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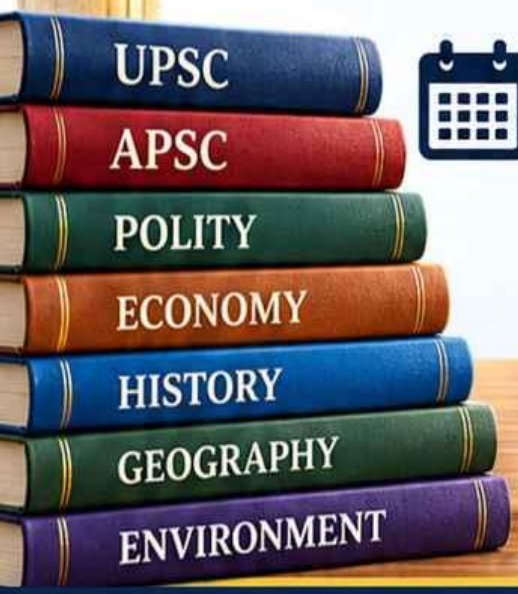
SCHOOL OF CIVIL SERVICES

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Daily Current Affairs





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GS Paper II – International Relations

Proposed Trilateral Meeting: USA, Russia and China



- US President Donald Trump has indicated the possibility of a trilateral meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin.
- The proposed meeting may take place on the sidelines of the **APEC Summit in Shenzhen, China, on November 18–19, 2026**.
- China has stated that it is in communication with relevant parties regarding the possibility of the meeting.

Major Issues on the Agenda

1. Russia–Ukraine War: Possibility of negotiations and diplomatic efforts to end the conflict.

2. Iran Issue: Discussions on regional tensions and ending the Iran conflict.

3. Nuclear Arms Control: Cooperation on nuclear disarmament and reducing nuclear risks.

4. Global Security: Strengthening diplomatic engagement among major powers.

Significance of the Meeting

For Global Politics

- May strengthen diplomatic engagement among major powers.
- Could contribute to resolving international conflicts.
- May encourage nuclear arms control.

For International Security

- Could reduce geopolitical tensions.
- May promote peaceful conflict resolution.
- Could influence the global strategic balance.

For India

- India's strategic autonomy may become increasingly important.
- Developments may affect India's relations with the USA, Russia and China.
- The outcome could influence global energy security and geopolitical stability.

Important Organisations and Concepts

Term	**Significance**
APEC	**Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation**
Nuclear Arms Control	**Measures to regulate and reduce nuclear weapons**
Trilateral Diplomacy	**Diplomatic engagement among three countries**
Strategic Autonomy	**Independent foreign policy decision-making**
Multipolar World	**International system with multiple centres of power**

APEC: Important Prelims Facts

- Full form: **Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation**.
- Established: 1989.
- **Headquarters: Singapore.**
- **Nature: Regional economic forum.**
- **Members: 21 member economies.**
- **Main objective: Promote regional economic cooperation, trade and investment**.

Prelims Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements about APEC:

1. APEC was established in 1989.

2. Its headquarters is located in Singapore.

3. It has 21 member economies.

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, 2 and 3

Mains Questions

Q1. (10 Marks | 150 Words)

Discuss the significance of trilateral diplomatic engagement among the USA, Russia and China in maintaining global peace and security.

GS Paper III: Environment

Cracker Conundrum: Air Pollution and Regulation of Firecrackers



- An article titled "Cracker Conundrum" highlights the environmental and health impacts of firecrackers during Deepavali.
- Following the Supreme Court's temporary relaxation of the cracker ban, Delhi and several North Indian cities witnessed a rise in air pollution.

- The article calls for strict enforcement of firecracker regulations and a time-bound policy to control their manufacture, sale and use.

Key Facts and Data

- Delhi's AQI reached the 'Severe' category on Diwali night.
- PM2.5 concentrations reportedly exceeded 1,000 in some monitoring stations in Delhi and surrounding areas.

Major Causes of Air Pollution

1. Firecrackers – release particulate matter and harmful gases.
2. Vehicular emissions – major source of urban air pollution.
3. Industrial pollution – releases harmful pollutants.
4. Construction dust – increases PM10 and PM2.5.
5. Stubble burning – contributes to seasonal pollution in North India.
6. Weather conditions – low wind speed and atmospheric dryness trap pollutants.

Green Crackers

- Developed by CSIR-NEERI (National Environmental Engineering Research Institute).
- Designed to reduce emissions compared to conventional firecrackers.
- Under stringent laboratory conditions, they reduce emissions by approximately 30–45%.
- However, green crackers do not eliminate air pollution.

Supreme Court's Role

- The Supreme Court has considered the environmental and health consequences of firecrackers.
- The debate involves balancing religious practices with public health and environmental protection.
- The article argues that religious customs cannot override constitutional protections relating to health and life.
- It calls for a final, time-bound policy on the manufacture, sale and use of firecrackers.

Constitutional Provisions

Article	Provision
Article 14	Right to Equality
Article 19(1)(a)	Freedom of Speech and Expression
Article 21	Right to Life and Personal Liberty
Article 25	Freedom of Religion, subject to public order, morality and health
Article 48A	State shall protect and improve the environment
Article 51A(g)	Fundamental duty to protect the natural environment

Important Environmental Laws

1. Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
2. Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.
3. National Green Tribunal Act, 2010.

Major Challenges

- Illegal manufacturing and sale of firecrackers.
- Weak implementation of existing regulations.
- Difficulty in monitoring emissions.
- Public health risks, especially for children and elderly people.
- Conflict between religious practices, livelihoods and environmental protection.
- Limited public awareness about green alternatives.

Way Forward

- Strict enforcement of firecracker regulations.
- Promote certified green crackers where permitted.
- Strengthen monitoring of air quality.
- Control vehicular and industrial emissions.
- Prevent illegal manufacturing and distribution.
- Promote public awareness and environmentally responsible celebrations.
- Develop a comprehensive, time-bound national policy.

Prelims Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements about green crackers:

1. They are developed by CSIR-NEERI.

2. They completely eliminate air pollution.

3. They are designed to reduce emissions compared to conventional crackers.

Which of the statements is/are correct?

A. 1 only

B. 1 and 2 only

C. 1 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: C

Mains Questions

Q1. (10 Marks | 150 Words)

Discuss the environmental and public health impacts of firecrackers. Suggest measures to control pollution during festivals.

GS Paper III: Environment and Climate Change

The Next Test for Renewable Energy



- India hosted the Bharat Renewable Energy Summit, highlighting its progress in renewable energy development.
- India has achieved near-universal household electricity access and developed the world's third-largest renewable energy capacity.
- The upcoming COP31 climate negotiations have proposed a global electrification target called 35 by 35.
- The target aims to increase electricity's share in global final energy consumption to 35% by 2035.

Global Renewable Energy Scenario

Indicator	Important Data
Global renewable energy capacity (2025)	**5,149 GW**
New capacity added in 2025	**692 GW**
Contribution of solar and wind	**Nearly 97%**
Growth since 2020	**Around 80%**
China's share of new deployment	**Nearly two-thirds**
Africa's share of new deployment	**1.6%**

Three Major Challenges of Renewable Energy

A. Reliability

- Existing electricity grids were designed mainly for centralised fossil-fuel power plants.
- Solar and wind energy are intermittent sources.
- Insufficient battery storage creates difficulties in maintaining a continuous power supply.
- Weak transmission infrastructure leads to wastage of renewable electricity.

B. Energy Security

- Cleantech manufacturing and supply chains are concentrated in a few countries.
- Dependence on imported solar components and critical minerals creates strategic vulnerabilities.
- Local manufacturing and diversified supply chains are necessary.

C. Digitalisation

- Increasing AI and data-centre activities are raising electricity demand.
- Smart grids and smart meters can improve electricity management.
- AI can forecast renewable energy generation and optimise power distribution.

Important Government Initiatives in India

Initiative	**Objective**
National Solar Mission	Promote solar energy
PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana	Promote rooftop solar in households
PM-KUSUM	Promote solar energy in agriculture
National Green Hydrogen Mission	Promote green hydrogen production
National Critical Minerals Mission	Strengthen critical mineral supply chains
Green Energy Corridor	Improve renewable energy transmission
National Smart Grid Mission	Modernise electricity infrastructure
Battery Energy Storage Systems	Store electricity for future use

Significance of Renewable Energy for India

1. Energy Security: Reduces dependence on imported fossil fuels.

2. Climate Action: Helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

3. Economic Growth: Encourages investment and industrial development.

4. Employment: Creates green jobs and skill-development opportunities.

5. Energy Access: Improves electricity availability in remote areas.

6. Atmanirbhar Bharat: Promotes domestic manufacturing of solar cells, batteries and other clean technologies.

Challenges for India

- Intermittency of solar and wind energy.
- Inadequate battery storage infrastructure.
- High dependence on imported critical minerals.
- Financial problems of electricity distribution companies (DISCOMs).
- Land acquisition and environmental concerns.
- Inadequate transmission infrastructure.
- Increasing electricity and water demand from data centres.

Way Forward

- Develop reliable battery storage infrastructure.
- Modernise transmission and distribution networks.
- Promote domestic manufacturing of solar cells and batteries.
- Diversify critical mineral supply chains.
- Use AI and smart-grid technologies.
- Encourage public-private partnerships.
- Promote research and development.
- Ensure affordable and reliable electricity for all.

Prelims Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements about renewable energy:

1. Solar and wind energy are intermittent sources.

2. Battery storage helps improve grid stability.

3. Renewable energy completely eliminates the need for transmission infrastructure.

Which of the statements is/are correct?

A. 1 only

B. 1 and 2 only

C. 2 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: B

Mains Practice Questions

Q1. (10 Marks | 150 Words)

Discuss the major challenges in India’s transition towards renewable energy.

GS Paper III: Disaster Management

Flood-Hit Areas of Upper Assam Face Economic Crisis

Why in News?

- Three months after devastating floods, several areas of Upper Assam are facing an economic crisis.
- Agricultural land has become unsuitable for cultivation due to heavy silt and sand deposition.
- Farmers are facing crop damage, soil degradation and shortage of cattle fodder.
- The worst-affected areas include parts of Sivasagar and Charaideo districts.

Major Impacts of Floods

A. Agricultural Impact

- Agricultural land covered with silt and sand.
- Soil fertility and structure affected.
- Crops showing signs of distress.
- Farmers uncertain about the next cultivation cycle.

B. Livestock Impact

- Shortage of natural grass and cattle fodder.
- Increased difficulties in maintaining livestock.
- Risk of reduced dairy and livestock productivity.

C. Economic Impact

- Loss of agricultural income.
- Increased cost of agricultural restoration.
- Risk of rural unemployment and indebtedness.
- Threat to farmers' livelihoods.

Soil Degradation

- Soil samples are being collected from affected areas.
- Silt and sand deposits have reached approximately 3–4 feet in some locations.

Two major types of deposits have been identified:

1. **Clay Loam Soil**: Contains a mixture of clay, sand and silt.

2. **Sandy Loam Soil**: Contains a higher proportion of sand than clay.

Major Challenges

1. Loss of fertile agricultural land.

2. Heavy siltation and sand deposition.

3. Poor crop growth and reduced productivity.

4. Shortage of cattle fodder.

5. Financial difficulties for farmers.

6. Uncertainty regarding the next agricultural season.

Way Forward

- Conduct scientific soil testing.
- Remove excessive sand and silt wherever technically feasible.
- Restore soil fertility through organic manure and suitable soil amendments.
- Promote flood-resilient crop varieties.
- Provide quality seeds and agricultural inputs.
- Ensure fodder supply for affected livestock.
- Provide compensation and agricultural credit support.
- Strengthen flood forecasting and early-warning systems.
- Develop long-term flood management strategies.

Important Government Initiatives

Scheme / Programme	**Objective**
PMFBY	Crop insurance against specified risks
PM-KISAN	Income support to eligible farmer families
Soil Health Card Scheme	Provides information on soil health and nutrients
MGNREGA	Provides rural wage employment
National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF)	Disaster response and relief assistance
State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF)	Provides financial assistance for notified disasters
National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture	Promotes climate-resilient agriculture

Prelims Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements about soil:

1. Sandy loam soil generally has better drainage than clay-rich soil.

2. Excessive sand deposition can reduce agricultural productivity.

3. Heavy silt deposition always increases soil fertility.

Which of the statements is/are correct?

A. 1 only

B. 1 and 2 only

C. 2 and 3 only

D. All three

Answer: B

Mains Questions

Q1. (10 Marks | 150 Words)

Examine the socio-economic consequences of recurrent floods on agricultural communities in Assam.