article 118:** Parliament may make rules for regulating its procedure.
- **Rules of Procedure:** Govern conduct of business in Rajya Sabha.
- **Ruling:** Decision by Chair on interpretation of rules — binding in House.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. The Vice-President of India acts as the ex-officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha.
2. The Chairman of Rajya Sabha has the authority to interpret rules of procedure.
3. Rulings given by the Chairman have no relevance for future parliamentary proceedings.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

2.INDIA ACHIEVES RECORD FERTILIZER PRODUCTION; INDIGENOUS UREA CAPACITY SURGES TO 283.74 LMTPA



AATMA-NIRBHAR
BHARAT

- India has achieved a **significant increase in domestic urea production capacity**, reaching **283.74 lakh metric tonnes per annum (LMTPA)**.
- The growth is driven by revival of **closed fertilizer plants and setting up of new units**.
- It reduces **import dependence**, especially for urea, a key agricultural input.
- The development strengthens **food security and agricultural productivity**.
- It aligns with **Atmanirbhar Bharat** by promoting domestic manufacturing.
- Improved availability of fertilizers ensures **timely supply to farmers** and stabilises prices.
- However, concerns remain regarding **subsidy burden and environmental impact of excessive urea use**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Importance of Urea

- Urea is the most widely used **nitrogenous fertilizer** in India.
- Essential for **crop growth and improving yields**.

Policy Push for Self-Reliance

- Government initiatives include **revival of sick fertilizer units** and promotion of **energy-efficient plants**.
- Neem-coated urea introduced to **reduce diversion and improve efficiency**.

Institutional Framework

- Managed by the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.
- The fertilizer sector is heavily regulated with **subsidy support**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Production Capacity:** Indigenous urea capacity reaches **283.74 LMTPA**.
- **Atmanirbhar Bharat:** Focus on reducing import dependence.
- **Plant Revival:** Closed units revived to boost domestic output.
- **Food Security:** Ensures adequate fertilizer supply for agriculture.
- **Subsidy Impact:** High fiscal burden due to fertilizer subsidies.
- **Environmental Concerns:** Overuse leads to soil degradation and water pollution.
- **Way Forward:** Promote balanced fertilization and alternative nutrients.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Urea:** Nitrogenous fertilizer widely used in agriculture.
- **LMTPA:** Lakh Metric Tonnes Per Annum (1 LMTPA = 0.1 million tonnes).
- **Neem-Coated Urea:** Reduces nitrogen loss and misuse.
- **Fertilizer Subsidy:** Government support to keep prices affordable.
- **NPK Balance:** Ideal nutrient ratio for sustainable agriculture.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Urea is a nitrogenous fertilizer widely used in Indian agriculture.
2. Increasing domestic urea production can reduce import dependence.
3. Neem-coated urea increases diversion of urea for non-agricultural purposes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

3. NHRC TAKES SUO MOTU COGNIZANCE OF DEATH OF SANITATION WORKERS IN CHHATTISGARH



- The NHRC initiated action on its own (suo motu) over the **fatal incident involving sanitation workers**, raising serious human rights concerns.
- The case highlights the continued prevalence of **hazardous manual cleaning practices**, despite legal prohibitions.
- It underscores issues of **worker safety, dignity, and implementation gaps in sanitation laws**.
- The incident reflects persistent challenges in **eradicating manual scavenging and unsafe sanitation work**.
- It raises concerns about **accountability of local authorities and contractors**.
- The development reinforces the need for **strict enforcement of safety protocols and mechanisation**.
- It has broader implications for **labour rights, social justice, and governance**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Manual Scavenging Issue

- Refers to manual handling/cleaning of **human waste in insanitary conditions**.
- Considered a violation of **human dignity and fundamental rights**.

Legal Framework

- **Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013** bans manual scavenging and hazardous cleaning of septic tanks without safety measures.
- Supreme Court has issued guidelines for **compensation and safety compliance**.

Role of NHRC

- National Human Rights Commission safeguards human rights and can take **suo motu action** in cases of violations.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Suo Motu Action:** NHRC intervenes without formal complaint.
- **Human Rights Concern:** Deaths highlight violation of dignity and right to life.
- **Legal Violation:** Contravention of 2013 Act banning hazardous sanitation work.
- **Worker Safety:** Lack of protective gear and mechanisation.
- **Accountability:** Responsibility of local bodies and contractors questioned.
- **Social Justice:** Reflects caste and occupational vulnerabilities.
- **Way Forward:** Strict enforcement, mechanisation, rehabilitation, and awareness.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **NHRC:** Statutory body established under Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993.
- **Suo Motu:** Action taken on its own without complaint.
- **2013 Act:** Bans manual scavenging and unsafe septic tank cleaning.
- **Fundamental Right:** Article 21 – Right to life and dignity.
- **Rehabilitation:** Provision for alternative livelihood to affected workers.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 bans hazardous cleaning of septic tanks without safety measures.
2. NHRC can take suo motu cognizance of human rights violations.
3. Manual scavenging is legally permitted under certain conditions in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

4. MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS ORGANIZES NATIONAL-LEVEL CSR CONCLAVE FOR TRIBAL EMPOWERMENT



- The conclave aims to **leverage Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds** for targeted tribal welfare initiatives.
- It promotes **public-private partnerships** to address socio-economic challenges in tribal areas.
- Focus areas include **education, healthcare, livelihood generation, and skill development**.
- The initiative seeks to align CSR activities with **government schemes for better convergence and impact**.
- It strengthens efforts toward **inclusive growth and social justice**.
- The platform encourages corporates to adopt **sustainable and community-driven development models**.
- It reflects governance emphasis on **multi-stakeholder participation in development**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

- Mandated under the **Companies Act, 2013** (Section 135).
- Requires eligible companies to spend **2% of average net profits** on social development activities.

Tribal Development in India

- Tribal communities face challenges like **poverty, limited access to education, healthcare, and infrastructure**.
- The government implements schemes for **livelihood, education, and welfare of Scheduled Tribes**.

Need for CSR Convergence

- CSR can complement government efforts by providing **additional resources and innovation**.
- Ensures **efficient utilisation and targeted intervention in underserved regions**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **CSR Conclave:** Platform for collaboration between corporates and government.
- **Focus Areas:** Education, health, livelihoods, skill development in tribal regions.
- **Public-Private Partnership:** Enhances impact through shared responsibility.
- **Policy Convergence:** Aligns CSR initiatives with government schemes.
- **Inclusive Growth:** Targets socio-economic upliftment of tribal communities.
- **Sustainability:** Encourages long-term, community-driven development models.

- **Way Forward:** Strengthen monitoring, transparency, and outcome-based CSR utilisation.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **CSR Law:** Section 135 of Companies Act, 2013.
- **CSR Mandate:** 2% of average net profits of eligible companies.
- **Implementing Ministry:** Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- **Target Group:** Scheduled Tribes.
- **Key Areas:** Education, healthcare, livelihood, skill development.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) expenditure is mandated under the Companies Act, 2013.
2. CSR requires eligible companies to spend 2% of their average net profits on social activities.
3. CSR funds can only be used for environmental protection activities.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

5. GROWTH OF ELDERLY POPULATION IN INDIA



- India is witnessing a **demographic transition**, with a rising share of elderly population due to **increased life expectancy and declining fertility rates**.
- The trend is expected to significantly increase the **old-age dependency ratio**.
- It creates challenges for **healthcare infrastructure, pension systems, and social support mechanisms**.
- The shift necessitates **age-inclusive policies and geriatric care systems**.
- It also presents opportunities through the **"silver economy"**—elderly participation in economic and social activities.
- Urbanisation and nuclear families are weakening **traditional family-based support systems**.
- The issue has implications for **welfare governance, labour markets, and inclusive growth**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Demographic Transition

- Shift from **high birth and death rates to low birth and death rates**.

- Results in an **ageing population structure**.

Key Indicators

- **Life Expectancy:** Increasing due to better healthcare and nutrition.
- **Fertility Rate:** Declining, reducing proportion of young population.
- **Old-Age Dependency Ratio:** Ratio of elderly to working-age population.

Policy Framework

- **National Policy on Older Persons (1999):** Focus on welfare and security.
- **Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007:** Legal support for elderly care.
- Schemes for **pensions, healthcare, and social assistance**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Demographic Shift:** Increasing proportion of population aged 60+.
- **Healthcare Demand:** Rising need for geriatric care and chronic disease management.
- **Social Security:** Pressure on pension and welfare systems.
- **Family Structure Change:** Decline of joint family support systems.
- **Economic Opportunity:** Emergence of "silver economy".
- **Challenges:** Loneliness, elder abuse, inadequate infrastructure.
- **Way Forward:** Strengthen healthcare, pensions, community support, and active ageing policies.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Elderly Population:** Persons aged **60 years and above** (India definition).
- **Old-Age Dependency Ratio:** Elderly (60+) to working-age population (15–59).
- **Life Expectancy:** Average number of years a person is expected to live.
- **2007 Act:** Legal framework for maintenance of senior citizens.
- **Silver Economy:** Economic opportunities related to the aging population.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Increase in life expectancy contributes to the growth of the elderly population.
2. Declining fertility rates reduce the proportion of elderly in the population.
3. Old-age dependency ratio measures the ratio of elderly population to working-age population.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

1. ECI HOLDS REVIEW AND TRAINING OF DEOs, SPs/SSPs, CPS OF ASSAM

EVM



Electronic Voting Machine

- The ECI organised a **capacity-building and review exercise** to ensure efficient election management in Assam.
- Focus was on **coordination between civil administration and police authorities**.
- Training covered **law and order management, vulnerability mapping, and enforcement of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC)**.
- Emphasis was placed on **free, fair, and inducement-free elections**.
- The initiative strengthens **institutional preparedness and accountability** at district and field levels.
- It reflects the ECI's proactive approach to **electoral integrity and transparency**.
- The move also enhances **inter-agency coordination for smooth conduct of polls**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Role of Election Commission of India

- The Election Commission of India is empowered under **Article 324 of the Constitution** to conduct free and fair elections.

Key Functionaries

- **District Election Officer (DEO):** Responsible for overall election management at district level.
- **SP/SSP/CP:** Ensure **law and order, security arrangements, and enforcement of electoral guidelines**.

Model Code of Conduct (MCC)

- A set of guidelines to ensure **ethical conduct of political parties and candidates** during elections.
- Enforced by ECI to maintain a level **playing field**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Training Initiative:** Capacity building for DEOs, police officials, and field officers.
- **Coordination Focus:** Strengthens civil-police coordination for election management.
- **Law & Order Preparedness:** Emphasis on security planning and vulnerability mapping.
- **MCC Enforcement:** Ensures compliance with election norms and ethical practices.
- **Electoral Integrity:** Reinforces free, fair, and transparent elections.

- **State Focus:** Special attention to Assam due to upcoming polls.
- **Way Forward:** Continuous monitoring, use of technology, and voter awareness.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Article 324:** Empowers Election Commission of India.
- **DEO:** District-level election management authority.
- **MCC:** Non-statutory code ensuring fair conduct of elections.
- **SP/SSP/CP Role:** Maintain law & order during elections.
- **Vulnerability Mapping:** Identifying sensitive areas prone to electoral malpractices.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Article 324 of the Constitution vests the conduct of elections in the Election Commission of India.
2. The Model Code of Conduct is a legally binding statute enacted by Parliament.
3. District Election Officers are responsible for election management at the district level.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

2.NATIONAL CENTRE FOR ORGANIC AND NATURAL FARMING ORGANISES TWO-DAY NATIONAL SEMINAR-CUM-EXHIBITION TO PROMOTE ORGANIC AND NATURAL FARMING



- The event aimed to **popularise organic and natural farming** through knowledge-sharing and demonstrations.
- It brought together **farmers, scientists, policymakers, and industry stakeholders**.
- Focus was on **sustainable agriculture, soil health, and reduction of chemical inputs**.
- The seminar promoted **best practices, innovations, and certification mechanisms**.
- It aligns with national goals of **sustainable agriculture and climate-resilient farming**.
- The initiative supports **farmers' income enhancement through value addition and premium markets**.
- It reflects governance emphasis on **eco-friendly agricultural transformation**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Organic Farming

- A system of farming that avoids **synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, and GMOs**, relying on natural inputs.
- Enhances **soil fertility, biodiversity, and ecological balance**.

Natural Farming

- Focuses on **zero-budget or low-cost farming**, using locally available inputs like cow dung and urine.
- Promoted as a sustainable alternative to chemical-intensive agriculture.

Institutional Framework

- The National Centre for Organic and Natural Farming works under the Ministry of Agriculture to promote organic farming practices.
- Supported by schemes like **Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)** and **Bharatiya Prakritik Krishi Paddhati (BPKP)**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Knowledge Platform:** Seminar and exhibition for awareness and capacity building.
- **Stakeholder Participation:** Farmers, researchers, policymakers and industry.
- **Sustainability Focus:** Promotes eco-friendly and chemical-free agriculture.
- **Soil Health:** Emphasis on restoring soil fertility and biodiversity.

- **Market Linkages:** Encourages certification and access to premium organic markets.
- **Climate Resilience:** Supports adaptation to climate change impacts.
- **Way Forward:** Scale up adoption, improve certification systems, and enhance farmer awareness.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Organic Farming:** No synthetic chemicals; eco-friendly agricultural system.
- **Natural Farming:** Low-cost, input-light farming using local resources.
- **PKVY:** Promotes organic farming through cluster approach.
- **BPKP:** Focus on natural farming practices.
- **NCONF:** National Centre for Organic and Natural Farming – nodal body for promotion.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Organic farming avoids the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides.
2. Natural farming promotes the use of locally available inputs with minimal external inputs.
3. Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) is aimed at promoting chemical-intensive agriculture.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

3. CABINET APPROVES REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY SCHEME – MODIFIED UDAN WITH ₹28,840 CRORE OUTLAY



Directorate General of Civil Aviation
(DGCA)

- The modified **UDAN scheme** aims to expand **affordable air connectivity** to underserved and unserved regions.
- It focuses on **revival of regional airports and airstrips**, boosting last-mile connectivity.
- The scheme enhances **regional economic development, tourism, and job creation**.
- Financial support through **Viability Gap Funding (VGF)** ensures affordable fares.
- It aligns with India's goal of **inclusive infrastructure development and balanced regional growth**.
- The expansion will strengthen **multimodal connectivity and logistics efficiency**.

- It reflects governance emphasis on **ease of travel and aviation sector growth**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

UDAN Scheme (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik)

- Launched in **2016** under the **National Civil Aviation Policy**.
- Objective: Make air travel **affordable and widespread**.

Key Features

- **Viability Gap Funding (VGF):** Financial support to airlines to operate on less profitable routes.
- **Fare Cap:** Affordable ticket pricing for passengers.
- Focus on **Tier-2, Tier-3 cities and remote areas**.

Institutional Framework

- Implemented by the Ministry of Civil Aviation.
- Supported by **Airports Authority of India (AAI)**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Scheme Expansion:** Modified UDAN with enhanced scope and funding.
- **Financial Outlay:** ₹28,840 crore allocated.
- **Connectivity Boost:** Targets underserved and unserved airports.
- **Affordability:** Maintains fare caps through VGF mechanism.
- **Economic Impact:** Promotes tourism, trade, and regional development.

- **Infrastructure Development:** Revives airports and airstrips.
- **Way Forward:** Integrate with multimodal transport and ensure financial sustainability.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **UDAN Launch:** 2016 under National Civil Aviation Policy.
- **Full Form:** Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik.
- **Key Mechanism:** Viability Gap Funding (VGF).
- **Objective:** Affordable regional air connectivity.
- **Implementing Ministry:** Ministry of Civil Aviation.
- **Target Areas:** Tier-2, Tier-3 cities and remote regions.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. The UDAN scheme aims to enhance regional air connectivity in India.
2. Viability Gap Funding under UDAN is used to subsidize airlines operating on less profitable routes.
3. The UDAN scheme focuses only on metro cities.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

4.DEPARTMENT OF POSTS PARTNERS WITH TRIFED TO BOOST E-COMMERCE OF TRIBAL PRODUCTS ACROSS INDIA



- The collaboration aims to leverage the **extensive postal network** for delivering tribal products across India.
- It will strengthen **e-commerce capabilities** for products marketed under TRIFED initiatives like **Tribes India**.
- The partnership enhances **last-mile connectivity and logistics support** for tribal entrepreneurs.
- It promotes **digital inclusion and market integration** of tribal communities.
- The initiative aligns with goals of **inclusive growth and tribal empowerment**.
- It supports **local-to-global marketing and value chain development**.
- The move reflects convergence of **governance, digital economy, and social justice objectives**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

About TRIFED

- TRIFED is a national-level organisation under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- It focuses on **marketing and development of tribal products and livelihoods**.

Role of Department of Posts

- The Department of Posts operates one of the world's largest postal networks.
- Provides **logistics, parcel delivery, and financial services**, especially in rural areas.

Tribal E-Commerce Ecosystem

- Initiatives like **Tribes India** promote **tribal handicrafts, handlooms, and forest products**.
- E-commerce helps overcome **geographical and market barriers**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Strategic Partnership:** Collaboration between Department of Posts and TRIFED.
- **E-Commerce Boost:** Enhances online marketing and nationwide reach of tribal products.
- **Logistics Support:** Utilises postal network for last-mile delivery.
- **Tribal Empowerment:** Improves income and livelihood opportunities.
- **Digital Inclusion:** Integrates tribal communities into the digital economy.
- **Market Expansion:** Promotes local products at national and global levels.
- **Way Forward:** Strengthen branding, digital literacy, and export potential.

- **TRIFED:** Apex body for tribal product marketing under Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- **Tribes India:** Brand for tribal products.
- **Department of Posts:** Nationwide postal and logistics network.
- **Objective:** Enhance market access for tribal artisans.
- **E-Commerce Role:** Reduces intermediaries and expands reach.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. TRIFED functions under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
2. The Department of Posts has one of the largest postal networks in India.
3. E-commerce platforms help tribal artisans by reducing market access barriers.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (c)

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

5. EXCLUSION OF WEST BENGAL FROM NEW NATIONAL COOPERATIVE INITIATIVE



- A new cooperative initiative aimed at strengthening the **cooperative sector and rural economy** has been rolled out at the national level.
- However, West Bengal has not been included due to **administrative or policy-level constraints**.
- The development raises concerns regarding **cooperative federalism and centre-state coordination**.
- Cooperatives play a crucial role in **agriculture, credit, and rural livelihoods**.
- Exclusion may impact **benefit flow to farmers and local institutions** in the state.
- It highlights the need for **policy alignment and institutional cooperation**.
- The issue has implications for **governance, decentralisation, and inclusive development**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Cooperative Sector in India

- Cooperatives are **member-driven institutions** aimed at mutual economic benefit.
- Important in sectors like **agriculture, dairy, credit, and marketing**.

Constitutional Framework

- **Part IXB of the Constitution** (added by 97th Constitutional Amendment) deals with **cooperative societies**.
- Promotes **democratic functioning, autonomy, and professional management**.

Ministry of Cooperation

- Established in **2021** to strengthen the cooperative movement.
- Focus areas include **multi-state cooperatives, digitalisation, and capacity building**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Policy Issue:** Exclusion of West Bengal from national cooperative initiative.
- **Governance Concern:** Reflects challenges in centre-state coordination.
- **Sector Importance:** Cooperatives critical for rural economy and financial inclusion.
- **Federal Dimension:** Raises questions on cooperative federalism.
- **Economic Impact:** Potential loss of benefits for farmers and cooperative members.
- **Institutional Gap:** Need for better policy alignment and implementation.

- **Way Forward:** Dialogue, capacity building, and harmonisation of policies.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Part IXB:** Deals with cooperative societies in the Constitution.
- **97th Constitutional Amendment:** Strengthens cooperative movement.
- **Ministry of Cooperation:** Established in 2021.
- **Cooperatives:** Member-owned institutions for mutual benefit.
- **Key Sectors:** Agriculture, dairy, credit, marketing.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Part IXB of the Constitution deals with cooperative societies.
2. The Ministry of Cooperation was established after 2010.
3. Cooperative societies are entirely controlled by the central government.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

1. IICA AND NLUJA, ASSAM LAUNCH LL.M. PROGRAMME IN CORPORATE LAW AND MANAGEMENT



- The programme aims to **develop specialized knowledge in corporate law, governance, and management practices**.
- It targets **law graduates, legal professionals, and corporate executives** seeking advanced understanding.
- The curriculum combines **academic study, practical exposure, and industry interaction**.
- Focus areas include **corporate governance, mergers & acquisitions, compliance, and regulatory frameworks**.
- The initiative promotes **skill development aligned with India's corporate regulatory environment**.
- It strengthens **capacity building for legal and corporate professionals**, contributing to better governance.
- Reflects policy emphasis on **education-industry linkage and legal sector professionalization**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA)

- Autonomous institution under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.
- Provides **training, research, and advisory services** in corporate regulation and governance.

NLUJA, Assam

- Premier law university in Assam offering **undergraduate, postgraduate, and research programmes** in law.
- Focuses on **legal education, policy research, and capacity building**.

Need for Corporate Law Expertise

- Increasing complexity in **corporate governance, regulatory compliance, and global business practices**.
- Demand for skilled professionals in **legal, managerial, and advisory roles**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Collaborative Programme:** IICA and NLUJA, Assam partnership.
- **Specialization:** Corporate Law and Management.
- **Target Audience:** Law graduates, corporate professionals.
- **Curriculum Focus:** Corporate governance, M&A, compliance, regulatory frameworks.
- **Skill Development:** Combines theory, case studies, and industry exposure.
- **Capacity Building:** Strengthens India's corporate legal ecosystem.
- **Way Forward:** Encourage research, industry linkages, and policy-oriented learning.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **IICA:** Autonomous institute under Ministry of Corporate Affairs.
- **NLUJA Assam:** National Law University in Assam.
- **LL.M.:** Master of Laws, postgraduate legal degree.
- **Key Focus:** Corporate law, governance, management practices.
- **Objective:** Develop skilled legal professionals for the corporate sector.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. The LL.M. programme launched by IICA and NLUJA, Assam focuses on Corporate Law and Management.
2. IICA functions under the Ministry of Finance.
3. NLUJA, Assam offers postgraduate legal programmes including LL.M.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

2.NATIONAL HOUSING BANK LAUNCHES GRUH SUGAM PORTAL FOCUSING ON DEFENCE, PARAMILITARY & GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL



- The **Gruh Sugam Portal** is an **online platform for housing loans**, aimed at facilitating easy access to finance for eligible personnel.
- It focuses on **Defence, Paramilitary, and Central/State Government employees**.
- Provides **centralized application, tracking, and sanctioning of housing loans** across participating banks.
- Enhances **transparency, efficiency, and user-friendliness** in housing finance processes.
- Supports the national goal of **housing for all and financial inclusion**.
- Promotes **digitisation of public services and convergence with central housing schemes**.
- Strengthens governance by **streamlining lending and reducing procedural delays**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

National Housing Bank (NHB)

- Established in **1988** under the **National Housing Bank Act, 1987**.
- Apex financial institution for **housing finance regulation and promotion** in India.

Housing Finance for Government Personnel

- Defence, Paramilitary, and Government employees have **structured salary-based loan repayment capacity**.
- Dedicated portals improve **ease of access and monitoring**.

Gruh Sugam Portal

- Integrates participating banks and their housing loan schemes.
- Provides a **single-window interface** for loan application, sanction, and monitoring.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Digital Platform:** Online access for housing finance applications.
- **Target Beneficiaries:** Defence, Paramilitary, and Government personnel.
- **Simplified Process:** Streamlined application and sanctioning.
- **Transparency:** Reduces paperwork and procedural delays.
- **Financial Inclusion:** Enhances access to institutional housing finance.
- **Integration:** Linked with multiple banks and housing schemes.
- **Way Forward:** Expand features, incorporate real-time tracking, and improve user experience.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **NHB:** Apex housing finance institution, established 1988.
- **Act:** National Housing Bank Act, 1987.
- **Portal:** Gruh Sugam – digital platform for housing loans.
- **Beneficiaries:** Defence, Paramilitary, Central/State Government personnel.
- **Objective:** Simplify housing finance and promote housing for all.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. The Gruh Sugam Portal is launched by the National Housing Bank to facilitate housing loans.
2. It specifically targets Defence, Paramilitary, and Government personnel.
3. NHB functions under the Ministry of Finance.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

3. INDIAN RAILWAYS STRENGTHENS PASSENGER SAFETY AND SECURITY WITH OVER 52,000 ARRESTS AND 50,000+ CASES FILED IN COURTS DURING 2021–2025



- Indian Railways has taken **proactive measures** to ensure **passenger safety and law enforcement** on trains and stations.
- **52,000+ offenders** were arrested during 2021–2025 for various offenses including theft, harassment, and unruly behaviour.
- **50,000+ cases** were filed in courts to ensure **legal action and deterrence**.
- Initiatives include **CCTV installation, patrolling by RPF, and coordination with local police**.
- Measures have enhanced **public confidence, deterrence against crime, and overall security management**.
- The actions support **governance goals of safe, reliable, and passenger-friendly transport services**.
- Strengthening security aligns with broader objectives of **modernization and trust-building in public transport infrastructure**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Railway Protection Force (RPF)

- Established under **Railway Protection Force Act, 1957**.
- Responsible for **protection of railway property, passengers, and ensuring law and order**.

Safety Measures

- **Patrolling and Special Drives:** Focus on crime-prone areas and trains.
- **Technology Integration:** CCTV, helplines, and tracking systems.
- **Legal Action:** Filing of cases in courts to deter repeat offenders.

Policy Context

- Part of Indian Railways' **passenger-centric safety policy**, integrating **security, surveillance, and awareness programs**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Enforcement:** 52,000+ arrests of offenders during 2021–2025.
- **Judicial Action:** 50,000+ cases filed in courts.
- **Technology Use:** CCTV, online reporting, and emergency helplines.
- **RPF Role:** Ensures law, order, and passenger safety.
- **Passenger Confidence:** Enhanced through visible security measures.
- **Integrated Security:** Coordination between RPF, GRP, and local police.

- **Way Forward:** Expand technology integration, predictive policing, and awareness campaigns.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **RPF Act, 1957:** Governs Railway Protection Force operations.
- **RPF:** Specialized force for railway security and passenger protection.
- **Key Stats (2021–2025):** 52,000+ arrests; 50,000+ cases filed.
- **Technology:** CCTV, helplines, and reporting mechanisms.
- **Objective:** Passenger safety, crime deterrence, and legal compliance.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Railway Protection Force (RPF) is responsible for passenger safety and railway property protection.
2. During 2021–2025, Indian Railways reported over 50,000 arrests for passenger safety violations.
3. Legal action against offenders includes filing cases in courts.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

4.NHRC TAKES SUOMOTU COGNIZANCE OF 16 DEATHS DUE TO ADULTERATED MILK IN EAST GODAVARI, ANDHRA PRADESH



- NHRC has intervened following reports of **fatal food adulteration incidents** in East Godavari.
- The deaths are linked to **consumption of contaminated or adulterated milk**, raising serious public health concerns.
- The Commission has **directed the State Government and authorities to investigate** and submit reports on accountability.
- Measures include **identifying lapses in milk supply chains, enforcing food safety standards, and taking punitive action**.
- Highlights the need for **stringent monitoring under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006**.
- The case underscores governance focus on **consumer safety, public health, and human rights protection**.
- It also stresses the importance of **coordination between state authorities, regulatory agencies, and law enforcement**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

NHRC's Role

- Established under the **Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993**.
- Can take **suomotu cognizance** of human rights violations, including **health and safety lapses**.

Food Safety Framework

- **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)**: Ensures safe food standards.
- **FSSA, 2006**: Regulates production, storage, distribution, and sale of food items.

Milk Adulteration in India

- Milk may be adulterated with **synthetic milk, detergents, starch, or harmful chemicals**.
- Regular monitoring and laboratory testing are mandated under law.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Incident**: 16 deaths in East Godavari due to adulterated milk.
- **NHRC Action**: Suomotu cognizance taken to ensure accountability.
- **Investigation Directive**: State government to probe sources and lapses.
- **Legal Framework**: Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.
- **Public Health Concern**: Ensuring safe milk supply is critical.
- **Coordination**: Enforcement by FSSAI, local authorities, and police.

- **Way Forward**: Strengthen monitoring, laboratory testing, and consumer awareness.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **NHRC**: National Human Rights Commission of India, statutory body under Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993.
- **Suomotu Cognizance**: Action initiated by NHRC on its own, without formal complaint.
- **FSSAI**: Regulates food safety and standards.
- **FSSA, 2006**: Legal framework for safe food production, sale, and distribution.
- **Key Concern**: Adulteration of milk and public health protection.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. NHRC can take suomotu cognizance of human rights violations, including public health lapses.
2. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) regulates food safety in India.
3. Suomotu cognizance can only be initiated after a formal complaint is filed.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

5. INTEGRATING INDUSTRIAL WASTE INTO ROAD CONSTRUCTION IS KEY TO INDIA'S CIRCULAR ECONOMY VISION – DR. N. KALAIVELI



- Industrial by-products such as **fly ash, slag, and plastic waste** can be used in **road construction and pavement technology**.
- Integration of waste materials supports **circular economy principles**, reducing landfill burden and conserving natural resources.
- Promotes **cost-effective and sustainable road infrastructure** while mitigating environmental pollution.
- Encourages **industrial responsibility and innovation in material reuse**.
- Aligns with **national initiatives for sustainable development and low-carbon infrastructure**.
- Facilitates **research-industry-government collaboration** for scalable implementation.

- Highlights governance and policy relevance in **waste management, resource efficiency, and climate action**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Circular Economy Concept

- Focuses on **minimizing waste, maximizing resource efficiency, and recycling/reusing materials**.
- Moves away from the linear “take-make-dispose” model.

Industrial Waste in Road Construction

- **Fly Ash:** By-product of thermal power plants used in cement and asphalt mixes.
- **Steel Slag:** Recycled in road base layers.
- **Plastic Waste:** Shredded plastics blended into bitumen for durable roads.
- **Benefits:** Improved road strength, longevity, and reduced environmental footprint.

Policy Framework

- Part of India's **National Programme on Circular Economy and Waste Management**.
- Supported by the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change and Ministry of Road Transport & Highways initiatives.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Sustainability:** Industrial waste utilization reduces environmental pollution.

- **Resource Efficiency:** Conserves natural aggregates and reduces landfills.
- **Innovation:** Adoption of modern materials science and construction technologies.
- **Cost-Effectiveness:** Economical road construction through alternative raw materials.
- **Governance Angle:** Policy-driven promotion of circular economy principles.
- **Climate Action:** Lower carbon footprint through waste integration.
- **Way Forward:** Scale-up adoption, R&D collaboration, and regulatory incentives for waste utilization.

3. Using industrial waste in roads helps reduce environmental footprint and construction costs.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Circular Economy:** System promoting resource efficiency, recycling, and reuse.
- **Fly Ash:** Thermal power plant by-product for cement and asphalt use.
- **Steel Slag:** Recycled in road base and construction.
- **Plastic Waste Roads:** Bitumen blended with shredded plastics.
- **Policy Linkage:** Supported under India's National Programme on Circular Economy.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Circular economy emphasizes resource efficiency, recycling, and minimal waste.
2. Industrial wastes like fly ash and plastic cannot be used in road construction due to safety concerns.

1. OFFICERS OF CENTRAL POWER ENGINEERING SERVICE AND INDIAN ECONOMIC SERVICE CALL ON THE PRESIDENT



- Officers from CPES and IES interacted with the President as part of their **capacity-building and orientation training**.
- The President emphasised the role of civil servants in **nation-building, policy implementation, and public service delivery**.
- CPES officers are crucial for **power sector planning, generation, transmission, and distribution**.
- IES officers contribute to **economic policy formulation, analysis, and governance**.
- The interaction reinforces values of **integrity, professionalism, and public accountability**.
- It highlights the importance of **specialised civil services in sectoral governance**.
- Reflects broader focus on **institutional strengthening and administrative efficiency**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Central Power Engineering Service (CPES)

- A **Group 'A' engineering service** responsible for technical management of India's **power sector**.
- Works under the Ministry of Power.

Indian Economic Service (IES)

- A specialised civil service responsible for **economic analysis, policy formulation, and advisory roles**.
- Officers serve in various ministries including the Ministry of Finance.

Role of the President in Civil Services

- The President is the **constitutional head of the state** under **Article 52**.
- Such interactions are part of **civil service training traditions**, promoting administrative values and governance ethos.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Ceremonial Interaction:** Probationers meet Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan.
- **Capacity Building:** Part of training and orientation programmes.
- **Sectoral Role (CPES):** Power infrastructure and technical governance.
- **Policy Role (IES):** Economic policy analysis and advisory.
- **Governance Values:** Emphasis on integrity, accountability, and public service.

- **Institutional Strengthening:** Enhances professionalism in specialised services.
- **Way Forward:** Continuous training, skill upgradation, and ethical governance.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **President of India:** Constitutional head under **Article 52**.
- **CPES:** Engineering service for power sector management.
- **IES:** Economic advisory and policy formulation service.
- **Cadre Control:** CPES – Ministry of Power; IES – Ministry of Finance.
- **Role:** Technical + economic expertise in governance.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Central Power Engineering Service officers work in the power sector under the Ministry of Power.
2. Indian Economic Service officers are involved in economic policy formulation and analysis.
3. The President of India has no constitutional role in relation to civil services.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

2.GEOPOLITICAL RISKS ADDRESSED AS INDIA LOCKS IN LONG-TERM FERTILIZER RAW MATERIAL SUPPLIES



- India is entering into **long-term agreements for sourcing fertilizer inputs** like rock phosphate, potash, and natural gas.
- The move reduces dependence on **volatile global markets and geopolitical uncertainties**.
- Ensures **stable supply of fertilizers**, critical for agricultural productivity and food security.
- Supports farmers by maintaining **price stability and availability of inputs**.
- Aligns with India's strategy for **resource security and supply chain resilience**.
- Strengthens ties with resource-rich countries, enhancing **economic diplomacy**.
- Reflects governance focus on **agricultural sustainability and inflation management**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

India's Fertilizer Dependence

- India is heavily dependent on imports for **raw materials like potash and phosphates**.
- Domestic production is limited due to **resource constraints**.

Key Fertilizer Types

- **Urea (Nitrogen-based):** Mostly domestically produced but dependent on imported natural gas.
- **DAP (Di-Ammonium Phosphate):** Requires imported phosphate rock.
- **MOP (Muriate of Potash):** Entirely import-dependent.

Geopolitical Risks

- Supply disruptions due to **conflicts, trade restrictions, and sanctions**.
- Price volatility affects **farmers and subsidy burden**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Long-Term Contracts:** Securing raw materials like rock phosphate and potash.
- **Supply Chain Stability:** Reduces vulnerability to global disruptions.
- **Food Security:** Ensures timely availability of fertilizers for agriculture.
- **Economic Impact:** Helps manage subsidy burden and price fluctuations.
- **Strategic Diplomacy:** Strengthens ties with resource-rich nations.
- **Import Dependence:** Addressing vulnerabilities in fertilizer supply.

- **Way Forward:** Diversify sources, boost domestic production, and promote balanced fertilizer use.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **DAP:** Di-Ammonium Phosphate (phosphate fertilizer).
- **MOP:** Muriate of Potash (potassium fertilizer).
- **Urea:** Nitrogen-based fertilizer.
- **Import Dependence:** High for potash and phosphate.
- **Subsidy:** Fertilizer subsidy is a major component of government expenditure.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. India is fully self-sufficient in potash production.
2. Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP) requires phosphate rock as a raw material.
3. Long-term fertilizer supply agreements can reduce vulnerability to global price volatility.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

3. ESTABLISHMENT OF PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY IN INDIA



रसायन एवं
उर्वरक मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
CHEMICALS
AND FERTILIZERS

सत्यमेव जयते

- India is strengthening its **pharmaceutical manufacturing ecosystem** through policy support and incentives.
- Focus is on **bulk drugs (APIs), medical devices, and high-value formulations**.
- Government initiatives aim to reduce dependence on **imports, especially from China**.
- The sector contributes significantly to **exports, healthcare access, and economic growth**.
- Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes are driving **investment and capacity expansion**.
- The move enhances **drug security and supply chain resilience**.
- It aligns with India's goal of becoming a **global pharmaceutical hub ('Pharmacy of the World')**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Pharmaceutical Industry in India

- India is one of the **largest producers of generic medicines globally**.
- Known as the **"Pharmacy of the World"** due to affordable drug exports.

Key Policy Initiatives

- PLI Scheme for Pharmaceuticals:** Incentivises domestic manufacturing of high-value drugs.
- Bulk Drug Parks Scheme:** Promotes domestic production of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs).
- Medical Devices Parks Scheme:** Supports infrastructure for device manufacturing.

Regulatory Framework

- Governed by the **Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940**.
- Regulated by the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Manufacturing Push:** Focus on APIs, formulations, and medical devices.
- PLI Incentives:** Encourages investment and domestic production.
- Import Substitution:** Reduces reliance on foreign supply chains.
- Export Strength:** Enhances India's global pharma leadership.
- Healthcare Impact:** Improves availability of affordable medicines.
- Regulatory Oversight:** Ensures quality and safety standards.
- Way Forward:** Invest in R&D, innovation, and global competitiveness.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- API:** Active Pharmaceutical Ingredient — core component of drugs.
- PLI Scheme:** Incentive for domestic manufacturing.
- CDSCO:** Central Drugs Standard Control Organization — drug regulator.

- **Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940:** Governs pharma sector.
- **India:** Major exporter of generic medicines globally.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. India is one of the largest producers of generic medicines globally.
2. The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme aims to boost domestic pharmaceutical manufacturing.
3. CDSCO functions as India's central drug regulatory authority.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

4.KHELO INDIA TRIBAL GAMES



- The initiative aims to **promote indigenous sports and tribal sporting talent** across India.
- It focuses on **grassroots-level talent identification and development** in tribal regions.
- Encourages preservation of **traditional tribal games and cultural heritage**.
- Provides opportunities for tribal youth to **enter mainstream sports ecosystems**.
- Aligns with the broader **Khelo India Programme** for sports development.
- Enhances **inclusivity and regional representation in sports**.
- Supports governance goals of **youth empowerment and social inclusion**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Khelo India Programme

- Flagship initiative launched in **2018** to promote **sports culture at grassroots level**.
- Aims to build a **strong sporting ecosystem** and improve India's performance in international events.

Focus on Tribal Areas

- Tribal regions possess a rich **tradition of physical sports and endurance activities**.
- Lack of infrastructure and exposure limits their participation in mainstream sports.

Indigenous Games

- Includes traditional sports unique to tribal communities, contributing to **cultural preservation**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Talent Identification:** Focus on tribal youth with sporting potential.
- **Cultural Preservation:** Promotion of indigenous tribal games.
- **Inclusion:** Integrates tribal communities into a national sports framework.
- **Grassroots Development:** Strengthens rural and remote sports ecosystems.
- **Youth Empowerment:** Provides opportunities for training and recognition.
- **Sports Infrastructure:** Encourages development in tribal regions.
- **Way Forward:** Expand outreach, provide coaching support, and ensure sustained funding.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Khelo India Programme:** Launched in 2018.
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
- **Objective:** Promote sports culture and talent at grassroots.
- **Tribal Focus:** Inclusion and preservation of indigenous games.
- **Outcome:** Talent development and social integration.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Khelo India Programme was launched to promote sports at the grassroots level.
2. Khelo India Tribal Games aim to promote indigenous sports among tribal communities.

3. The programme is implemented by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs alone.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

5.FROM FOREST TO FASHION



- The initiative connects **forest-based raw materials** with **fashion and lifestyle industries**.
- Focus is on **value addition, branding, and design innovation** for tribal products.
- It promotes **sustainable livelihoods for tribal communities** through better market linkages.
- Encourages use of **eco-friendly, natural, and non-timber forest products (NTFPs)**.
- Aligns with goals of **tribal empowerment, sustainable development, and circular economy**.

- Strengthens India's push for '**Vocal for Local**' and '**Atmanirbhar Bharat**'.
- Enhances global visibility of **tribal craftsmanship and indigenous knowledge systems**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Role of TRIFED

- TRIFED works under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- Focuses on **marketing tribal products and improving livelihoods**.

Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP)

- Includes **bamboo, lac, honey, tendu leaves, medicinal plants**.
- Critical source of **income and sustenance for tribal populations**.

Forest-Based Value Chains

- Traditional tribal products are integrated into **modern design, textiles, and fashion industries**.
- Encourages **sustainable harvesting and biodiversity conservation**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Value Addition:** Converts raw forest produce into high-value fashion products.
- **Livelihood Support:** Enhances income for tribal artisans and gatherers.
- **Sustainability:** Promotes eco-friendly and biodegradable materials.
- **Market Linkages:** Connects tribal products with national and global markets.

- **Cultural Preservation:** Protects indigenous knowledge and craftsmanship.
- **Economic Inclusion:** Integrates tribal communities into formal economy.
- **Way Forward:** Strengthen branding, export promotion, and design innovation.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **TRIFED:** Apex body for tribal product marketing.
- **NTFP:** Non-Timber Forest Produce (bamboo, lac, honey, etc.).
- **Objective:** Value addition and market access for tribal products.
- **Concept:** Linking forest produce to fashion and lifestyle markets.
- **Policy Link:** Tribal welfare + sustainable development.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP) includes bamboo, lac, and honey.
2. TRIFED functions under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
3. The 'From Forest to Fashion' initiative discourages the use of natural materials in fashion.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

1. UNION BUDGET 2026–27: STRENGTHENING SEZs FOR GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS & GROWTH



- The Budget focuses on **revamping SEZ policy framework** to make them more competitive globally.
- Emphasis on **increasing exports, attracting foreign investment, and boosting manufacturing.**
- Proposed reforms include **simplification of procedures, regulatory flexibility, and infrastructure development.**
- SEZs are being aligned with **global supply chains and new-age sectors like electronics, semiconductors, and services.**
- The move supports India's ambition to become a **major export hub and manufacturing powerhouse.**
- Addresses challenges such as **declining SEZ performance and WTO-related concerns.**
- Reflects governance focus on **trade facilitation, ease of doing business, and economic growth.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

What are SEZs?

- Special Economic Zones are **designated areas with liberal economic laws** to promote exports and investment.
- Operate as **duty-free enclaves** for trade and industrial activities.

Legal Framework

- Governed by the **Special Economic Zones Act, 2005.**
- Administered by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Need for Reforms

- Declining attractiveness due to **tax regime changes and global competition.**
- Need to align with **WTO norms and evolving trade practices.**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Policy Revamp:** Modernisation of SEZ framework.
- **Export Promotion:** Focus on boosting exports and foreign exchange earnings.
- **Ease of Doing Business:** Simplified procedures and regulatory reforms.
- **Sectoral Focus:** Electronics, semiconductors, services, and advanced manufacturing.
- **Global Integration:** Alignment with global value chains.
- **Investment Boost:** Attracts FDI and private investment.
- **Way Forward:** Transition to Development of Enterprise and Service Hubs (DESH) model and ensure WTO compliance.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **SEZ Act, 2005:** Governs Special Economic Zones.
- **Objective:** Promote exports, investment, and industrial growth.
- **Key Feature:** Duty-free enclave with tax incentives.
- **Admin Ministry:** Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- **DESH Bill:** Proposed to replace SEZ framework with modernised system.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Special Economic Zones operate as duty-free enclaves for trade and industrial activities.
2. SEZs in India are governed by the Special Economic Zones Act, 2005.
3. SEZ reforms aim to reduce exports and restrict foreign investment.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

2.GUT MICROBIOTA AND PROBIOTIC SCIENCE FOUNDATION ORGANISES 16TH INDIA PROBIOTIC SYMPOSIUM IN NEW DELHI



Gut Microbiota and Probiotic Science Foundation (India)

- The symposium focused on **emerging research in gut microbiota and probiotic science**.
- Experts highlighted the role of probiotics in **improving digestion, immunity, and overall health**.
- Discussions covered **clinical applications, nutrition, and preventive healthcare**.
- Emphasis on **scientific validation and regulatory frameworks** for probiotic products.
- The event fosters collaboration among **scientists, healthcare professionals, and industry stakeholders**.
- It aligns with India's focus on **preventive healthcare and wellness sector growth**.
- Reflects integration of **biotechnology, nutrition, and public health policy**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Gut Microbiota

- Refers to the **community of microorganisms** living in the human digestive tract.
- Plays a crucial role in **digestion, metabolism, and immune system function**.

Probiotics

- Live microorganisms that provide **health benefits when consumed in adequate amounts**.
- Commonly found in foods like **yogurt, fermented foods, and dietary supplements**.

Scientific & Policy Relevance

- Increasing focus on **microbiome research in medicine and nutrition**.
- Regulatory oversight in India by agencies like the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Scientific Platform:** 16th India Probiotic Symposium in New Delhi.
- **Health Focus:** Role of probiotics in immunity and digestion.
- **Research Collaboration:** Interaction among academia, industry, and healthcare experts.
- **Preventive Healthcare:** Promotes nutrition-based health interventions.
- **Regulatory Aspect:** Importance of standards and safety validation.
- **Biotechnology Link:** Advances in microbiome science.
- **Way Forward:** Strengthen research, awareness, and regulatory frameworks.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Gut Microbiota:** Microorganisms in digestive tract.
- **Probiotics:** Beneficial live microorganisms.

- **FSSAI:** Food Safety and Standards Authority of India regulates food safety including probiotics.
- **Health Benefit:** Improves digestion and immunity.
- **Application:** Nutrition, medicine, and preventive healthcare.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Gut microbiota refers to microorganisms present in the human digestive system.
2. Probiotics are harmful bacteria that negatively impact human health.
3. FSSAI regulates food safety standards in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

3.GOI OPENS NOMINATIONS FOR RASHTRIYA VIGYAN PURASKAR 2026 TO HONOUR EXCELLENCE IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND INNOVATION



The awards aim to honour scientists, technologists, and innovators for exceptional achievements.

- It replaces earlier individual science awards to create a **unified and prestigious national recognition system**.
- Covers diverse fields including **basic science, applied research, technology development, and innovation**.
- Encourages **young researchers and interdisciplinary work**.
- Strengthens India's focus on **scientific excellence and research ecosystem development**.
- Promotes **innovation-led growth and knowledge economy**.
- Reflects governance priority towards **science-led development and global competitiveness**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar

- Instituted by the Government of India to recognise **contributions across science and technology domains**.
- Categories include awards for **lifetime achievement, scientists, young scientists, and teams**.

Need for Reform in Science Awards

- Earlier awards were **fragmented across ministries and institutions**.
- The new system ensures **greater transparency, inclusivity, and national prestige**.

Science & Innovation Ecosystem

- India is focusing on **R&D, startups, deep-tech innovation, and global scientific collaboration**.
- Linked with initiatives like **National Research Foundation (NRF)** and innovation missions.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **National Recognition:** Prestigious awards for excellence in science and innovation.
- **Unified Framework:** Consolidates multiple science awards.
- **Inclusive Scope:** Covers basic science, applied research, and technology.
- **Youth Focus:** Encourages young scientists and innovators.
- **Innovation Push:** Supports research-driven economic growth.
- **Global Competitiveness:** Enhances India's scientific standing.
- **Way Forward:** Promote R&D investment, interdisciplinary research, and global collaboration.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar:** National science awards by Government of India.
- **Objective:** Recognise excellence in science, technology, and innovation.
- **Categories:** Lifetime achievement, individual, team, young scientists.
- **NRF:** National Research Foundation to boost R&D.
- **Focus:** Innovation, research, and knowledge economy.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar is a national-level award recognising excellence in science and technology.
2. It replaces multiple earlier science awards with a unified framework.
3. The award is given only for achievements in basic sciences.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

4.UPDATES ON KEY SECTORS IN VIEW OF DEVELOPMENTS IN WEST ASIA



- India is assessing the impact of **geopolitical tensions in West Asia** on critical sectors like **energy, fertilizers, shipping, and trade**.
- Disruptions in the region may affect **oil prices, supply chains, and inflation dynamics**.
- The government is taking measures to ensure **continuity of imports, especially crude oil and fertilizers**.
- Focus on **diversification of sourcing and strategic reserves** to reduce vulnerabilities.
- Shipping and logistics sectors are being monitored for **route disruptions and cost escalation**.
- The developments highlight India's dependence on **West Asia for energy security**.
- Reflects governance priority on **economic resilience and risk mitigation**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

India–West Asia Linkages

- West Asia is a major source of **crude oil, LNG, and fertilizers** for India.
- Strong ties in **trade, remittances, and diaspora presence**.

Key Vulnerable Sectors

- **Energy:** High dependence on crude oil imports.
- **Fertilizers:** Dependence on raw materials from the region.
- **Shipping:** Strategic sea routes like **Strait of Hormuz** critical for trade.

Geopolitical Risks

- Conflicts and tensions can lead to **price volatility, supply disruptions, and trade uncertainties**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Sectoral Review:** Monitoring energy, fertilizers, shipping, and trade sectors.
- **Energy Security:** Ensuring uninterrupted crude oil supply.
- **Supply Diversification:** Reducing dependence on specific regions.
- **Logistics Impact:** Rising freight costs and route disruptions.
- **Economic Stability:** Managing inflation and external sector risks.
- **Strategic Measures:** Use of reserves and alternative sourcing.
- **Way Forward:** Strengthen energy diversification, strategic reserves, and diplomatic engagement.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **West Asia:** Key supplier of crude oil and LNG to India.
- **Strait of Hormuz:** Critical chokepoint for global oil trade.
- **Energy Dependence:** India imports ~85% of crude oil.
- **Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR):** Buffer against supply disruptions.
- **Key Concern:** Price volatility and supply chain risks.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. West Asia is a major source of crude oil imports for India.
2. The Strait of Hormuz is an important route for global oil transportation.
3. India is fully self-sufficient in crude oil production.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

5.ROUNDTABLE ON EXPANSION OF PNG SERVICES AND MAINTAINING ESSENTIAL SERVICES IN URBAN AREAS



- The discussion focused on expanding **PNG infrastructure for households, industries, and commercial users.**
- Emphasis was placed on ensuring **reliable supply of clean fuel** in urban areas.
- PNG is promoted as a **safer, cost-effective, and environmentally friendly alternative** to conventional fuels.
- The initiative supports India's transition towards a **gas-based economy.**
- It also addresses challenges related to **urban infrastructure, last-mile connectivity, and service continuity.**
- Strengthening PNG networks contributes to **urban sustainability and reduced pollution levels.**
- Reflects governance priorities in **energy security, clean energy transition, and urban service delivery.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

What is PNG (Piped Natural Gas)?

- Natural gas supplied through pipelines directly to **homes, industries, and commercial establishments.**
- Eliminates the need for cylinders and ensures **continuous supply.**

Policy Framework

- Expansion driven by the **City Gas Distribution (CGD) network.**
- Regulated by the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board.

Gas-Based Economy

- India aims to increase the share of natural gas in the energy mix from ~6% to **15%.**
- PNG plays a key role in **clean energy transition and reducing carbon emissions.**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Infrastructure Expansion:** Focus on widening the PNG network in urban areas.
- **Clean Energy:** Promotes eco-friendly fuel over LPG and other fossil fuels.
- **Service Reliability:** Ensuring uninterrupted supply of essential services.
- **Urban Sustainability:** Reduces air pollution and enhances quality of life.
- **Regulatory Oversight:** Managed under PNGRB and CGD framework.
- **Economic Impact:** Cost-effective energy solution for households and industries.
- **Way Forward:** Accelerate network expansion, improve last-mile connectivity, and enhance resilience.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **PNG:** Piped Natural Gas supplied through pipelines.
- **CGD Network:** City Gas Distribution system.
- **PNGRB:** Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board regulates gas sector.
- **Energy Target:** Increase natural gas share to ~15% of energy mix.
- **Benefits:** Clean, safe, and continuous fuel supply.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Piped Natural Gas (PNG) is supplied through pipelines directly to consumers.
2. PNGRB regulates the natural gas sector in India.
3. PNG requires storage in cylinders for household use.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

1. INDIASKILLS NATIONAL COMPETITION 2025–26 KICKS OFF IN GREATER NOIDA, SHOWCASING INDIA'S FINEST SKILLED TALENT



- The competition is India's largest **skill showcase platform**, identifying top talent across multiple trades.
- Participants compete in sectors like **construction, manufacturing, IT, hospitality, and creative arts**.
- Winners get opportunities to represent India at **international platforms like WorldSkills**.
- The event promotes **vocational training, industry-relevant skills, and employability**.
- It strengthens the **Skill India Mission** and aligns with workforce development goals.
- Encourages **youth participation and industry-academia collaboration**.
- Reflects governance focus on **human capital development and demographic dividend utilisation**.

IndiaSkills Competition

- Conducted periodically as part of India's **skill development ecosystem**.
- Acts as a gateway to global competitions like **WorldSkills International**.

Institutional Framework

- Organised by National Skill Development Corporation under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

Skill India Mission

- Launched to enhance **employability through skill training and certification**.
- Focus on bridging the gap between **industry demand and workforce skills**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **National Platform:** IndiaSkills Competition 2025–26 in Greater Noida.
- **Skill Showcase:** Covers multiple sectors including IT, manufacturing, and services.
- **Global Linkage:** Pathway to WorldSkills competitions.
- **Youth Empowerment:** Promotes vocational excellence among youth.
- **Industry Alignment:** Focus on job-ready and future skills.
- **Policy Support:** Strengthens Skill India Mission.
- **Way Forward:** Expand outreach, improve training quality, and strengthen industry partnerships.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **IndiaSkills:** National-level skill competition.
- **Organiser:** National Skill Development Corporation.
- **Ministry:** Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
- **Global Link:** WorldSkills International competition.
- **Objective:** Promote vocational skills and employability.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. IndiaSkills National Competition is organised by the National Skill Development Corporation.
2. Winners of IndiaSkills may represent India in international skill competitions.
3. The competition focuses only on academic and theoretical knowledge.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

2.VICE PRESIDENT ADDRESSES NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON TELE-LAW INITIATIVE IN NEW DELHI



विधि और न्याय मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF LAW & JUSTICE

SUMMARY

- The Tele-Law Initiative leverages **digital platforms to provide legal advice and services** to citizens, especially in rural and remote areas.
- The Vice President emphasised the importance of **accessible, affordable, and timely justice delivery**.
- Tele-Law connects beneficiaries with **panel lawyers through Common Service Centres (CSCs)**.
- It supports **legal awareness, dispute resolution, and empowerment of marginalized communities**.
- Aligns with the broader goal of **Digital India and e-governance**.
- Strengthens **inclusive governance and legal empowerment**.
- Highlights integration of **technology with judicial and legal services**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Tele-Law Initiative

- Launched by the Department of Justice.
- Provides **legal advice via video conferencing and telecommunication tools**.

- Operates through **Common Service Centres (CSCs)** across India.

Access to Justice

- A key component of **rule of law and good governance**.
- Focus on bridging the gap between **legal institutions and citizens**, especially in rural areas.

Digital Governance

- Tele-Law is part of India's **e-governance ecosystem**, enhancing service delivery through technology.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Leadership Address:** C. P. Radhakrishnan at national consultation.
- **Digital Justice:** Use of ICT for legal service delivery.
- **Target Group:** Rural and marginalized populations.
- **Platform:** Common Service Centres (CSCs).
- **Governance Impact:** Enhances access, transparency, and efficiency.
- **Legal Awareness:** Promotes understanding of rights and remedies.
- **Way Forward:** Expand outreach, strengthen infrastructure, and improve legal literacy.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Tele-Law Initiative:** Digital legal service platform.
- **Launched by:** Department of Justice.
- **Medium:** CSCs with video/tele consultation.

- **Objective:** Access to justice for all.
- **Focus:** Rural and underserved communities.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Tele-Law Initiative provides legal advice through digital platforms.
2. It operates through Common Service Centres across India.
3. The initiative is implemented by the Ministry of Electronics and IT.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

3.OVERFISHING DRIVEN BY SUBSIDISED INDUSTRIAL FLEETS, NOT SMALL-SCALE FISHERS: INDIA'S STAND



- India has reiterated its stance in global forums that **industrial-scale fishing with heavy subsidies** is the main cause of overfishing.
- Small-scale and artisanal fishers in India and other developing countries have **limited ecological impact**.
- Developed nations' subsidies lead to **overcapacity, depletion of fish stocks, and unfair competition**.
- India advocates for **equitable and differentiated treatment** in global fisheries agreements.
- The issue is central to negotiations at the World Trade Organization on fisheries subsidies.
- It links to concerns of **livelihood security, food security, and sustainable marine ecosystems**.
- Reflects governance focus on **protecting vulnerable communities while ensuring environmental sustainability**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Fisheries Subsidies Issue

- Subsidies include **fuel support, vessel construction, and operational costs**.
- Large subsidies in developed countries enable **deep-sea industrial fishing**.

WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies

- Aims to curb **harmful subsidies contributing to overfishing and Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing**.
- Includes **special and differential treatment (S&DT)** provisions for developing countries.

Indian Fisheries Sector

- Dominated by **small-scale, artisanal fishers**.
- Critical for **livelihoods, nutrition, and coastal economy**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Core Argument:** Industrial fleets, not small fishers, drive overfishing.
- **Equity Concern:** Need for fair treatment of developing nations.
- **WTO Negotiations:** Focus on fisheries subsidy discipline.
- **Livelihood Protection:** Safeguarding artisanal fishers.
- **Environmental Impact:** Addressing depletion of marine resources.
- **Global Trade Dimension:** Balancing sustainability and development.
- **Way Forward:** Ensure equitable rules, strengthen monitoring, and promote sustainable fishing practices.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **WTO Fisheries Subsidies Agreement:** Targets harmful subsidies.
- **IUU Fishing:** Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated fishing.
- **S&DT:** Special and Differential Treatment for developing countries.
- **Indian Fisheries:** Predominantly small-scale and artisanal.
- **Key Issue:** Overcapacity due to industrial fleets.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Overfishing is primarily driven by heavily subsidised industrial fishing fleets.
2. Small-scale fishers in developing countries are the main contributors to global overfishing.
3. WTO negotiations on fisheries subsidies include provisions for special and differential treatment.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

4. IONS MARITIME EXERCISE (IMEX) TTX 2026 HELD AT SOUTHERN NAVAL COMMAND, KOCHI



- The IMEX (TTX) 2026 focused on **maritime security cooperation and coordination among Indian Ocean Region (IOR) navies**.
- Table Top Exercise (TTX) involved **scenario-based discussions on maritime contingencies** like piracy, HADR (Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief), and search & rescue.
- Strengthens **interoperability and mutual understanding among participating navies**.
- Enhances preparedness for **non-traditional security threats in the maritime domain**.
- Reinforces India's role as a **net security provider in the Indian Ocean Region**.
- Supports broader vision of **SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region)**.
- Reflects emphasis on **regional cooperation and maritime diplomacy**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)

- Indian Ocean Naval Symposium is a **voluntary initiative of navies of the Indian Ocean Region**.
- Aims to enhance **maritime cooperation, security, and dialogue**.

IMEX (IONS Maritime Exercise)

- Conducted periodically to improve **operational coordination among member navies**.
- Includes both **Table Top Exercises (TTX)** and **field exercises**.

Southern Naval Command

- Southern Naval Command is the **training command of the Indian Navy**, headquartered in Kochi.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Exercise Type:** Table Top Exercise (TTX) under IMEX 2026.
- **Location:** Kochi.
- **Participants:** Navies of Indian Ocean Region.
- **Focus Areas:** Maritime security, piracy, HADR, search & rescue.
- **Interoperability:** Enhances coordination among navies.
- **Strategic Role:** Strengthens India's maritime leadership in IOR.
- **Way Forward:** Expand participation, conduct joint field exercises, and deepen cooperation.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **IONS:** Forum of Indian Ocean navies for cooperation.
- **IMEX:** Maritime exercise under IONS.
- **TTX:** Table Top Exercise (discussion-based simulation).
- **SAGAR:** India's maritime vision – Security and Growth for All in the Region.
- **Southern Naval Command:** Training command of Indian Navy in Kochi.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) is a forum for cooperation among navies of the Indian Ocean Region.
2. Table Top Exercise (TTX) involves real-time deployment of naval ships in sea operations.
3. SAGAR is India's vision for maritime security and cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

5.ABDOMINAL (CENTRAL) OBESITY POSES HIGHER HEALTH RISKS THAN GENERAL OBESITY: FOCUS ON INDIAN CONTEXT



- Central obesity refers to **fat accumulation around the abdomen**, particularly **visceral fat surrounding internal organs**.
- It is strongly linked to **metabolic disorders** like diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and hypertension.
- In the Indian context, many individuals exhibit the **“thin-fat phenotype”**—normal BMI but high abdominal fat.
- This increases risk despite **apparently healthy body weight**.
- The issue highlights limitations of **BMI as a sole indicator of health risk**.
- Emphasises need for **lifestyle interventions, early screening, and awareness**.
- Reflects policy relevance in **public health, non-communicable diseases (NCDs), and preventive healthcare**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Types of Obesity

- **General Obesity:** Measured using Body Mass Index (BMI).
- **Central (Abdominal) Obesity:** Measured using **waist circumference or waist-hip ratio**.

Visceral Fat

- Fat stored around internal organs in the abdominal cavity.
- More metabolically active and harmful than subcutaneous fat.

Indian Phenotype

- Indians are more prone to **insulin resistance and fat deposition in the abdominal region**.
- Leads to higher prevalence of **Type 2 Diabetes and cardiovascular diseases** at lower BMI levels.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Higher Risk Factor:** Central obesity is more dangerous than overall obesity.
- **Thin-Fat Phenotype:** Common in Indian population.
- **Health Impact:** Linked to diabetes, hypertension, and heart diseases.
- **Measurement Tools:** Waist circumference and waist-hip ratio more relevant than BMI alone.
- **Preventive Approach:** Focus on lifestyle changes—diet, exercise, and early screening.
- **Public Health Concern:** Rising NCD burden in India.
- **Way Forward:** Promote awareness, revise screening norms, and integrate into national health programmes.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **BMI:** Body Mass Index ($\text{weight}/\text{height}^2$).
- **Central Obesity Indicator:** Waist circumference, waist-hip ratio.
- **Visceral Fat:** Fat around internal organs—highly risky.
- **NCDs:** Non-Communicable Diseases (diabetes, heart disease).
- **Indian Risk:** Higher metabolic risk at lower BMI levels.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Central obesity refers to fat accumulation around the abdomen and internal organs.
2. Body Mass Index (BMI) alone is always sufficient to assess health risks related to obesity.
3. Indians may have higher metabolic risks even at lower BMI levels.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

1. AYURVEDA RESEARCH ACCESSIBLE IN 13 LANGUAGES: CCRAS SIGNS MoU WITH ANUVADINI AI



- The initiative aims to **democratize access to Ayurveda knowledge** through multilingual digital translation.
- Research publications will be made available in **13 languages**, enhancing reach among practitioners and the public.
- Promotes **integration of traditional knowledge systems with modern technology (AI)**.
- Facilitates **research dissemination, education, and evidence-based Ayurveda practice**.
- Strengthens India's push for **digital inclusion and knowledge accessibility**.
- Supports global promotion of **Ayurveda as a traditional system of medicine**.
- Reflects governance priorities in **healthcare innovation and cultural knowledge preservation**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

CCRAS

- Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences is an autonomous body under the Ministry of AYUSH.
- Responsible for **research, development, and promotion of Ayurveda**.

Anuvadini AI

- Anuvadini AI is an AI-driven platform for **real-time multilingual translation**.
- Supports Indian languages, promoting **linguistic inclusion**.

Ayurveda

- Traditional Indian system of medicine focusing on **holistic health and balance of body, mind, and environment**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **MoU Signed:** Between CCRAS and Anuvadini AI.
- **Multilingual Access:** Ayurveda research in 13 languages.
- **Technology Integration:** Use of AI for translation and dissemination.
- **Healthcare Impact:** Enhances accessibility and awareness.
- **Cultural Promotion:** Strengthens traditional knowledge systems.
- **Digital Inclusion:** Bridges language barriers in research access.
- **Way Forward:** Expand language coverage and integrate with global platforms.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **CCRAS:** Apex research body for Ayurveda under Ministry of AYUSH.
- **Anuvadini AI:** AI-based multilingual translation platform.
- **Ayurveda:** Traditional system of medicine in India.
- **Objective:** Accessibility of research in multiple languages.

- **Focus:** Digital health and knowledge dissemination.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. CCRAS functions under the Ministry of AYUSH.
2. Anuvadini AI is used for multilingual translation of research content.
3. Ayurveda is a modern Western medical system.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

2.GENERAL ELECTIONS & BYE-ELECTIONS 2026: OVER 2.3 LAKH ELECTORS TO AVAIL HOME VOTING



- Home voting enables **senior citizens (80+) and Persons with Disabilities (PwDs)** to cast votes from their residence.

- Around **2.3 lakh electors** are expected to benefit in the 2026 elections.
- The facility ensures **greater electoral participation and inclusiveness**.
- Voting is conducted through **postal ballot with strict monitoring and verification**.
- It reduces barriers related to **mobility, health, and accessibility**.
- Reflects India's commitment to **free, fair, and inclusive elections**.
- Strengthens democratic governance through **universal adult franchise and accessibility measures**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Home Voting Facility

- I. Introduced as part of an accessible **elections initiative** by ECI.
- II. Available for:
 - A. **Senior citizens aged 80 years and above**
 - B. **Persons with benchmark disabilities (PwDs)**

Legal Framework

- Governed under provisions of the **Representation of the People Act, 1951** and related election rules.
- Uses **Form 12D** for opting home voting.

Implementation Mechanism

- Election officials visit voters' homes with a secure **postal ballot system**.
- Ensures **secrecy, transparency, and integrity** of the voting process.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Inclusive Voting:** Home voting for elderly and PwDs.
- **Scale:** 2.3 lakh electors to benefit.
- **Mechanism:** Postal ballot with official supervision.
- **Accessibility:** Removes physical barriers to voting.
- **Democratic Strengthening:** Enhances participation rates.
- **ECI Initiative:** Part of accessible elections programme.
- **Way Forward:** Expand coverage, improve awareness, and ensure smooth implementation.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **ECI:** Constitutional body under **Article 324**.
- **Home Voting:** For 80+ citizens and PwDs.
- **Form 12D:** Application for home voting.
- **Law:** Representation of the People Act, 1951.
- **Objective:** Inclusive and accessible elections.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Home voting facility is available for senior citizens aged 80 years and above.
2. Persons with Disabilities can avail home voting through postal ballot.
3. Election Commission of India derives its powers from Article 324 of the Constitution.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

3.CSIR TRANSFERS INDIGENOUS BIO-BITUMEN TECHNOLOGY: TURNING FARM RESIDUE INTO SUSTAINABLE ROADS



- Bio-bitumen is produced using **agricultural residues like stubble and biomass**, replacing conventional petroleum-based bitumen.
- The technology aims to address **stubble burning and air pollution issues**, especially in northern India.
- It offers a **sustainable, eco-friendly alternative** for road construction.
- Reduces dependence on **imported crude oil and fossil fuels**.
- Enhances **circular economy practices by converting waste into valuable resources**.

- Supports India's goals of **green infrastructure and climate mitigation**.
- Demonstrates effective **lab-to-land technology transfer and industry collaboration**.

- **Sustainability:** Promotes green road construction.
- **Way Forward:** Scale up adoption, incentivize industries, and integrate with national road projects.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

CSIR

- Council of Scientific and Industrial Research is a premier R&D organisation in India.
- Works on **scientific innovation and technology development**.

Bitumen in Road Construction

- Conventional bitumen is derived from **crude oil refining**.
- Widely used as a **binding material in road pavements**.

Agricultural Residue Problem

- Crop residues like **paddy straw** are often burned, causing **severe air pollution**.
- Sustainable alternatives are needed for **residue management**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Innovation:** Indigenous bio-bitumen technology developed by CSIR.
- **Raw Material:** Agricultural residues and biomass.
- **Environmental Benefit:** Reduces stubble burning and air pollution.
- **Energy Security:** Lowers dependence on fossil fuels.
- **Circular Economy:** Converts waste into infrastructure material.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **CSIR:** India's premier scientific R&D body.
- **Bio-bitumen:** Bitumen alternative derived from biomass.
- **Use:** Road construction and pavements.
- **Problem Addressed:** Stubble burning and pollution.
- **Benefit:** Sustainable infrastructure and waste utilization.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Bio-bitumen can be produced using agricultural residues.
2. Conventional bitumen is derived from crude oil.
3. Bio-bitumen technology can help reduce stubble burning.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

4.RELEASE OF PUBLICATION “ENERGY STATISTICS INDIA 2026”

Organogram of Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)



- The report presents **latest data on energy supply, demand, and consumption patterns** across sectors.
- Covers key sources such as **coal, crude oil, natural gas, electricity, and renewables**.
- Highlights trends in **energy mix diversification and growing share of renewable energy**.
- Serves as a critical input for **policy formulation, planning, and energy security strategies**.
- Provides insights into **efficiency, sustainability, and sectoral demand (industry, transport, households)**.
- Supports India's goals of **energy transition and climate commitments**.
- Strengthens evidence-based governance in **infrastructure and economic planning**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Energy Statistics India

- Annual publication by Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
- Compiles data from multiple ministries and agencies.

India's Energy Scenario

- India is among the **largest energy consumers globally**.
- High dependence on **fossil fuels**, especially coal and imported crude oil.
- Rapid growth in **renewable energy capacity (solar, wind, hydro)**.

Policy Context

- Linked to goals such as:
 - Energy security**
 - Sustainable development**
 - Net-zero commitments (by 2070)**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Comprehensive Data:** Covers production, consumption, and energy flows.
- **Energy Mix:** Coal dominant, rising share of renewables.
- **Sectoral Demand:** Industry, transport, and households major consumers.
- **Policy Utility:** Supports planning and decision-making.
- **Sustainability Focus:** Tracks renewable energy growth.
- **Energy Security:** Helps assess import dependence and supply risks.
- **Way Forward:** Accelerate clean energy transition and improve efficiency.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Publisher:** Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
- **Content:** Energy production, consumption, and trends.
- **Major Sources:** Coal, oil, gas, electricity, renewables.
- **India's Status:** Major global energy consumer.
- **Climate Goal:** Net-zero emissions target by 2070.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. "Energy Statistics India" is published by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
2. The report includes data on renewable energy sources.
3. India is fully self-sufficient in crude oil production.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

5.PROMOTION OF DUAL SYSTEM OF TRAINING



सत्यमेव जयते

कौशल विकास और
उद्यमशीलता मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
**SKILL DEVELOPMENT
AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

- The Dual System of Training integrates **classroom instruction with on-the-job training in industries.**
- Aims to bridge the gap between **theoretical knowledge and practical skills.**
- Implemented mainly through **Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs)** in partnership with industries.
- Enhances **employability, productivity, and job readiness of trainees.**
- Aligns training with **industry requirements and technological advancements.**
- Supports India's **Skill India Mission and workforce development goals.**
- Strengthens governance focus on **human capital development and economic growth.**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Dual System of Training (DST)

- Modeled on systems like **Germany's dual vocational training model.**
- Combines **institution-based training and practical industry exposure.**

Institutional Framework

- Implemented via ITIs under the Directorate General of Training (DGT).

- Industry partners provide **hands-on training and real-world exposure**.

Skill Development Ecosystem

- Part of broader initiatives like **Skill India Mission**.
- Focus on addressing **skill gaps and unemployment**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Integrated Training:** Combines theory and practical industry experience.
- **Industry Partnership:** Collaboration between ITIs and industries.
- **Employability Boost:** Enhances job readiness of trainees.
- **Skill Alignment:** Training aligned with industry needs.
- **Global Model:** Inspired by successful international practices.
- **Economic Impact:** Supports industrial growth and productivity.
- **Way Forward:** Expand industry participation, modernize ITIs, and strengthen certification systems.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **DST:** Dual System of Training (theory + practical training).
- **Implemented by:** Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
- **Institutions:** Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs).
- **Objective:** Improve employability and industry readiness.
- **Inspiration:** German dual vocational training model.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Dual System of Training combines classroom instruction with on-the-job training.
2. It is implemented primarily through Industrial Training Institutes in collaboration with industries.
3. The system focuses only on theoretical education without practical exposure.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

1. PMAY-G: ADVANCING HOUSING FOR ALL IN RURAL INDIA



- PMAY-G aims to provide **affordable, pucca houses with basic amenities** to rural households.
- Targets beneficiaries identified through **Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) data**.
- Promotes **convergence with schemes** like sanitation, electricity, and clean cooking fuel.
- Uses **technology-driven monitoring (AwaasSoft, geo-tagging)** for transparency.
- Enhances **rural livelihoods, dignity, and quality of life**.
- Contributes to **poverty alleviation and inclusive development**.
- Reflects governance focus on **welfare delivery and rural infrastructure development**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

PMAY-G

- Launched in **2016**, replacing Indira Awaas Yojana.
- Objective: Provide **pucca houses with basic amenities** to all eligible rural households.

Key Features

- Financial assistance shared between **Centre and States**.
- Incorporates **disaster-resilient and eco-friendly construction designs**.
- Promotes **beneficiary-led house construction**.

Convergence Approach

- I. Linked with schemes like:
 - A. **Swachh Bharat Mission (toilets)**
 - B. **Saubhagya (electricity)**
 - C. **Ujjwala Yojana (LPG)**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Housing for All:** Focus on rural housing infrastructure.
- **Targeting:** Based on SECC data for beneficiary identification.
- **Technology Use:** Geo-tagging and digital monitoring systems.
- **Convergence:** Integration with sanitation, electricity, and LPG schemes.
- **Social Impact:** Improved living standards and dignity.
- **Economic Benefit:** Boosts rural employment and construction sector.
- **Way Forward:** Ensure timely completion, improve quality, and expand coverage.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **PMAY-G:** Rural housing scheme launched in 2016.
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Rural Development.
- **Beneficiaries:** Identified via SECC data.
- **Technology:** AwaasSoft, geo-tagging.
- **Goal:** Housing for All.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. PMAY-G aims to provide pucca houses to rural households.
2. Beneficiaries under PMAY-G are identified using SECC data.
3. PMAY-G operates without convergence with other welfare schemes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

2.NTPC GREEN ENERGY LTD. GROUP SURPASSES 10 GW INSTALLED CAPACITY MILESTONE; ACCELERATES INDIA'S CLEAN ENERGY TRANSITION



- NTPC Green Energy Ltd. has achieved over **10 GW renewable energy capacity**,

including solar, wind, and hybrid projects.

- The milestone strengthens India's progress toward its **renewable energy targets and net-zero commitments**.
- It reduces dependence on **fossil fuels and lowers carbon emissions**.
- Enhances India's position as a **global leader in renewable energy expansion**.
- Supports energy security through **diversified and sustainable energy sources**.
- Contributes to **green growth, climate action, and sustainable development goals**.
- Reflects governance focus on **energy transition, infrastructure growth, and climate commitments**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

NTPC Green Energy Limited

- NTPC Green Energy Limited is a subsidiary of NTPC Limited.
- Focuses on **renewable energy projects** such as solar, wind, and green hydrogen.

India's Renewable Energy Targets

- Target of **500 GW non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030**.
- Commitment to **net-zero emissions by 2070**.

Energy Transition

- Shift from fossil fuels to **renewable and clean energy sources**.
- Key for addressing **climate change and ensuring sustainable growth**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Capacity Milestone:** 10 GW renewable energy achieved.
- **Energy Mix:** Includes solar, wind, and hybrid projects.
- **Climate Impact:** Reduces carbon emissions.
- **Energy Security:** Diversifies energy sources.
- **Global Positioning:** Strengthens India's renewable leadership.
- **Policy Alignment:** Supports national climate and energy targets.
- **Way Forward:** Scale up capacity, invest in storage and green hydrogen, and enhance grid integration.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **NTPC:** India's largest power generation PSU.
- **NTPC Green Energy Ltd.:** Renewable energy arm of NTPC.
- **Capacity:** 10 GW renewable milestone.
- **Target:** 500 GW non-fossil capacity by 2030.
- **Net Zero:** India aims by 2070.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. NTPC Green Energy Limited focuses on renewable energy projects such as solar and wind.
2. India aims to achieve 500 GW of non-fossil fuel energy capacity by 2030.
3. Renewable energy expansion increases dependence on fossil fuels.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

3.DIGITAL PUSH DEEPENS IN RURAL INDIA: eGRAMSWARAJ RECORDS OVER ₹3 LAKH CRORES IN ONLINE PAYMENTS; SABHASAAR EXPANDS TO 23 LANGUAGES



- eGramSwaraj has enabled **large-scale digital financial transactions in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)**.
- Over ₹3 lakh crore in payments reflects **increased transparency, accountability, and efficiency** in fund utilization.
- SabhaSaar enhances **local governance by providing multilingual AI-based support for Gram Sabha proceedings**.
- Expansion to 23 languages promotes **inclusivity and accessibility in grassroots governance**.
- These initiatives strengthen **decentralization and participatory democracy**.

- Align with **Digital India and e-Governance reforms**.
- Reflect governance focus on **technology-driven rural development and financial transparency**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

eGramSwaraj

- eGramSwaraj is a **simplified work-based accounting application** for PRIs.
- Tracks **planning, budgeting, accounting, and monitoring of projects**.

SabhaSaar

- SabhaSaar is an AI-driven platform to support **Gram Sabha meetings, documentation, and decision-making**.
- Enables **multilingual access and real-time assistance**.

Panchayati Raj System

- Constitutional backing under **73rd Constitutional Amendment (1992)**.
- Focus on **decentralised governance and grassroots democracy**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Digital Transactions:** ₹3 lakh crore processed via eGramSwaraj.
- **Transparency:** Improved accountability in fund utilisation.
- **Multilingual Governance:** SabhaSaar expanded to 23 languages.
- **AI Integration:** Enhances Gram Sabha functioning.

- **Decentralisation:** Strengthens Panchayati Raj Institutions.
- **Digital India:** Promotes e-governance at grassroots level.
- **Way Forward:** Expand digital literacy, improve infrastructure, and ensure cybersecurity.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **eGramSwaraj:** Digital accounting and planning tool for PRIs.
- **SabhaSaar:** AI-based multilingual platform for Gram Sabha.
- **73rd Amendment:** Constitutional status to Panchayati Raj.
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Panchayati Raj.
- **Objective:** Transparency, decentralisation, and digital governance.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. eGramSwaraj is a digital platform for planning and accounting in Panchayati Raj Institutions.
2. SabhaSaar is an AI-enabled platform supporting Gram Sabha functioning.
3. Panchayati Raj Institutions derive their constitutional status from the 74th Amendment.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

4. INDIA EMERGES AS GLOBAL LEADER IN ISSUING COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATES UNDER NAGOYA PROTOCOL



- India has issued a large number of **compliance certificates (IRCCs)** under the Nagoya Protocol.
- These certificates ensure **legal access to biological resources and fair benefit sharing**.
- Strengthens **biodiversity conservation and protection of traditional knowledge**.
- Enhances India's credibility in **global environmental governance**.
- Supports equitable sharing of benefits with **local communities and indigenous groups**.
- Facilitates **bioprospecting, research, and sustainable utilisation of resources**.
- Reflects governance focus on **environmental sustainability and legal frameworks for biodiversity use**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Nagoya Protocol

- Nagoya Protocol (2010) is a supplementary agreement to the

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

- Focuses on **Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS)** of genetic resources.

Internationally Recognized Certificate of Compliance (IRCC)

- Issued to certify that **genetic resources are accessed legally** and benefits are shared fairly.
- Registered in the **ABS Clearing-House**.

India's Legal Framework

- Governed by the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**.
- Implemented by the National Biodiversity Authority.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Global Leadership:** India among top issuers of IRCCs.
- **Legal Compliance:** Ensures lawful access to biological resources.
- **Benefit Sharing:** Protects rights of local communities.
- **Biodiversity Conservation:** Promotes sustainable use.
- **Traditional Knowledge:** Safeguards indigenous practices.
- **International Role:** Strengthens India's environmental diplomacy.
- **Way Forward:** Enhance awareness, strengthen ABS mechanisms, and improve monitoring.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **Nagoya Protocol (2010):** On Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS).

- **CBD:** Convention on Biological Diversity.
- **IRCC:** Internationally Recognized Certificate of Compliance.
- **Indian Law:** Biological Diversity Act, 2002.
- **Authority:** National Biodiversity Authority.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Nagoya Protocol deals with access to genetic resources and benefit sharing.
2. IRCC certifies that biological resources are accessed legally.
3. Biological Diversity Act, 2002 implements Nagoya Protocol in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

5.NYAYA SETU AI CHATBOT AND MASCOT "DISHIKA" UNVEILED AT DISHA PROGRAMME; BHASHINI ENABLES REAL-TIME MULTILINGUAL TRANSLATION



- Nyaya Setu AI chatbot aims to **enhance legal awareness and access to justice** through digital means.
- Mascot "Dishika" symbolizes **citizen-friendly legal outreach and engagement**.
- BHASHINI facilitates **real-time translation across multiple Indian languages**, promoting inclusivity.
- Demonstrates integration of **Artificial Intelligence in governance and public service delivery**.
- Supports **Digital India and e-Governance initiatives**.
- Strengthens accessibility in **legal services and public communication**.
- Reflects governance focus on **technology-driven inclusivity and citizen empowerment**.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

Nyaya Setu AI Chatbot

- AI-based platform designed to provide **legal information and assistance**.

- Aims to bridge the gap between **citizens and legal services**.

BHASHINI

- BHASHINI under the **National Language Translation Mission (NLTM)**.
- Enables **speech-to-speech and text translation in Indian languages**.

DISHA Programme

- The DISHA Programme focuses on **legal awareness, empowerment, and outreach**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **AI Integration:** Nyaya Setu chatbot for legal assistance.
- **Citizen Outreach:** Mascot "Dishika" for awareness.
- **Multilingual Access:** BHASHINI enables real-time translation.
- **Digital Governance:** Enhances accessibility and inclusivity.
- **Legal Empowerment:** Improves access to justice.
- **Innovation:** Use of AI in public service delivery.
- **Way Forward:** Expand language coverage, improve AI accuracy, and scale up adoption.

PRELIMS BOOSTER BOX

- **BHASHINI:** AI-based multilingual translation platform.
- **NLTM:** National Language Translation Mission.
- **Nyaya Setu:** AI chatbot for legal assistance.

- **DISHA Programme:** Legal awareness initiative.
- **Focus:** Digital inclusion and access to justice.

PadhAI-GENERATED UPSC MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. BHASHINI is part of the National Language Translation Mission.
2. Nyaya Setu AI chatbot aims to improve access to legal services.
3. DISHA Programme focuses on promoting industrial manufacturing.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)