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SCHOOL OF CIVIL SERVICES
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MANAN

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A MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS MAGAZINE
FOR COMPETITIVE EXCELLENCE

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Environment (GS Paper 3)

CAFE-III Norms



Why in News?

The Ministry of Power has notified **CAFE-III norms**, which will come into effect from **1 April 2027 to 31 March 2032**.

They aim to improve passenger-vehicle fuel efficiency by about **16.7%** and reduce **CO_2 emissions and fossil-fuel consumption**

What are CAFE Norms?

- **CAFE = Corporate Average Fuel Economy**.
- Introduced in **2017** under the **Energy Conservation Act, 2001**.
- Regulates the **average fuel consumption and CO_2 emissions** of a manufacturer's entire passenger-vehicle fleet.
- Unlike vehicle-specific emission norms, CAFE evaluates the **weighted average performance of the fleet**.
- **CAFE-II:** effective from 2022.
- **CAFE-III: 1 April 2027–31 March 2032**, covering **M1-category passenger vehicles** manufactured/imported for sale in India.

Key Features of CAFE-III

Feature	CAFE-III
Implementation	2027–28 to 2031–32
Target	~**16.7% improvement** in fuel efficiency
Reference weight	**1,229 kg**
Previous reference weight	1,082 kg

Feature	CAFE-III
Baseline consumption target	3.996 L/100 km → **3.3273 L/100 km**
Compliance	**3+2 year blocks**
Focus	Fuel efficiency + CO_2 reduction

Formula:

Annual average fuel consumption = a × (W − b) + c

Where:

- **W** = weighted average unladen weight of eligible vehicles
- **b** = reference weight (**1,229 kg**)
- **a** = weight adjustment factor
- **c** = baseline fuel-consumption target

Small Cars Issue

- Draft CAFE-III proposed an additional **3 g CO_2/km relaxation** for petrol cars below **909 kg**.
- Final framework **removed this separate concession**.
- Instead, the revised weight-adjustment formula gives relatively favourable targets to lighter fleets.
- **No separate regulatory category** exists for cars below 909 kg.

UPSC significance: Shows the policy challenge of balancing **decarbonisation, industry competitiveness and affordability of small cars**.

EV & Alternative-Fuel Incentives

CAFE-III uses **super credits/volume derogation factors** to encourage cleaner technologies:

- **BEV & REEV:** factor **3**
- **Plug-in hybrid & strong hybrid flex-fuel:** factor **2.5**
- EV electricity consumption converted into petrol-equivalent consumption using **0.1028** conversion factor.
- **Carbon Neutrality Factors (CNFs):**
  - E20 or higher ethanol-blended petrol: **8%**
  - Flex-fuel ethanol vehicles: **22.3%**

Concept: Cleaner vehicles can receive greater weight in fleet-average compliance calculations, encouraging manufacturers to shift toward low-emission technologies.

Flexible Compliance Mechanism

CAFE-III introduces a **credit–debit system**:

- Better-than-required performance → **credits**

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- Under-performance → **debits**
- Credits can be:
  - carried forward within compliance blocks
  - traded between manufacturers
- Deficit manufacturers can purchase credits from **BEE**.

Buyout price:

- 2027–28: **₹2,500 per g CO_2/km**
- Increases by ₹500 annually
- 2031–32: **₹4,500 per g CO_2/km**

Technology Incentives

Specified technologies can claim efficiency improvements, including:

- Start-stop systems
- Tyre-pressure monitoring
- Regenerative braking
- Efficient transmissions
- Motor-generators
- Efficient alternators
- LED lighting
- Advanced glazing
- Electric water pumps
- Improved air-conditioning

Maximum technology-related claimed reduction: 9 g CO_2/km.

Exemption

Manufacturers producing/importing **fewer than 1,000 eligible vehicles** during a reporting period are exempt from specific CAFE targets but must report actual fleet-average fuel consumption.

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Why is CAFE-III Important?

Environmental

- Reduces **CO_2 emissions** and fuel consumption.
- Supports India's **decarbonisation** goals.
- Promotes cleaner mobility.

Energy Security

- Better fuel efficiency → lower petroleum demand.
- Can reduce India's dependence on **imported crude oil**.

Economic/Industrial

- Encourages investment in:
  - EVs
  - hybrids
  - flex-fuel vehicles
  - fuel-efficient technologies.
- Provides greater **regulatory certainty** to automobile manufacturers.

Consumer

- Encourages availability of cleaner vehicle technologies.
- However, compliance costs may affect **vehicle prices and affordability**, particularly in the small-car segment.

CAFE vs BS Emission Norms

CAFE Norms	Bharat Stage (BS) Norms
Fleet-average fuel efficiency/CO_2	Pollutant emission limits
Manufacturer-level approach	Vehicle/engine-level emission standards
Focus on fuel economy & CO_2	Focus on pollutants such as NOx, PM, CO, HC
Encourages fleet-wide efficiency	Controls tailpipe emissions

Challenges:

- Higher technology/compliance costs
- Potential impact on vehicle affordability
- Different technological capabilities among manufacturers
- Need for reliable testing and monitoring
- Charging infrastructure and clean electricity availability for EVs
- Balancing industrial competitiveness with environmental objectives

Conclusion:
CAFE-III combines **regulation, market-based compliance and technology incentives** to improve the efficiency of India's passenger-vehicle fleet. Its effectiveness will depend on robust monitoring, technological innovation and maintaining affordability.

Economy (GS Paper 3)

Foreign Investment in India



Why in News?

A recent **US Department of State report on India's investment climate** highlighted regulatory uncertainty, sector-specific restrictions, corruption risks and import-related barriers faced by foreign investors.

India's FDI Framework

- **FDI (Foreign Direct Investment):** Investment by a foreign entity/person with a long-term interest and significant influence in an Indian business.
- India allows **up to 100% FDI through the automatic route in many sectors**.
- Some sensitive sectors require **government approval** and/or additional conditions.
- Examples: **multi-brand retail, defence, private banking, pharmaceuticals, print/digital media and satellites**.

Major Concerns Highlighted

- **Regulatory uncertainty:** Frequent/unclear changes can increase investment risk.
- **Import barriers:** Authorisation requirements for specialised used equipment such as servers, semiconductors and testing equipment.
- **FDI–FPI restrictions:** Rules can create difficulties for investors using both routes.
- **Corruption risks:** Reported concern among some foreign businesses.
- **Tax differences:** The report highlighted a higher effective tax burden for foreign banks compared with domestic banks.

Importance of Foreign Investment

FDI can contribute to:

- Capital formation
- **Technology transfer**
- Employment generation
- Managerial expertise
- Integration into **Global Value Chains (GVCs)**
- Higher productivity and competitiveness

Ease of Doing Business

A favourable investment climate requires:

- Predictable regulations
- Transparent approvals
- Efficient dispute resolution
- Consistent taxation
- Strong corporate governance
- Transparent trade procedures
- Anti-corruption mechanisms

National Single Window System (NSWS): Provides businesses access to multiple Central and State approvals through a common digital platform.

Key Policy Challenge

India needs to balance:

Investment Facilitation ↔ Strategic Regulation

Regulation may be necessary for **national security, financial stability, sensitive technologies and strategic sectors**, but excessive procedural complexity can discourage investment.

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Prelims MCQ

Q. Consider the following statements regarding foreign investment in India:

1. India permits 100% FDI through the automatic route in every sector.
2. FDI can contribute to technology transfer and integration into global value chains.
3. The National Single Window System aims to facilitate access to multiple government approvals.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A. 1 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: B. 2 and 3 only

Explanation: India does **not** permit 100% automatic FDI in every sector; certain sectors have restrictions or require government approval. Foreign investment can facilitate technology transfer and GVC integration, while NSWS facilitates multiple approvals through a common platform.

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Geography (GS Paper 1)

Sea-Level Rise



Why in News?

The **UN General Assembly adopted its first-ever declaration on sea-level rise**, recognising the threat it poses to vulnerable coastal and island states and supporting adaptation, human rights, and continuity of statehood.

Key Facts

- Global sea-level rise increased from **2.1 mm/year (1993–2002)** to **4.7 mm/year (2015–2024)**.
- **2024:** sea level rose about **6 mm**, the highest annual increase recorded.
- By 2100:
  - Low-emission pathway → about **38 cm** rise.
  - High-emission pathway → up to about **77 cm**.
- Sea levels are expected to continue rising for **centuries to millennia**, even after net zero.

Legal Significance

The declaration supports a **"presumption in favour of continued statehood"** for island states affected by sea-level rise.

This means loss or uninhabitability of territory need not automatically end:

- Sovereignty
- Statehood
- UN membership
- Maritime rights

Important maritime zones:

- **Territorial Sea:** 12 nautical miles (~22.2 km)
- **EEZ:** up to 200 nautical miles (~370 km)

Impact on India

India has:

- About **11,098 km coastline**
- **1,298 offshore islands/islets**
- Important island territories: **Lakshadweep** and **Andaman & Nicobar Islands**

Stable maritime boundaries are therefore important for India's **sovereignty, EEZ and marine resources**.

India's Coastal Vulnerability

- Around **one-third of India's mainland shoreline** showed erosion during 1990–2016.
- Nearly **400 km** was retreating by more than **5 m/year**.
- **West Bengal** has particularly severe coastal erosion.

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- **Sundarbans:** Ghoramara Island reduced from about **7.2 sq km (1972)** to **3.6 sq km (2022)**.

Policy Gap in India

Under the **Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) framework**, restrictions are largely linked to the present **High Tide Line (HTL)**.

Problem: Climate change and erosion continuously shift the coastline, so today's HTL may not represent tomorrow's risk.

The **Survey of India hazard line** incorporates factors such as shoreline change and sea-level rise, but its use in regulation remains limited.

Climate Migration

Sea-level rise can cause **slow-onset displacement**.

India currently lacks a comprehensive legal framework specifically addressing people displaced gradually by coastal erosion and sea-level rise.

Example: Fiji incorporated planned relocation into its **Climate Change Act, 2021**.

What Should India Do?

- Integrate **future sea-level projections** into coastal planning.
- Use hazard lines for development regulation.
- Develop a legal framework for **climate-induced displacement**.
- Provide relocated people with **land rights, housing and livelihood support**.
- Strengthen coastal ecosystems such as **mangroves and wetlands**.
- Push for greater **international climate finance**.

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Prelims Question

Q. Consider the following statements regarding sea-level rise:

1. The Territorial Sea extends up to 12 nautical miles from the baseline.
2. The EEZ can extend up to 200 nautical miles from the baseline.
3. Sea-level rise can have implications for the continued statehood of vulnerable island countries.

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

Geography (GS Paper 1)

Southwest Monsoon 2026

Context

India's 2026 Southwest Monsoon ended with a 12.6% rainfall deficit, with IMD forecasting below-normal rainfall in October.

Key Facts

- Total rainfall: 759.4 mm
- Normal rainfall: 868.6 mm
- Deficit: 12.6%
- Rainfall as % of LPA: 87%
- Lowest monsoon rainfall since: 2015 (758.2 mm)
- East & Northeast India: 1,017.1 mm — driest monsoon since 1901
- October 2026: Rainfall likely below 85% of LPA
- October LPA: ~75.4 mm
- Major climatic factor: Strengthening El Niño
- Southwest monsoon withdrawal expected to be completed in early October, followed by the Northeast Monsoon.

Why Important?

- Agricultural stress
- Water shortages
- Reservoir depletion
- Higher drought risk
- Impact on food prices and rural incomes

Northeast India is particularly significant: The region experienced its driest monsoon since 1901, highlighting the vulnerability of the region to changing rainfall patterns.

Prelims Pointers

1. Southwest Monsoon: June–September

2. Northeast/Retreating Monsoon: Mainly October–December

3. El Niño: Abnormal warming of the central/eastern tropical Pacific Ocean.

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4. LPA: Long Period Average, used as a benchmark for comparing seasonal rainfall.

5. East & Northeast India: 2026 recorded its driest monsoon since 1901.

Prelims Question

Q. With reference to India's 2026 Southwest Monsoon, consider the following statements:

1. India received 12.6% less rainfall than the normal monsoon rainfall.

2. East and Northeast India recorded their driest monsoon since 1901.

3. The Southwest Monsoon normally occurs from October to December.

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

Mains Question

Q. The Indian monsoon is increasingly exhibiting significant spatial and temporal variability. Discuss the major factors responsible for monsoon variability and examine its implications for India's agriculture and water security. (150 words)

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International Relations (GS Paper 2)

India–Canada CEPA (Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement)



Key Points

- Fifth round of India–Canada CEPA negotiations: October 5–9, 2026, in Ottawa.
- Both sides **aim to conclude negotiations by the end of 2026.**
- **CEPA (Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement): A trade agreement that reduces/eliminates customs duties and facilitates services, investment and movement of skilled professionals.**

- **Indian diaspora in Canada: about 2.9 million.**
- Indian students in Canada: over 4.27 lakh.

- **India's major exports: pharmaceuticals, iron & steel, seafood, cotton garments, electronics and chemicals.**
- **Major imports from Canada: pulses, coal, fertilisers, paper and crude petroleum**.
- **India's services exports include telecommunications, computer & information services and business services.**

Why is CEPA important?

CEPA → Lower trade barriers → More exports/imports → Investment → Services & skilled mobility → Stronger economic ties

Prelims Question

Q. Consider the following statements regarding CEPA:

1. It can involve reduction or elimination of customs duties.

2. It can facilitate movement of skilled professionals.

3. It is limited only to trade in goods.

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 and 2 only

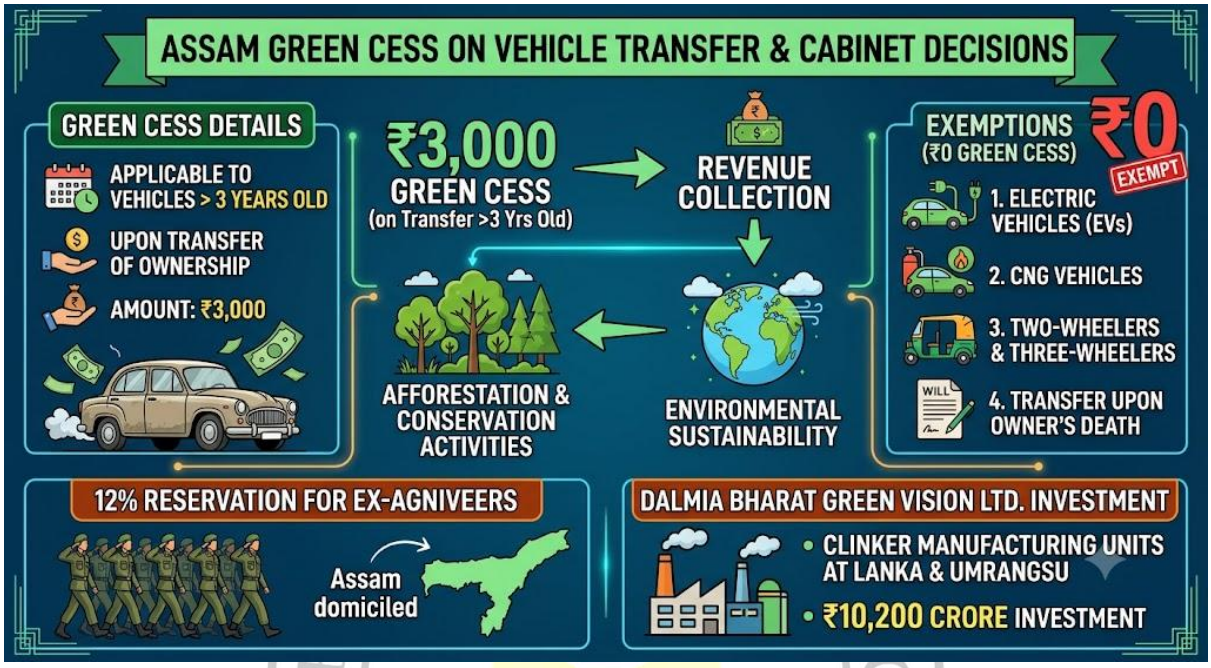
Mains Question

Q. Discuss the economic significance of the proposed India–Canada CEPA for bilateral trade, investment and services. Also examine the challenges in strengthening India–Canada economic relations.

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Environment & Ecology (GS Paper:3)

Green Cess on Vehicle Transfer



Key Points

- **The Assam State Cabinet approved a ₹3,000 green cess on transfer of ownership of vehicles more than 3 years old.**
- **Purpose:** To support afforestation and conservation activities.
- **Exemptions:**
- **Electric Vehicles (EVs)**
- **CNG vehicles**
- **Two-wheelers and three-wheelers**
- **Transfer due to the death of the vehicle owner**
- The Cabinet also approved 12% reservation for Assam-domiciled ex-Agniveers in selected recruitment categories.
- **Dalmia Bharat Green Vision Ltd. will set up two clinker manufacturing units at Lanka and Umrangsu, involving an investment of about ₹10,200 crore.**

Why Important?

Green cess → Revenue → Afforestation & conservation → Environmental sustainability

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Prelims Question

Q. With reference to Assam's recently approved green cess, consider the following statements:

1. It applies to the transfer of ownership of vehicles more than three years old.

2. Electric vehicles are exempted from the cess.

3. The cess applies to all two-wheelers and three-wheelers.

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 and 2 only

Mains Question

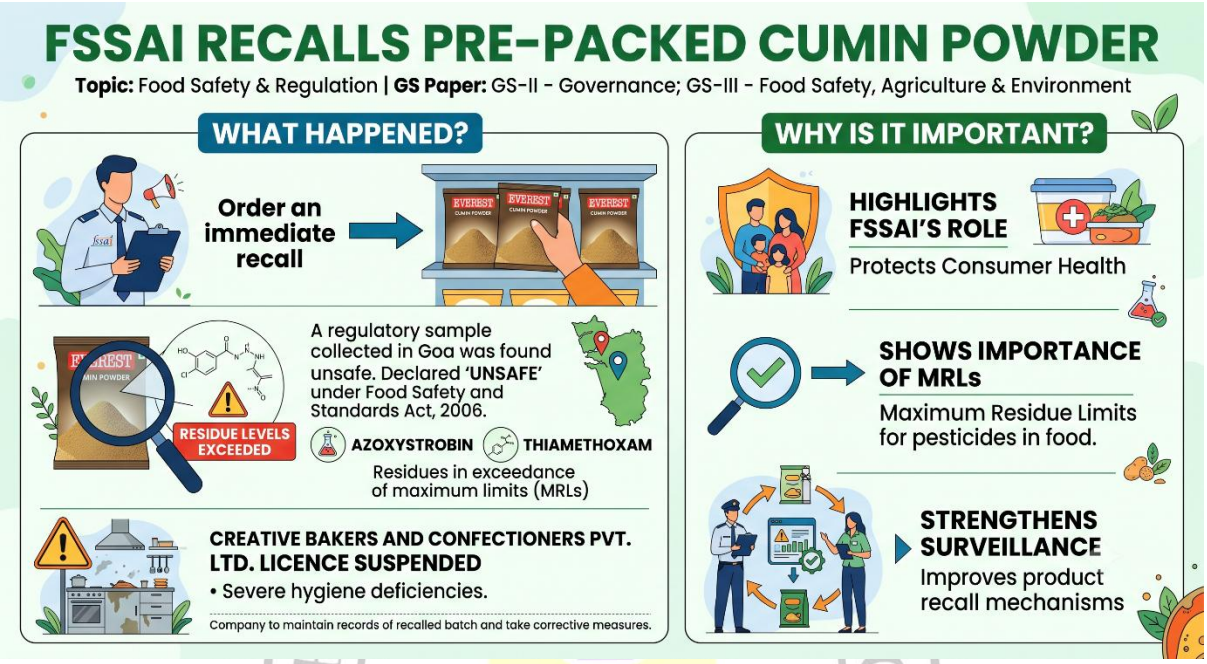
Q. Discuss the role of environmental cess as an instrument for promoting sustainable development. With reference to Assam's green cess on vehicle ownership transfer, examine its potential benefits and challenges.

(150 words | 10 marks)

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Governance (GS Paper: II)

FSSAI Recalls Pre-packed Cumin Powder



What happened?

- **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) ordered Everest Food Products Pvt. Ltd. to immediately recall a batch of pre-packed cumin powder.**
- A regulatory sample collected in Goa was found unsafe.
- **Azoxystrobin and Thiamethoxam pesticide residues exceeded the prescribed maximum limits.**
- **The sample was declared "unsafe" under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.**
- **FSSAI also suspended the licence of Creative Bakers and Confectioners Pvt. Ltd. due to severe hygiene deficiencies.**
- The company was directed to maintain records of the recalled batch and undertake corrective measures.

Why is it important?

- **Highlights the role of FSSAI in protecting consumer health.**
- **Shows the importance of Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for pesticides in food.**
- **Strengthens food-safety surveillance and product recall mechanisms.**

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Prelims Question

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. FSSAI is the statutory authority responsible for regulating food safety in India.

2. Pesticide residues in food are regulated through prescribed maximum residue limits.

3. The Food Safety and Standards Act was enacted in 2006.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A. 1 only

B. 1 and 2 only

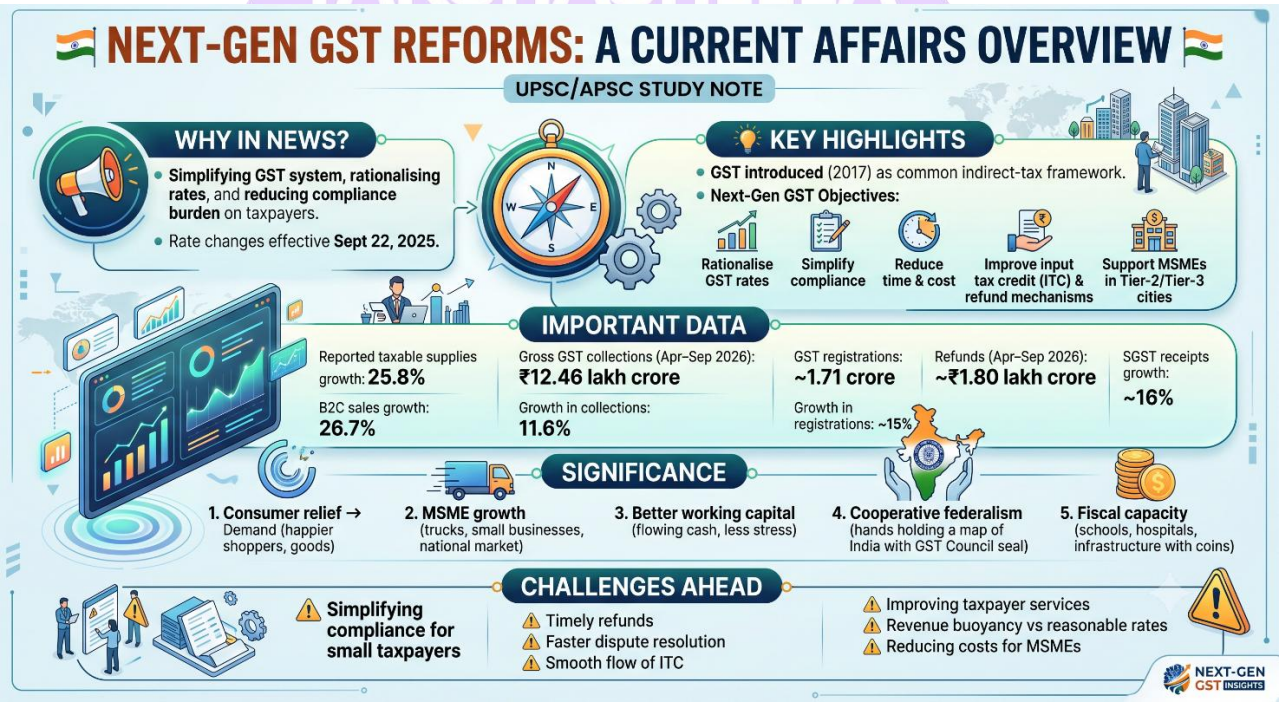
C. 2 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: D. 1, 2 and 3

Indian Economy GS Paper 3)

Next-Gen GST



Why in News?

The **Next-Gen GST reforms** aim to simplify the GST system, rationalise tax rates and reduce the compliance burden on taxpayers. The rate changes took effect on 22 September 2025, while further process reforms are proposed to the GST Council.

Key Highlights

- GST was introduced in 2017 as a common indirect-tax framework across India.
- **Next-Gen GST objectives**:
- **Rationalise GST rates**
- **Simplify compliance**
- **Reduce time and cost for taxpayers**
- **Improve input tax credit and refund mechanisms**
- **Support MSMEs and businesses in Tier-2/Tier-3 cities**

Important Data

Indicator	Key figure
Reported taxable supplies growth	25.8%
Gross GST collections, Apr–Sep 2026	12.46 lakh crore
Growth in gross GST collections	11.6%
GST registrations	1.71 crore
Growth in registrations	15%
Refunds, Apr–Sep 2026	1.80 lakh crore
SGST receipts growth	16%

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Significance

1. Consumer relief → Demand

Lower tax burden → greater household purchasing power → higher consumption → stronger demand.

2. MSME growth

A unified national market allows small businesses to reach customers beyond their local markets.

3. Better working capital

Efficient Input Tax Credit (ITC) and faster refunds can reduce the working-capital burden on businesses.

4. Cooperative federalism

The GST Council administers GST, where the Centre and States participate in decision-making.

5. Fiscal capacity

Despite tax-rate rationalisation, GST collections and State revenues have continued to grow, providing resources for public expenditure.

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Challenges Ahead

- **Simplifying GST compliance for small taxpayers**
- **Timely refunds**
- Faster dispute resolution
- Ensuring smooth flow of ITC
- Improving taxpayer services
- Maintaining revenue buoyancy while keeping rates reasonable
- Reducing compliance costs for MSMEs

Prelims Facts

GST Council

- **Constitutional body under Article 279A.**
- **GST was introduced through the 101st Constitutional Amendment Act, 2016.**
- **GST came into force on 1 July 2017.**
- **It is a major example of cooperative federalism.**

Mains Question

Q. "Next-Gen GST seeks to move beyond tax-rate rationalisation towards improving the overall taxpayer experience." Discuss its potential significance for MSMEs, consumers and cooperative federalism. (150 words)

Science and Technology (GS Paper 3)

Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2026 – Optogenetics



Trio wins medicine Nobel for 'controlling' neurons with light

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

A trio of scientists was on Monday declared the winners of the 2026 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for discoveries leading to a technique called optogenetics, which allows scientists to control select nerve cells using light.

The Nobel Assembly said the work of the laureates — Karl Deisseroth, Peter Hegemann, and Georg Nagel — allowed neuroscience to move beyond observing correlations and testing how particular neurons and neural circuits are related to different behaviours and emotions. Today, optogenetics helps scientists study schizophrenia, depression, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases, and test treatments to restore vision and hearing loss.

In the 1990s, Mr. Hegemann, now at Humboldt University in Berlin, and his team found that shining light on a microscopic alga called Chlamydomonas rapidly triggered an electric signal within its body.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

Bright minds

The trio won the Nobel for contributions towards **optogenetics**, which helps in the study of schizophrenia, depression, and Alzheimer's disease

Peter Hegemann
Humboldt University of Berlin, Germany

Karl Deisseroth
Stanford University, U.S.

Georg Nagel
University of Würzburg, Germany

Why in News?

Karl Deisseroth, Peter Hegemann and Georg Nagel won the 2026 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for discoveries that enabled optogenetics—a technique to control specific nerve cells using light.

What is Optogenetics?

- **A neuroscience technique that combines genetics and optics (light).**
- **Specific neurons are genetically modified to produce light-sensitive proteins.**
- **Light can then activate or inhibit selected neurons, allowing scientists to study their role in behaviour, emotions and diseases.**

Key Scientific Discovery

- **Hegemann and Nagel studied the microscopic alga Chlamydomonas.**
- They identified light-sensitive proteins called **channelrhodopsins.**
- **Channelrhodopsin-2 (ChR2) opens when exposed to light, allowing positively charged ions to enter the cell and generate an electrical signal.**
- **Deisseroth's team demonstrated the technique in rat neurons (2005) and later in living mice.**

Applications

- **Study of schizophrenia, depression, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease.**
- **Understanding neural circuits involved in pain, sleep, memory, attention and social behaviour**.
- **Potential applications in restoring vision and hearing.**

Practice Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements about optogenetics:

1. It uses light to control specific neurons.

2. Channelrhodopsins are light-sensitive proteins used in the technique.

3. It can be used only for studying vision-related disorders.

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

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Answer: A

Mains Question:

"What is optogenetics? Discuss its significance in understanding neurological disorders and neural circuits." (10 marks)

Indian Economy (GS Paper 3)

World Unemployment Crisis



Why in News?

World Bank President Ajay Banga has warned of a major global employment challenge: **around 1.2 billion young people in the Global South are expected to enter working age over the coming decade, while only about 400 million jobs may be created.**

Key Points

- Potential job gap: Nearly 800 million employment opportunities could be lacking.
- **Demographic dividend:** A large working-age population can boost savings, productivity and economic growth—but only when adequate jobs and skills exist.
- **Premature deindustrialisation**: **Developing countries are losing the traditional manufacturing-led pathway to mass employment because of automation, robotics and advanced technologies.**
- **Skill mismatch**: **Lack of digital skills, vocational training and quality education limits youth employability.**
- India's challenge:
- **Median age is below 30 years**.
- **Persistent underemployment and skill mismatch**.
- **Low female labour-force participation.**
- **Agriculture continues to employ a large share of the workforce despite its relatively low contribution to GDP**.

Potential job-rich sectors:

- **Agriculture & agro-processing**
- **Healthcare and care economy**
- **Tourism and culture**
- **Green manufacturing**
- **MSMEs**
- **Digital and technology-enabled services**

Way Forward

1. Promote labour-intensive manufacturing.

2. Strengthen MSMEs and entrepreneurship.

3. Improve physical and digital infrastructure.

4. Expand vocational and industry-linked skill training.

5. Increase women's participation in the workforce.

6. Develop agro-processing and rural value chains.

7. Promote tourism and green industries.

8. Improve regulatory certainty and access to finance.

Prelims Question

Q. Consider the following statements regarding demographic dividend:

1. It refers to the economic growth potential arising from a relatively larger working-age population.

2. It automatically results in higher economic growth whenever the working-age population increases.

3. Employment generation and human-capital development are important for converting demographic potential into an economic dividend.

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: B

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Explanation: A demographic dividend is not automatic. Jobs, skills, health, education and productive opportunities are necessary to convert a large working-age population into economic growth.

Mains Question

Q. "A large young population can become either a demographic dividend or a demographic challenge depending on employment opportunities." Discuss with special reference to India.

(150 words | 10 marks)

International Relations (GS Paper 2)

Methanol Shipment from Assam to Bangladesh



Why in News?

A cargo barge carrying 540 metric tonnes of methanol from Assam to Bangladesh was flagged off from Bogibeel River Terminal, Dibrugarh.

Key Facts

- Cargo: 540 MT methanol
- Origin: Assam Petrochemicals Limited (APL), Namrup
- **Destination: Pangaon Port, Dhaka**
- **Vessel: Cargo barge DLB Patkai, tugboat Kushal Konwar**
- **Waterway: National Waterway-2 (NW-2) — Brahmaputra**
- **NW-2 distance: 768 km before entering the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol Route**

- **Total Bogibeel–Narayanganj journey: 1,300 km**
- **Flagged off by: Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal**
- Importance: Strengthens India-Bangladesh connectivity, inland water transport and Assam's role in regional trade.
- **Facilitation: Customs and immigration facilities established at Bogibeel and Dhubri**.

Significance

Economic: Lower-cost transportation and greater export opportunities for Assam.

Regional: Strengthens India–Bangladesh trade and connectivity.

Environmental: Inland waterways can reduce dependence on road transport and associated emissions.

Northeast: Provides the landlocked Northeast with an alternative international trade route.

Prelims MCQ

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. National Waterway-2 is located on the Brahmaputra River.

2. Bogibeel and Dhubri are important points for facilitating international inland-water cargo movement from Assam.

3. The Indo-Bangladesh Protocol Route facilitates inland water connectivity between India and Bangladesh.

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

Mains Question

Q. "Inland waterways can become a major driver of economic integration and sustainable development in Northeast India." Discuss with reference to the recent Assam–Bangladesh methanol shipment. (150 words)

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Environment (GS Paper 3)

Buxa Tiger Reserve – Tiger Reintroduction



Why in News?

A 3-year-old tigress from Valmiki Tiger Reserve, Bihar, was released in Buxa Tiger Reserve, West Bengal, on 2 October 2026. This is part of a phased programme to establish a viable and self-sustaining tiger population in Buxa.

Key Facts

- Buxa Tiger Reserve (BTR) – declared in 1983, India's 15th Tiger Reserve.
- **Area: 760.87 sq km.**
- **Location: Alipurduar district, West Bengal.**
- **Important connectivity:**
- **North: Bhutan forests**
- **East: Kochugaon forests & Manas Tiger Reserve**
- **West: Jaldapara National Park**
- **Tiger population declined due to:**
- **Habitat degradation & fragmentation**
- **Land-use changes**
- **Decline in prey availability**
- **Anthropogenic pressure**
- **Valmiki Tiger Reserve was selected because its terrain and ecological conditions are similar to Buxa.**
- **Sundarbans was not selected because its mangrove ecosystem and terrain differ significantly from Buxa.**

Major Challenges in Buxa

- **Human settlements and tea estates**
- **Low prey availability**

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- **Habitat fragmentation**
- **Railway and road infrastructure**
- **Human–wildlife conflict**
- **Heavy commercial traffic between Bhutan and West Bengal**

Important: Around 300 families have been persuaded to relocate to facilitate the programme.

Prelims Question

Q. With reference to Buxa Tiger Reserve, consider the following statements:

1. It is located in West Bengal.

2. It shares ecological connectivity with forests of Bhutan.

3. Valmiki Tiger Reserve was selected as the source for tiger reintroduction because of similarities in terrain.

4. Buxa is India's first Tiger Reserve.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1, 2 and 3 only

B. 1 and 4 only

C. 2, 3 and 4 only

D. 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer: A

Mains Question

Q. Tiger reintroduction can restore ecological balance, but its success depends on landscape-level conservation. Discuss with reference to Buxa Tiger Reserve.

(150 words | 10 marks)

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GS Paper II(International Relations)

Nobel Peace Prize 2026

Navi Pillay wins Nobel Peace Prize

Former UN human rights chief is South African jurist of Indian origin

OSLO, Oct 9: South African jurist of Indian origin Navanethem "Navi" Pillay, a former UN human rights chief whose work helped shape international law on genocide and sexual violence, won the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize on Friday for her efforts to promote peace and international law.

She is also serving as a Judge in a case at the International Court of Justice in which The Gambia has accused Myanmar of violating the Genocide Convention.

Born in Durban on September 23, 1941, to Indian parents of Tamil descent, Pillay grew up under apartheid and went on to build a career challenging racial discrimination, defending anti-apartheid



activists and advancing human rights and equality.

According to a biographical profile published by the Institute for African Women in Law, Pillay's father was a bus driver who worked multiple jobs to support the family, while her mother looked after their eight children. Despite financial hardship, her parents placed a strong emphasis on education and insisted that their daughters, like their sons, should be educated.

Pillay studied at the University of Natal and later earned postgraduate law degrees from Harvard University.

In 1967, she became the first woman of colour to establish a law practice in South Africa's Natal Province, according to the Institute for African Women in Law. – PTI

Key Facts

- "Navi Pillay" is a South African jurist of Indian (Tamil) origin.
- Born on 23 September 1941, in Durban, South Africa.
- **Former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (2008–2014).**
- **She has worked to advance human rights, gender equality and international justice.**
- In 1967, she became the first woman of colour to establish a law practice in South Africa's Natal Province.
- She studied at the **University of Natal and Harvard University**.

International Court of Justice (ICJ)

- The principal **judicial organ of the United Nations.**
- **Established in 1945; began functioning in 1946.**
- **Headquarters**: The **Hague, Netherlands**.
- **Comprises 15 judges elected for nine-year terms**.
- **Settles legal disputes between states and provides advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by authorised UN bodies and agencies.**

Prelims Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements about Navi Pillay:

1. She is a South African jurist of Indian origin.

2. She served as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

3. She was born in India.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 only

B. 1 and 2 only

C. 2 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: B. 1 and 2 only

Explanation: Navi Pillay was born in Durban, South Africa, to parents of Tamil origin.

Mains Question

Q. Discuss the role of international institutions in protecting human rights and promoting international justice. (150 words)

GS Paper III (Indian economy)

India Slams US Green Card Suspension for IT Firms



Why in News

India criticised the US decision to suspend the PERM programme for eight major IT companies, affecting Indian professionals seeking permanent residency.

Key Points:

- **PERM**: Labour certification process for certain employment-based US green cards.
- **Affected Indian firms**: Infosys, TCS, Wipro and HCL Technologies.
- **Other firms**: Microsoft, Adobe, Capgemini and Cognizant.
- **H-1B Visa**: Allows eligible foreign professionals to work in specialised occupations in the US.
- **India's response**: Condemned JD Vance's description of foreign professionals as "indentured servants."

Implications for India:

- **Uncertainty for Indian IT professionals.**
- **Possible strain on India–US relations.**
- **Challenges for India's IT industry and skilled-worker mobility.**
- Significance for India–US Relations

India and the US cooperate in several important areas:

- **Trade and investment**: Bilateral economic relations and services trade.
- **Technology**: Artificial intelligence, semiconductors and digital innovation.
- **Defence**: Cooperation under the India–US strategic partnership.
- **Human resources**: Mobility of skilled professionals and educational
- **Indo-Pacific**: Cooperation to promote regional stability.

Challenges and the Way Forward

Challenges

1. Immigration policy uncertainty for skilled Indian professionals.

2. Potential disruption to IT companies' workforce planning.

3. Differences between domestic employment priorities and global talent mobility.

4. Possible deterioration in bilateral economic relations.

Way forward

- India and the US should strengthen bilateral dialogue on skilled-worker mobility.
- Both countries should ensure transparent and predictable immigration procedures.
- Indian IT companies should diversify international operations and explore additional markets.
- India should strengthen domestic research, innovation and high-skilled employment opportunities.

Prelims Question

Consider the following statements:

1. PERM is associated with labour certification for certain US employment-based immigrant visas.

2. An H-1B visa automatically grants permanent residency in the United States.

3. A US green card provides lawful permanent resident status.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 only

B. 1 and 2 only

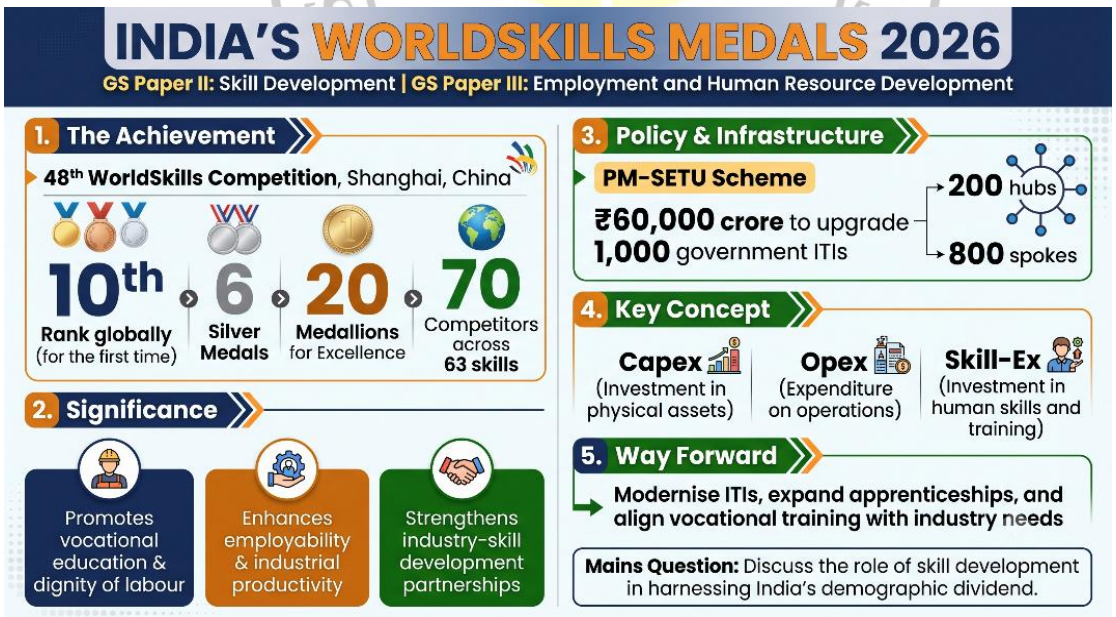
C. 1 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: C. 1 and 3 only

GS Paper III (Employment and Human Resource Development)

India's WorldSkills Medals 2026



- **Event**: 48th WorldSkills Competition, Shanghai, China.
- **India's Rank:** 10th globally for the first time.
- **Achievement:** 6 silver medals and 20 Medallions for Excellence.
- **Participation:** 70 competitors across 63 skills.

- **PM-SETU Scheme: 60,000 crore to upgrade 1,000 government ITIs into 200 hubs and 800 spokes.**

Significance:

- **Promotes vocational education and dignity of labour.**
- **Enhances employability and industrial productivity.**
- **Strengthens industry–skill development partnerships.**

Key Concept:

- **Capex: Investment in physical assets.**
- **Opex: Expenditure on operations.**
- **Skill-Ex: Investment in human skills and training.**

Way Forward: **Modernise ITIs, expand apprenticeships and align vocational training with industry needs.**

Mains Question

Discuss the role of skill development in harnessing India's demographic dividend.(10 marks)

GS Paper III (Science & Technology)

TRISHNA Satellite: India–France Space Cooperation



- **TRISHNA stands for Thermal Infra-Red Imaging Satellite for High-resolution Natural Resource Assessment.**
- **Collaboration: Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and French space agency CNES.**
- **Launch: Expected within the next 12–16 months, according to the report.**
- **Purpose**: High-resolution monitoring of Earth's surface temperature and vegetation health.

Applications:

1. **Monitoring water stress in crops.**
2. **Improving irrigation and water-resource management.**
3. **Assessing evapotranspiration and drought conditions.**
4. **Monitoring urban heat islands and ecosystem health.**

Important Prelims Facts

- **ISRO: Indian space agency.**
- **CNES: French space agency.**
- **TRISHNA: Focuses on thermal infrared observations for natural-resource assessment.**

Prelims Questions

Q1. TRISHNA is a joint satellite mission between which agencies?

A. ISRO and NASA

B. ISRO and CNES

C. ISRO and ESA

D. DRDO and CNES

Answer: B. ISRO and CNES

Mains Question

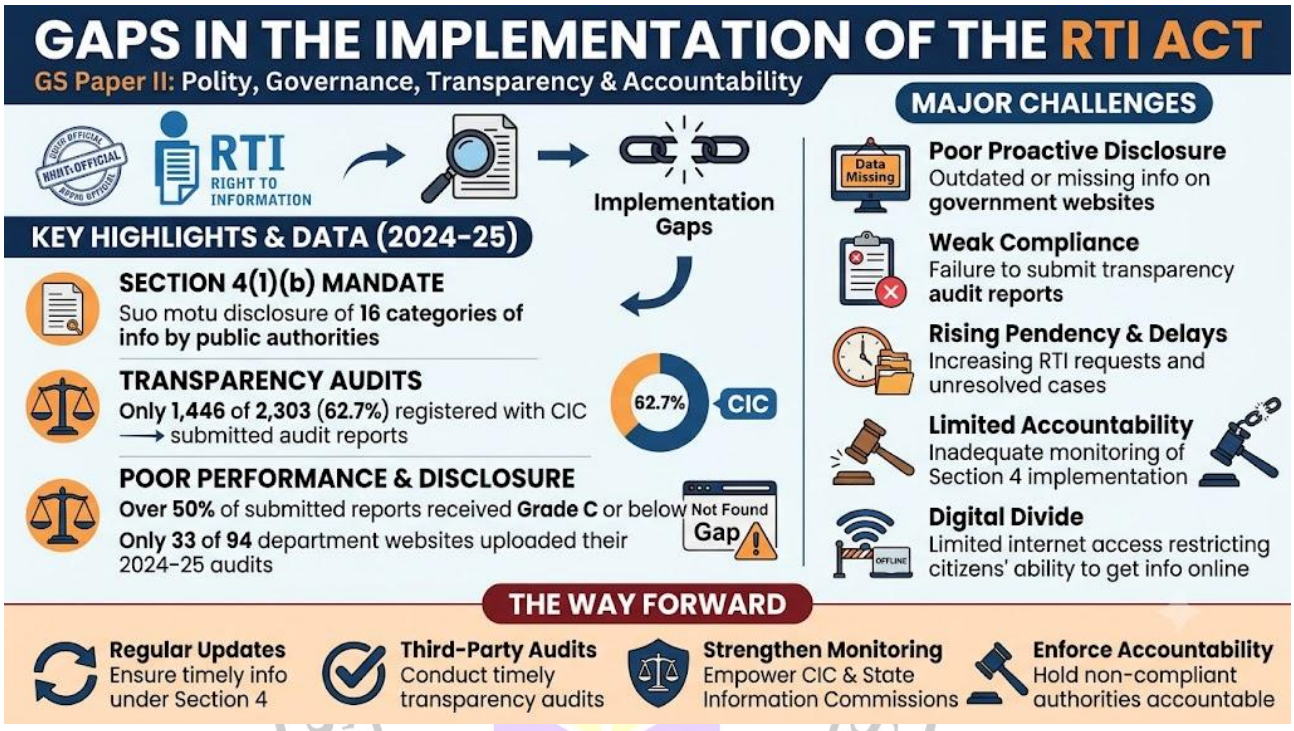
Q. Discuss the significance of India–France cooperation in space technology, with reference to the TRISHNA satellite mission. (150 words)

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GS Paper II (Polity, Governance)

Gaps in the Implementation of the RTI Act

Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005



Key Highlights

- **Section 4(1)(b): Mandates suo motu disclosure of 16 categories of information by public authorities.**
- **Transparency audits (2024–25): Of 2,303 public authorities registered with the Central Information Commission (CIC), only 1,446 (62.7%) submitted audit reports.**
- **Audit performance: More than 50% of submitted reports received Grade C or below.**
- **Website disclosure: Only 33 of 94 government department websites uploaded their 2024–25 transparency audit reports.**
- **Compliance gap: Websites of 26 departments lacked information covered under the Act.**
- **Growing concern: Increasing RTI requests and pendency highlight implementation challenges.**

Major Challenges

1. Poor proactive disclosure: Inadequate and outdated information on government websites.

2. Weak compliance: Many public authorities fail to submit transparency audit reports.

3. Limited accountability: Inadequate monitoring of Section 4 implementation.

4. Rising pendency: Delays in addressing RTI-related matters.

5. Digital divide: Limited internet access may restrict citizens' ability to obtain information online.

Way Forward

- **Ensure regular updates of information under Section 4.**
- **Conduct timely third-party transparency audits.**
- **Strengthen monitoring by the CIC and State Information Commissions.**
- **Improve public awareness and digital accessibility.**
- **Enforce accountability for non-compliance.**

Prelims Question

Q. With reference to the Right to Information Act, 2005, consider the following statements:

1. Section 4 provides for proactive disclosure of information by public authorities.

2. Every citizen must file an RTI application to access information held by public authorities.

3. The Central Information Commission monitors the implementation of the RTI framework at the central 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

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Answer: B. 1 and 3 only

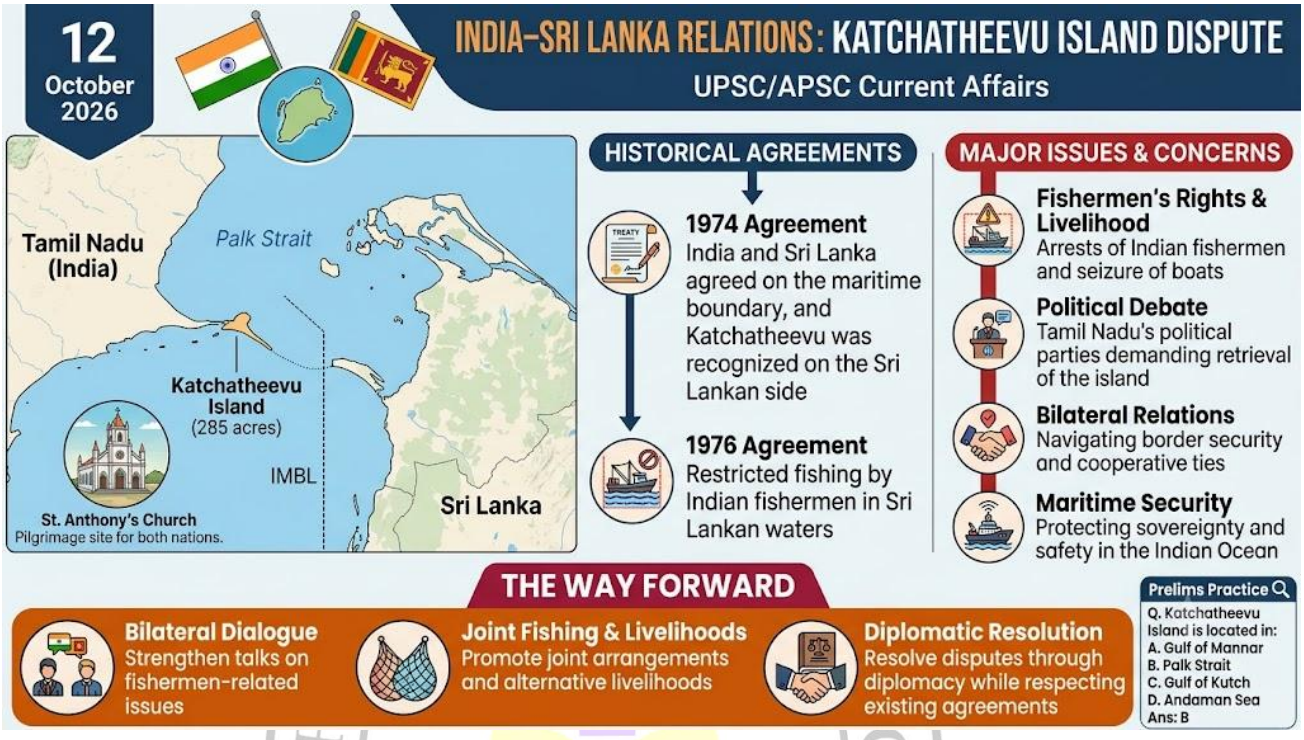
Explanation: **Section 4 requires public authorities to disclose specified information proactively. Citizens need not file an RTI application to access information already disclosed. The CIC performs information-related oversight functions at the central level.**

Mains Question

Q. "Proactive disclosure under Section 4 of the RTI Act is essential for ensuring transparency and reducing administrative delays." Discuss the challenges in its implementation and suggest measures to improve compliance.(150 words | 10 marks

International Relations (GS Paper 2)

India–Sri Lanka Relations: Katchatheevu Island Dispute



Why in the News?

Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake stated that India had acknowledged Sri Lanka's claim over Katchatheevu Island during proceedings in the Supreme Court of India. The Attorney General reportedly indicated that India did not intend to reopen the 1974 and 1976 agreements.

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About Katchatheevu Island

- **Location: Palk Strait, between India and Sri Lanka.**
- **Area: Approximately 285 acres.**
- **Geographical significance: Located between Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka.**
- **1974 Agreement: India and Sri Lanka agreed on the maritime boundary, and Katchatheevu was recognised as being on the Sri Lankan side.**
- **1976 Agreement: Further maritime boundary arrangements restricted fishing by Indian fishermen in Sri Lankan waters.**
- **Religious significance: St. Anthony's Church on the island is an important pilgrimage site for fishermen from both countries.**

Major Issues

1. Fishermen's rights: Indian fishermen, particularly from Tamil Nadu, seek access to traditional fishing grounds.

2. Maritime boundary: Disputes arise over fishing activities across the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL).

3. Livelihood concerns: Arrests of Indian fishermen and seizure of fishing boats create tensions.

4. Political debate: Political parties in Tamil Nadu have demanded the retrieval of Katchatheevu.

5. Bilateral relations: The issue affects cooperation between India and Sri Lanka.

Significance for India

- **Protecting the livelihood of Tamil Nadu's fishing communities.**
- **Maintaining friendly relations with Sri Lanka.**
- **Strengthening maritime security in the Indian Ocean.**
- **Promoting regional stability and cooperation.**

Way Forward

- **Strengthen bilateral dialogue on fishermen-related issues.**
- **Promote joint fishing arrangements and alternative livelihoods.**
- **Establish effective communication between maritime authorities.**
- **Explore sustainable fishing practices and joint fisheries management.**
- **Resolve disputes through diplomacy while respecting existing agreements and international law.**

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Prelims Questions

Q1. Katchatheevu Island is located in which of the following?

A. Gulf of Mannar

B. Palk Strait

C. Gulf of Kutch

D. Andaman Sea

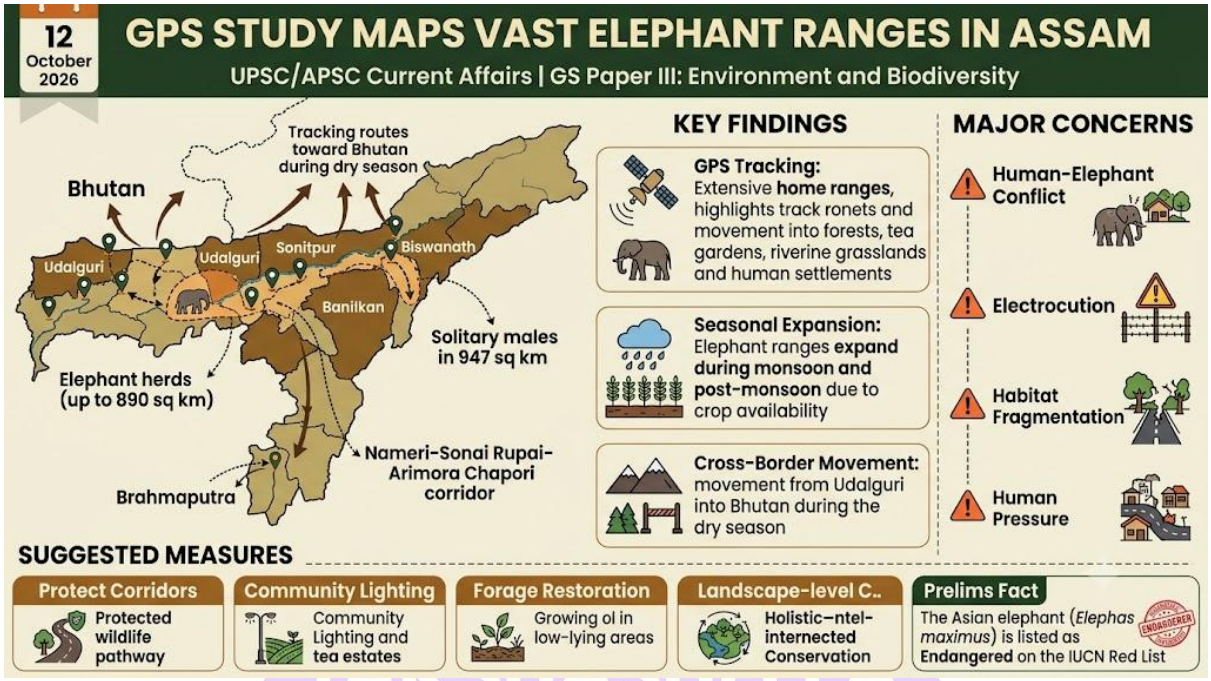
Answer: B. Palk Strait

Mains Question

Q. Discuss the significance of the Katchatheevu Island dispute in India–Sri Lanka relations. Suggest measures to address the concerns of Indian fishermen. (150 words)

GS Paper 3 (Environment)

GPS Study Maps Vast Elephant Ranges in Assam



- Study: Conducted by the Assam Forest Department in collaboration with WWF-India (April 2021–June 2026).
- **Study areas: Udalguri, Sonitpur and Biswanath districts of Assam**.

Key findings:

- **Elephant herds have extensive home ranges, with one herd covering 890 sq km and a solitary male covering 947 sq km.**
- **Elephants use forests, tea gardens, agricultural fields, riverine grasslands and human settlements.**
- **Their ranges expand during the monsoon and post-monsoon seasons, possibly due to crop availability.**
- **Elephants from Udalguri also move into Bhutan during the dry season.**
- **The Nameri–Sonai Rupai–Arimora Chapori corridor is important for elephant movement towards the Brahmaputra.**

Major Concerns

- **Human–elephant conflict and accidental encounters.**
- **Electrocution from electric fencing.**
- **Habitat fragmentation and obstruction of traditional elephant corridors.**
- **Increasing human pressure on natural habitats.**

Suggested Measures

- **Protect and restore elephant corridors.**
- **Improve lighting in tea estate settlements and along roads.**
- **Restore suitable low-lying areas in tea gardens to improve forage availability.**
- **Ensure electric fences do not block traditional elephant routes.**
- **Adopt a landscape-level approach to elephant conservation**.

Mains Question:

Discuss the challenges of human–elephant conflict in Assam and suggest measures for landscape-level elephant conservation. (150 words)

GS Paper III (Indian Economy)

Economics Nobel Prize 2026

2 Americans win economics Nobel

STOCKHOLM, Oct 12: American economists Robert E Hall and Michael Woodford won the Nobel memorial prize in economics on Monday for their work on models that have helped governments and central banks manage economic shocks, such as energy crises and inflation.

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences announced the winners in Stockholm, saying the two were being honoured for work that has helped policymakers deal with economic fluctuations.

"The laureates' research has made it possible to manage major macroeconomic crises far more effectively than before," the Nobel committee wrote. "It has been hugely beneficial during the pandemic and the energy crises of recent years," it said.



ILLUS: NIKLAS ELMEHED

Robert E Hall Michael Woodford

Hall is affiliated with Stanford University in California, and Woodford with Columbia University in New York.

Woodford spoke to the committee by phone on Monday from New York, saying: "It's a tremendous honour, it's a surprise."

The Nobel committee said the laureates' work has created the theoretical foundation for models now used by central banks and governments around the world.

» SEE PAGE 2

Key Highlights

- **Awardees: Robert E. Hall and Michael Woodford** (as stated in the provided article).
- **Contribution: Improving economic models to understand economic fluctuations and help policymakers manage economic shocks**.

- **Key Areas: Consumer behaviour, business pricing decisions, inflation expectations and monetary policy.**

Important Concepts

1. **Economic Shocks**: Unexpected events, such as energy crises, that disrupt economic activity.

2. **Stagflation**: A situation involving high inflation, high unemployment and sluggish economic growth.

3. **Consumer Expectations**: Expectations about future income influence present consumption and savings.

4. **Monetary Policy**: Central banks use interest rates and communication to influence inflation and economic activity.

5. **Policy Credibility**: Clear and credible central bank communication helps shape public and market expectations.

Significance

- **Improves understanding of how households and businesses respond to economic changes.**
- **Helps central banks formulate effective monetary policies.**
- **Highlights the importance of inflation expectations and credible policy communication.**

India-specific relevance: **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) can use expectations about inflation, interest rates and consumption to inform monetary policy decisions.**

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Prelims Questions

Q1. Stagflation refers to:

A. High inflation with rapid economic growth

B. High inflation accompanied by high unemployment

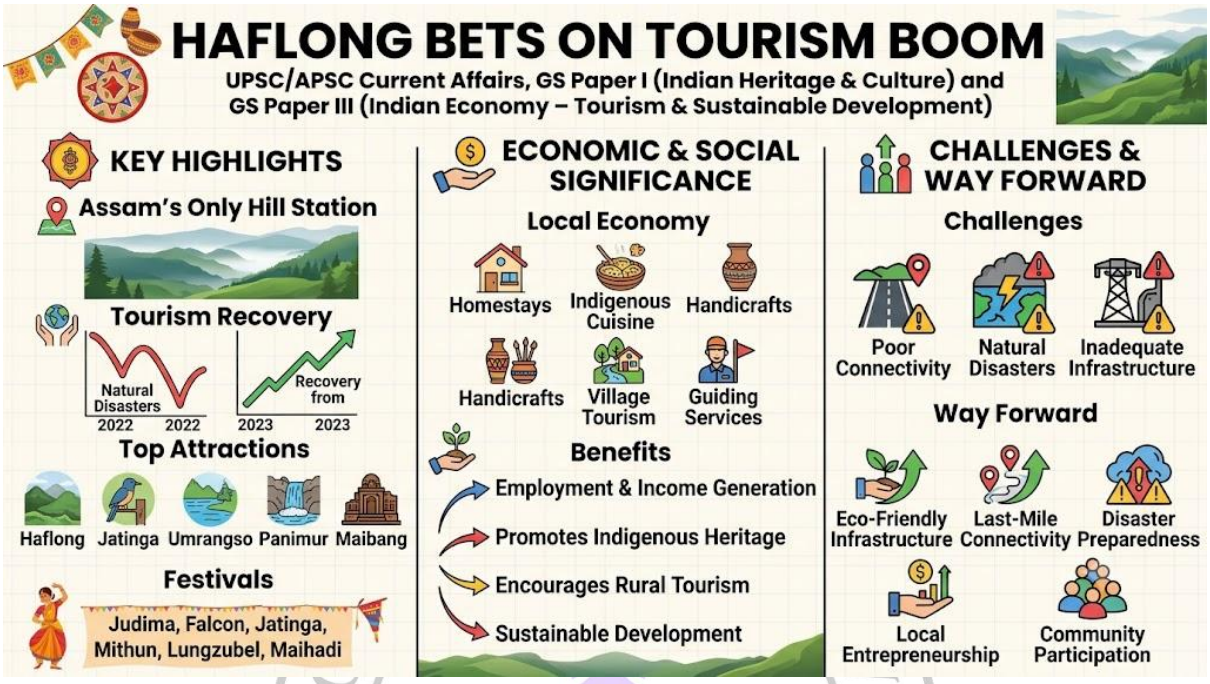
C. Low inflation with high employment

D. Falling prices with increasing output

Answer: B

GS Paper I (Indian Heritage and Culture)

Haflong Bets on Tourism Boom



Key Highlights:

- **Haflong**: Assam's only hill station and the flagship tourist destination of Dima Hasao.

- Major tourist destinations:
- **Haflong**: Scenic hills and landscapes.
- **Jatinga**: Birdwatching and bird-related phenomena.
- **Umrangso**: Waterside attractions.
- **Panimur**: Natural beauty and waterfalls.
- **Maibang**: Historical and cultural heritage.
- **Tourism recovery**: Dima Hasao recorded an estimated 1.5 lakh visitors in 2021. Tourism was severely affected by natural disasters in 2022, followed by recovery from 2023.
- **Promotional strategy: Digital platforms, an official tourism website, and festivals such as Lungzubel, Jatinga, Maihadi, Falcon, Judima and Mithun.**
- **Economic benefits**: Promotion of homestays, indigenous cuisine, handicrafts, village tourism, local guiding and transport services.
- **Responsible tourism**: Improvement of roads, sanitation, parking, safety and visitor amenities while protecting the environment and indigenous culture.

RAKSHASHEELA ESTD 2022 SHAPING LEADERS OF TOMORROW

Significance for Assam:

1. Generates employment and income for local communities.

2. Promotes indigenous traditions, cuisine and cultural heritage.

3. Encourages rural and community-based tourism.

4. Diversifies Assam's economy and strengthens tourism beyond established destinations.

5. Promotes sustainable tourism and regional development.

Challenges:

Poor connectivity in some areas, natural disasters, inadequate infrastructure and the need to balance tourism growth with environmental conservation.

Way Forward:

Develop eco-friendly tourism infrastructure, improve last-mile connectivity, strengthen disaster preparedness, promote local entrepreneurship and ensure community participation in tourism planning.

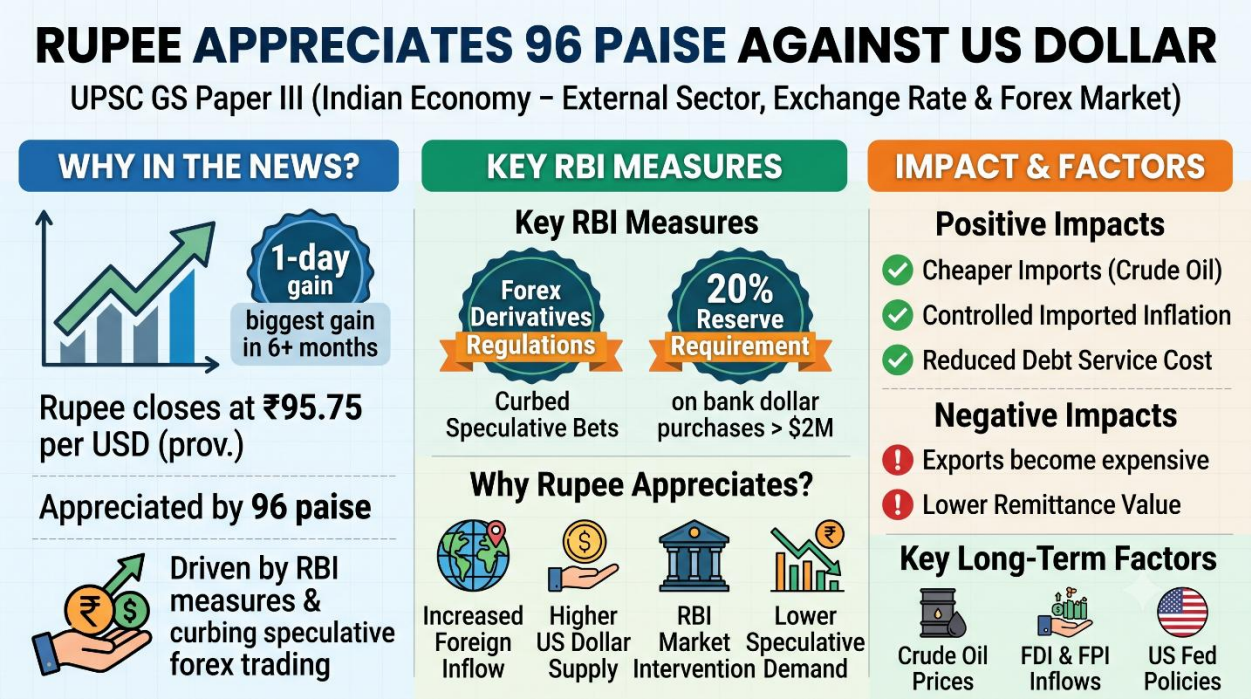
Mains Question (10 marks):

Discuss the potential of tourism in Dima Hasao for promoting sustainable development and generating rural employment in Assam.

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GS Paper III (Indian Economy)

Rupee Appreciates 96 Paise Against US Dollar



Why in the News

- **The Indian rupee appreciated by 96 paise against the US dollar, closing at 95.75 per dollar (provisional).**
- **It recorded its biggest single-day gain in more than six months.**
- **The appreciation followed measures introduced by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to support the rupee and curb speculative forex trading.**

Key RBI Measures

- **Forex derivatives regulations: Tightened rules governing foreign exchange derivative transactions to curb speculative bets against the rupee.**
- **Reserve requirement: Banks were asked to maintain a 20% reserve for dollar purchases exceeding 2 million, according to the report.**

Objective: Reduce excessive dollar demand and stabilise the rupee.

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Why Does the Rupee Appreciate?

The rupee may appreciate due to:

- **Increased foreign investment inflows.**
- **Higher supply of US dollars in the domestic market.**
- **RBI intervention in the foreign exchange market.**
- **Reduced speculative demand for dollars.**
- **Improved confidence in the Indian economy.**

Impact of Rupee Appreciation

Positive impacts

- **Reduces the cost of imports, including crude oil, if other factors remain unchanged.**
- **Helps control imported inflation.**
- **Reduces the rupee cost of servicing dollar-denominated debt.**
- **Benefits import-dependent industries**.

Negative impacts

- **Indian exports may become relatively more expensive.**
- **Exporters may receive fewer rupees for their dollar earnings.**
- **Remittances from abroad may yield fewer rupees when converted.**

Factors Affecting Sustainable Recovery

The rupee's long-term performance depends on:

1. International crude oil prices.

2. Foreign portfolio investment and foreign direct investment flows.

3. US dollar strength and US Federal Reserve policies.

4. India's trade deficit and current account balance.

5. Global geopolitical and financial conditions.

Prelims Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements about rupee appreciation:

1. It can reduce the domestic cost of imported crude oil.

2. It always increases the competitiveness of Indian exports.

3. It can reduce the rupee cost of repaying dollar-denominated debt.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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A. 1 only

B. 1 and 2 only

C. 1 and 3 only

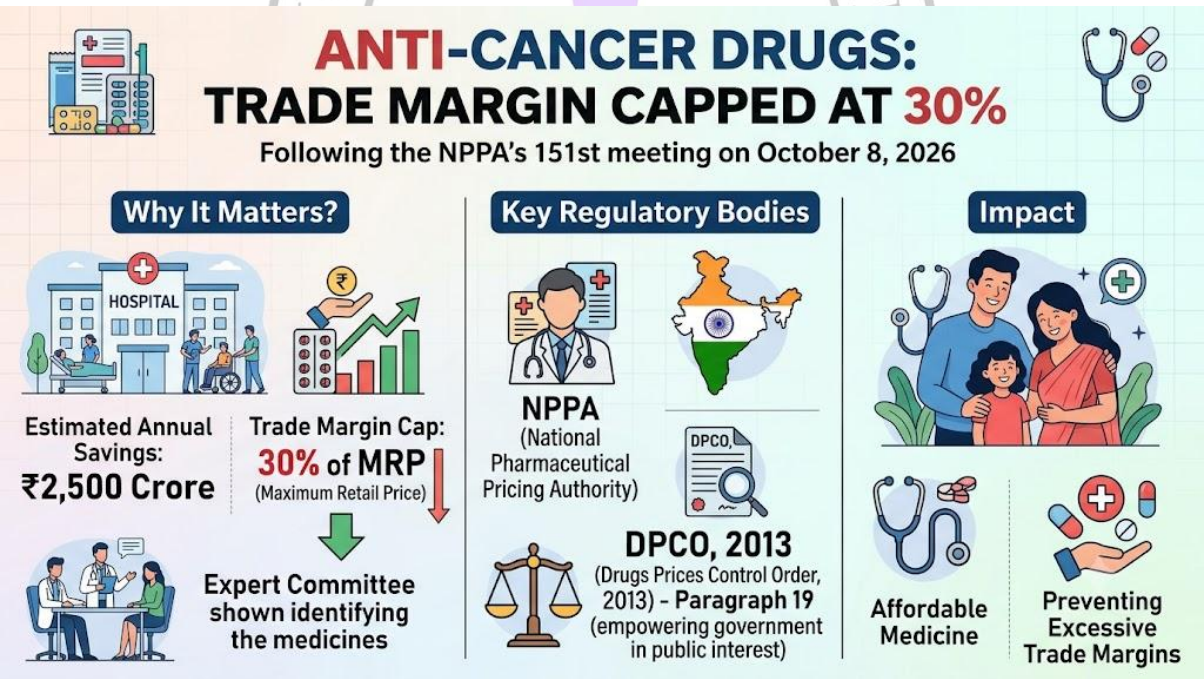
D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: C. 1 and 3 only

Explanation: Appreciation can make imports and dollar-denominated debt repayments cheaper in rupee terms. However, it may make Indian exports relatively more expensive for foreign buyers.

GS Paper 2 (Health)

Anti-Cancer Drugs: Trade Margin Capped at 30%



Key Points:

- **The Centre informed the Supreme Court that it has decided to cap trade margins on anti-cancer drugs at 30% of the Maximum Retail Price (MRP).**
- **The decision was considered at the 151st meeting of the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) on October 8, 2026.**
- **The estimated annual savings for patients are approximately ₹2,500 crore.**

- **An expert committee will identify eligible anti-cancer drugs, and the NPPA will issue the necessary price notifications.**
- **The measure aims to improve medicine affordability and prevent excessive trade margins.**

Important Terms:

- **NPPA: National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority.**
- **DPCO, 2013: Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013.**
- **MRP: Maximum Retail Price.**
- **Paragraph 19 of DPCO, 2013: Empowers the government to act in the public interest to regulate drug prices.**

Prelims Question

Under which provision of the DPCO, 2013, can the government use extraordinary powers to regulate drug prices?

A. Paragraph 5

B. Paragraph 10

C. Paragraph 19

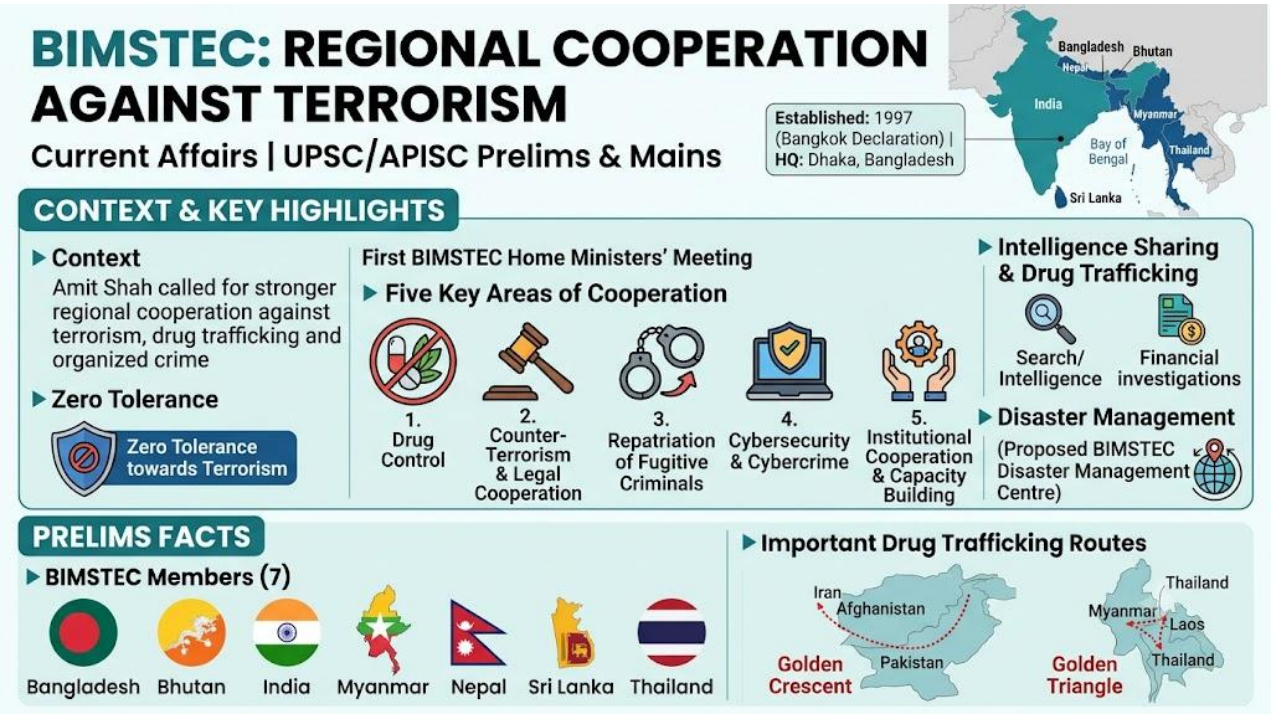
D. Paragraph 25

Answer: C. Paragraph 19

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GS Paper 2(INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS)

BIMSTEC: Regional Cooperation Against Terrorism



Context:

Union Home Minister Amit Shah called for **stronger regional cooperation among BIMSTEC countries to combat terrorism, terrorist financing, drug trafficking and organised crime at the first BIMSTEC Home Ministers' Meeting.**

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Key Highlights:

- **Zero tolerance: India reiterated its zero-tolerance policy towards terrorism.**

- **Five key areas of cooperation:**

1. **Drug control.**
2. **Counter-terrorism and legal cooperation.**
3. **Repatriation of fugitive criminals.**
4. **Cybersecurity and cybercrime investigations.**
5. **Institutional cooperation and capacity building**.

- **Intelligence sharing**: Strengthening intelligence exchange, financial investigations, extradition and mutual legal assistance.
- **Drug trafficking**: A coordinated regional approach is necessary to combat drug smuggling and terrorist financing.

- **Disaster management**: India supports stronger regional cooperation in disaster management, including the proposed BIMSTEC Disaster Management Centre.

Prelims Facts

BIMSTEC: Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation.

- **Established: 1997.**
- **Declaration: Bangkok Declaration**.
- **Headquarters: Dhaka, Bangladesh**.
- Members (7): Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand.
- **Objective**: **Promote regional cooperation in economic, technical and other areas among countries around the Bay of Bengal.**
- **India's role**: Promotes regional security, connectivity, economic cooperation and disaster management.

Important Drug Trafficking Routes

- **Golden Crescent: Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan.**
- **Golden Triangle: Myanmar, Laos and Thailand.**

Prelims Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements about BIMSTEC:

1. It was established in 1997.

2. Its headquarters is located in Dhaka.

3. It comprises seven member countries.

4. Pakistan is a member of BIMSTEC.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 1, 2 and 3 only

C. 2, 3 and 4 only

D. 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer: B. 1, 2 and 3 only

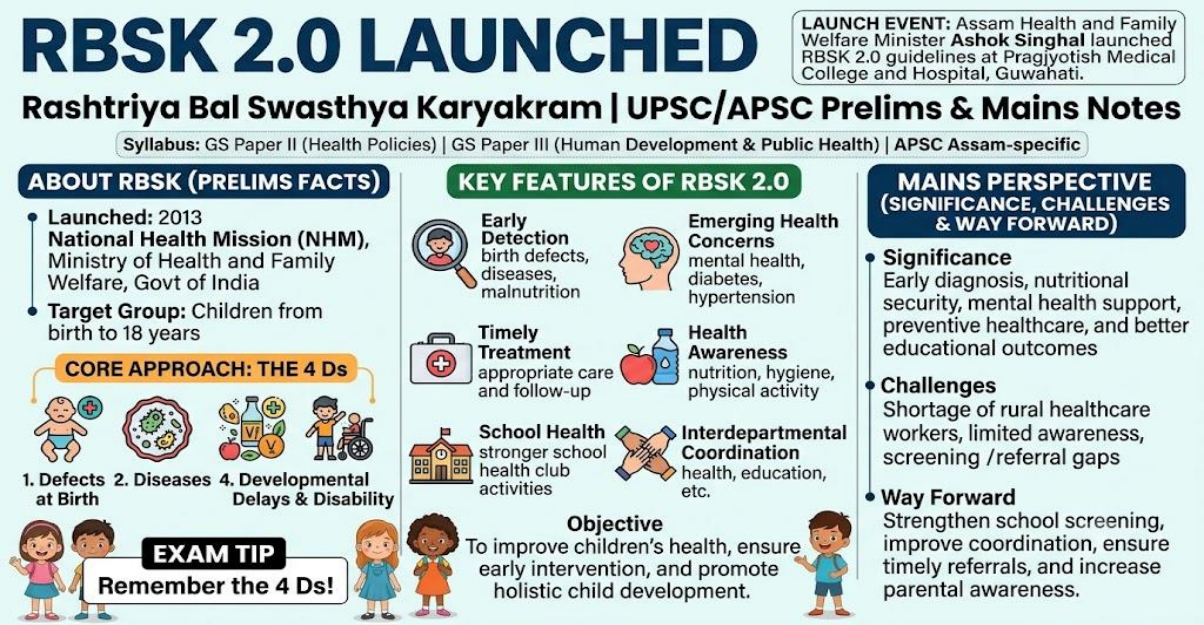
Mains Question

Q. Discuss the significance of BIMSTEC in strengthening regional security and combating transnational organised crime. (150 words)

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GS Paper II (Governance)

RBSK 2.0 Launched



Context:

Assam Health and Family Welfare Minister Ashok Singhal launched the guidelines for **Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) 2.0 at Pragjyotish Medical College and Hospital, Guwahati.**

Key Features of RBSK 2.0:

- **Early detection**: Birth defects, diseases, developmental delays and malnutrition.
- **Emerging health concerns**: Children's mental health, diabetes and hypertension.
- **Timely treatment**: Appropriate medical care and follow-up for identified health problems.
- **Health awareness**: Promotes proper nutrition, hygiene, physical activity and healthy lifestyles.
- **School health**: Strengthens school health club activities.
- **Interdepartmental coordination: Encourages cooperation among health, education and other relevant departments**.

Objective: Improve children's health, ensure early intervention, and promote holistic child development.

Prelims Facts

Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK)

- Launched: 2013.
- **Ministry: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.**
- **Scheme type: Child health screening and early intervention programme under the National Health Mission (NHM).**
- Target group: Children from birth to 18 years.

Core approach: Early identification and intervention for the 4 Ds:

1. **Defects at birth**
2. **Diseases**
3. **Deficiencies**
4. **Developmental delays, including disability**

Prelims Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements about RBSK:

1. It focuses on early identification and intervention for child health conditions.

2. It covers children from birth to 18 years.

3. It addresses the 4 Ds of child health.

Which of the statements given above 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

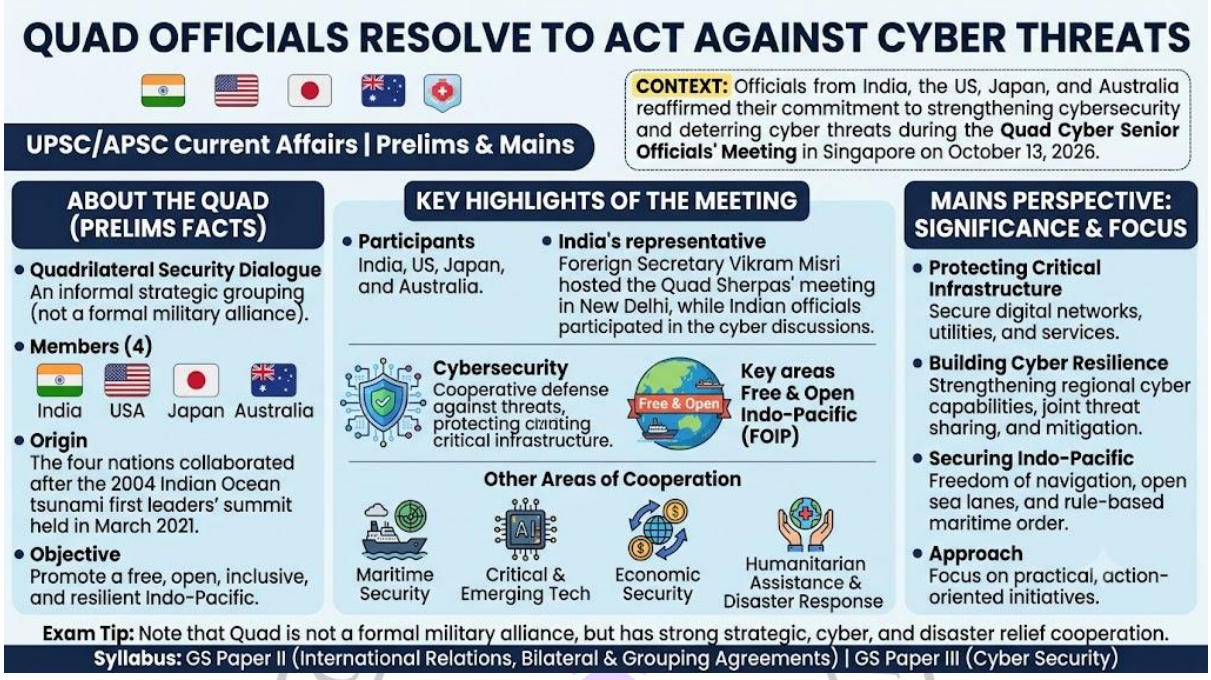
Mains Question

Q. Discuss the significance of early screening and intervention programmes in improving child health in India, with special reference to Assam. (150 words)

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GS Paper 3(Cybersecurity)

Quad Officials Resolve to Act Against Cyber Threats



Context:

Officials from **India, the US, Japan and Australia** **reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening cybersecurity and deterring cyber threats during the Quad Cyber Senior Officials' Meeting in Singapore on October 13, 2026.**

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Key Highlights:

- **Participants**: India, the United States, Japan and Australia.
- **Cybersecurity: Strengthening regional cyber capabilities and cooperation against cyber threats.**
- **FOIP: Reaffirmed commitment to a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.**
- **Other areas of cooperation**: **Maritime security, critical and emerging technologies, economic security, and humanitarian assistance and disaster response.**
- **Approach: Focus on practical, action-oriented initiatives to strengthen regional resilience.**

Significance:

The initiative aims to protect critical infrastructure, improve cyber resilience and promote a secure, free and open Indo-Pacific.

Prelims Facts

Quad (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue)

- **Members: India, USA, Japan and Australia.**
- **Objective: Promote a free, open, inclusive and resilient Indo-Pacific.**
- **Key areas**: **Maritime security, cybersecurity, critical technologies, economic security, infrastructure and disaster response.**
- **Origin**: **The four countries cooperated following the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami.**
- **First leaders' summit: Held virtually in March 2021.**

Prelims Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements about the Quad:

1. It comprises India, the USA, Japan and Australia.

2. It is a formal military alliance.

3. It promotes a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 only

B. 1 and 3 only

C. 2 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: B. 1 and 3 only

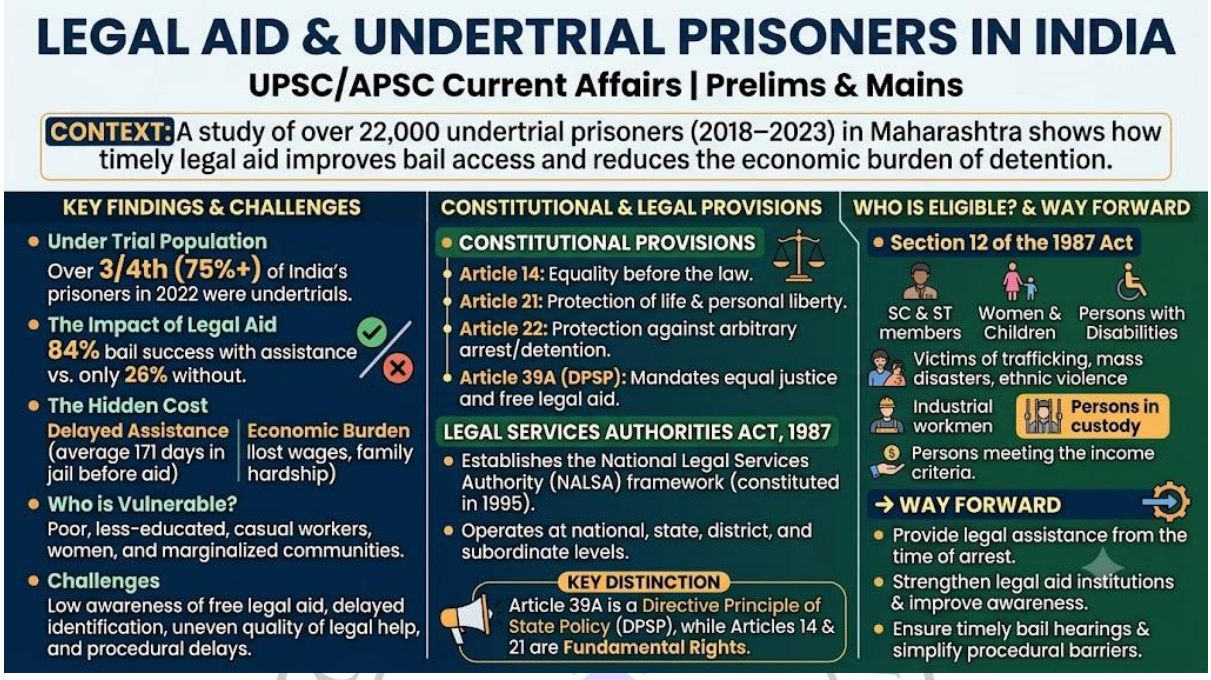
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Mains Question

Q. Discuss the significance of the Quad in strengthening cybersecurity and promoting a free and open Indo-Pacific. (150 words)

GS Paper 2 (Polity)

Legal Aid and Undertrial Prisoners in India



Context:

A study of over 22,000 undertrial prisoners assisted in eight Maharashtra prisons between 2018 and 2023 highlights how timely legal aid can improve access to bail and reduce the economic burden of detention.

Key Findings:

- High undertrial population: More than three-quarters of India's prisoners in 2022 were undertrials.
- Improved bail outcomes: **84% of programme participants' bail applications succeeded, compared with 26% across the same district courts during 2015–2020.**
- Delayed assistance: Participants spent an average of 171 days in jail before entering the programme and another 115 days in custody before release on bail.
- Economic burden: Prolonged detention results in lost wages, income insecurity and financial hardship for vulnerable families.
- Social vulnerability: Poor, less-educated people, casual workers, women and marginalised communities face significant barriers to legal representation.

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Major Challenges:

- **Low awareness of free legal aid.**
- **Delayed identification of eligible prisoners.**
- **Shortages and uneven quality of legal assistance.**
- **Procedural delays and difficulties meeting bail conditions.**

Way Forward:

Provide legal assistance from arrest, strengthen legal aid institutions, improve awareness, and ensure timely bail hearings.

Important Constitutional Provisions

- **Article 14**: Equality before the law and equal protection of the laws.
- **Article 21:** Protection of life and personal liberty.
- **Article 22:** Protection against arbitrary arrest and detention, including specified procedural safeguards.
- **Article 39A**: Directs the State to ensure equal justice and provide free legal aid so that opportunities for securing justice are not denied because of economic or other disabilities.

Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987

- Provides the statutory framework for free legal services to eligible sections of society.
- Established the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) framework.
- NALSA was constituted in 1995.
- Legal services institutions operate at national, state, district and subordinate levels.

Who is eligible for free legal services?

Under Section 12 of the Legal Services Authorities Act, eligible categories include:

- **Members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.**
- **Victims of trafficking or begar.**
- **Women and children.**
- **Persons with disabilities.**
- **Victims of mass disasters, ethnic violence, caste atrocities, floods, droughts, earthquakes or industrial disasters.**
- **Industrial workmen.**
- **Persons in custody.**
- **Persons meeting the prescribed income criteria.**

Important distinction: Article 39A is a Directive Principle of State Policy, while Articles 14 and 21 are Fundamental Rights.

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Prelims Questions

Q1. Article 39A of the Indian Constitution deals with:

A. Uniform Civil Code

B. Equal justice and free legal aid

C. Separation of the judiciary from the executive

D. Protection against arbitrary arrest

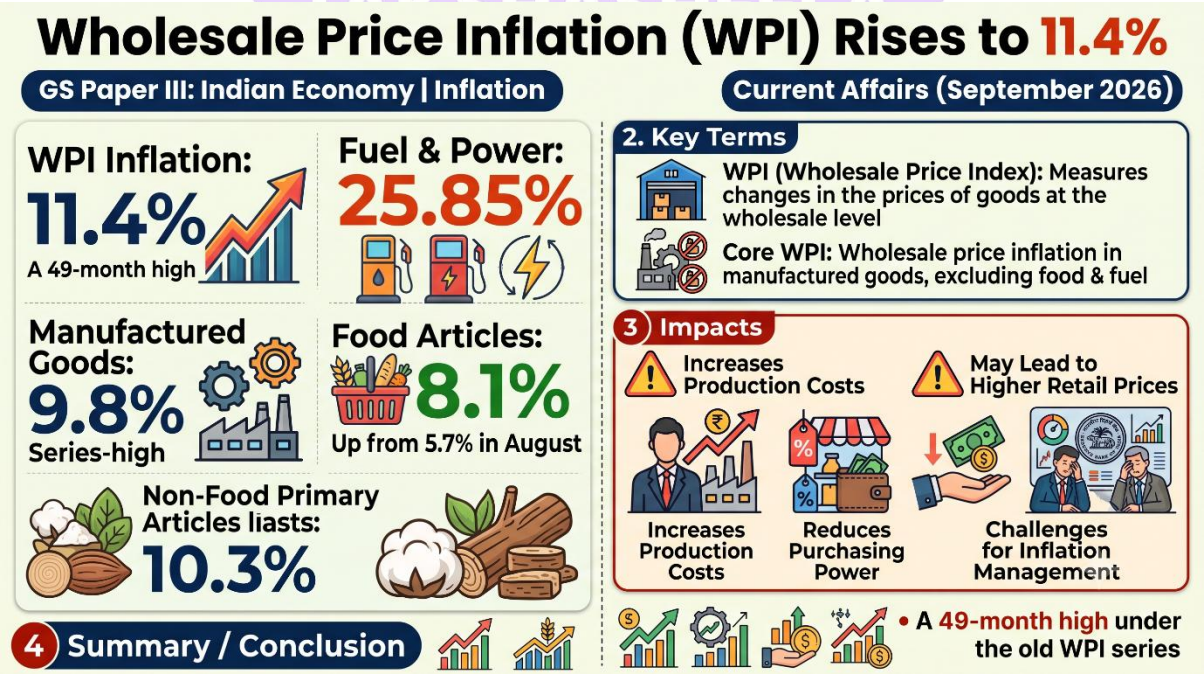
Answer: B. Equal justice and free legal aid

Mains Question

Q. "Timely legal aid is essential for ensuring access to justice and reducing unnecessary detention of undertrial prisoners." Discuss. (150 words)

GS Paper III: Indian Economy | Inflation

Wholesale Price Inflation Rises to 11.4%



- **WPI inflation**: Rose to 11.4%, a 49-month high under the old WPI series.
- **Food articles inflation**: Increased to 8.1% from 5.7% in August.
- **Fuel and power inflation**: Rose to 25.85%.
- **Manufactured goods inflation**: Reached a series high of 9.8%.
- **Non-food primary articles inflation**: Stood at 10.3%.

Key Terms:

- WPI: **Measures changes in the prices of goods at the wholesale level.**
- Core WPI**: Refers to wholesale price inflation in manufactured goods, excluding food and fuel.**

Impacts:

- Increases production costs for businesses.
- May lead to higher retail prices.
- Can reduce consumers' purchasing power.
- Creates challenges for inflation management.

Prelims Questions

Which of the following statements about the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) is correct?

A. It measures only the prices of services.

B. It measures price changes at the wholesale level.

C. It is published by the RBI.

D. It measures only agricultural prices.

Answer: B

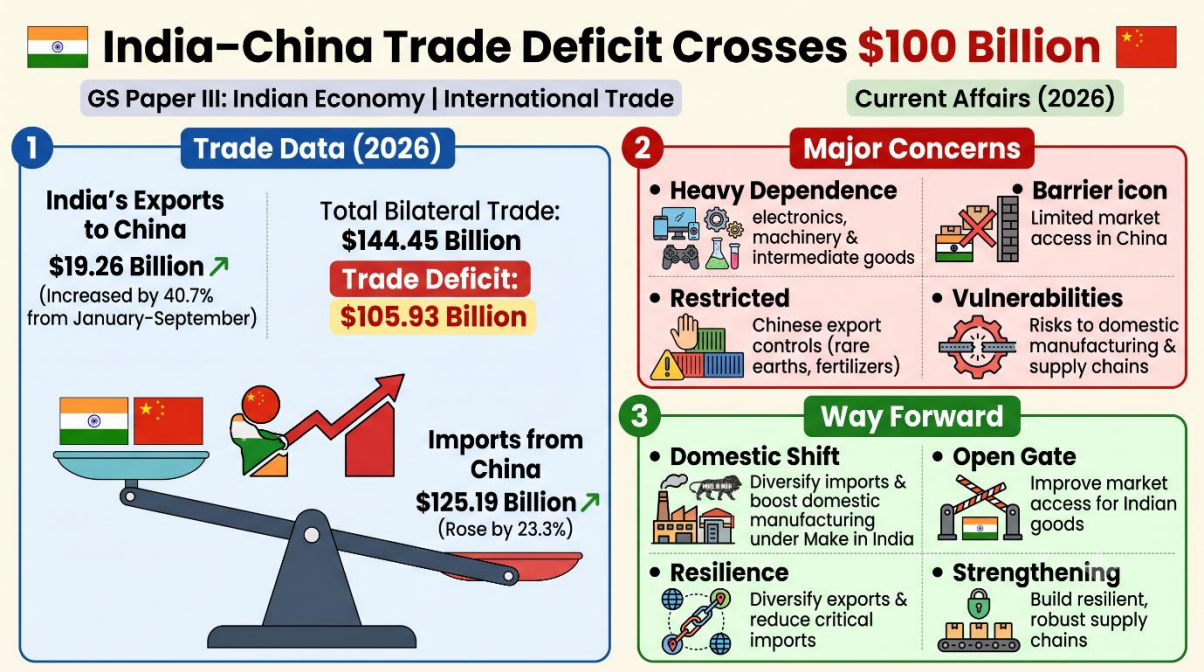
Mains Question (GS Paper III):

What is inflation? Discuss the major causes and economic impacts of rising wholesale price inflation in India. (150 words)

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GS Paper III: Indian Economy

India–China Trade Deficit Crosses 100 Billion



- **India's exports to China: Increased by 40.7% to 19.26 billion (January–September 2026).**
- **Imports from China: Rose by 23.3% to 125.19 billion.**
- **Total bilateral trade: Reached 144.45 billion.**
- **Trade deficit: Reached 105.93 billion, raising concerns about the growing trade imbalance.**

Major Concerns:

- **Heavy dependence on Chinese electronics, machinery and intermediate goods.**
- **Limited market access for Indian businesses in China.**
- **Chinese export controls on critical materials, including rare earths and fertilisers.**
- **Risks to India's manufacturing sector and supply chains.**

Way Forward:

- **Diversify import sources and strengthen domestic manufacturing under Make in India.**
- **Improve market access for Indian goods in China.**
- **Promote export diversification and reduce dependence on critical imports.**
- **Strengthen resilient supply chains.**

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Prelims Questions

Which of the following is a major concern associated with India's trade deficit with China?

A. Excessive Indian exports to China

B. Heavy dependence on Chinese imports

C. Complete absence of bilateral trade

D. Declining imports from China

Answer: B. Heavy dependence on Chinese imports

Mains Question (GS Paper III):

India's growing trade deficit with China highlights structural weaknesses in its external trade. Discuss the challenges and suggest measures to address them. (150 words)

GS Paper II: International Relations

India–ASEAN Defence Cooperation

- **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh called for stronger India–ASEAN defence and technological cooperation.**
- **Key proposals include joint defence research, co-production of military equipment and enhanced maritime security.**
- **2026 is designated as the ASEAN–India Year of Maritime Cooperation.**
- **Cooperation will focus on maritime domain awareness, interoperability and underwater surveillance.**

Key Initiatives:

- **Act East Policy: Strengthens India's engagement with Southeast Asia.**
- **SAGAR: Security and Growth for All in the Region.**
- **MAHASAGAR: Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions.**

Significance:

- **Promotes a free, open and rules-based Indo-Pacific.**
- **Strengthens regional maritime security.**

- **Reduces dependence on foreign defence technology.**
- **Counters emerging traditional and non-traditional security threats.**

Prelims Questions

What does SAGAR stand for?

A. Security and Growth for All in the Region

B. Strategic Alliance for Global Asian Relations

C. Security Agreement for Regional Growth

D. Sustainable Advancement for Global Asian Resources

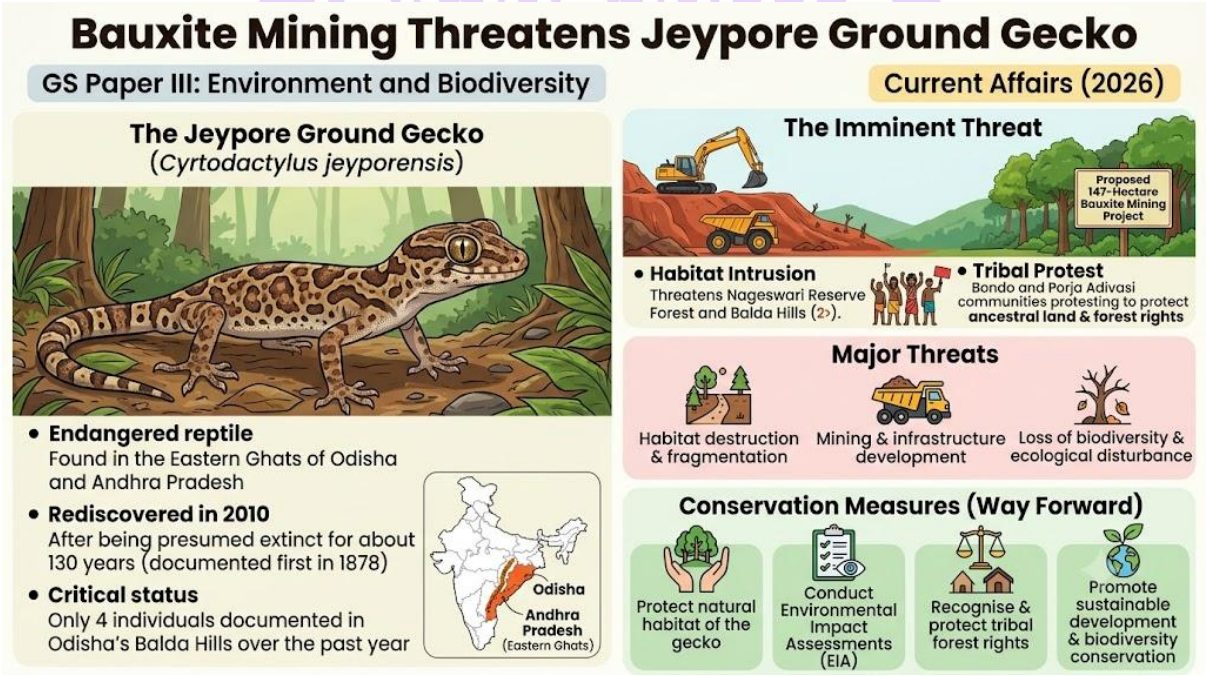
Answer: A. Security and Growth for All in the Region

Mains Question (GS Paper II):

Discuss the significance of India–ASEAN defence cooperation in strengthening maritime security and promoting stability in the Indo-Pacific region. (150 words)

GS Paper III: Environment and Biodiversity

Bauxite Mining Threatens Jeypore Ground Gecko



- **Jeypore ground gecko is an endangered reptile found in the Eastern Ghats of Odisha and Andhra Pradesh.**
- **It was first documented in 1878 and rediscovered in 2010 after being presumed extinct for about 130 years.**
- **Only four individuals were documented in Odisha's Balda Hills over the past year.**
- **A proposed 147-hectare bauxite mining project in the Nageswari Reserve Forest threatens its habitat.**
- **The Bondo and Porja Adivasi communities have protested against the mining project, citing concerns over their ancestral land and forest rights.**

Major Threats:

- Habitat destruction and fragmentation.
- Mining and infrastructure development.
- Loss of biodiversity and disturbance of fragile ecosystems.

Conservation Measures:

- Protect the gecko's natural habitat.
- Conduct Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA).
- Recognise and protect the legitimate forest rights of tribal communities.
- Promote sustainable development and biodiversity conservation

Prelims Questions

The Jeypore ground gecko is primarily associated with which geographical region?

A. Western Ghats

B. Eastern Ghats

C. Aravalli Hills

D. Western Himalayas

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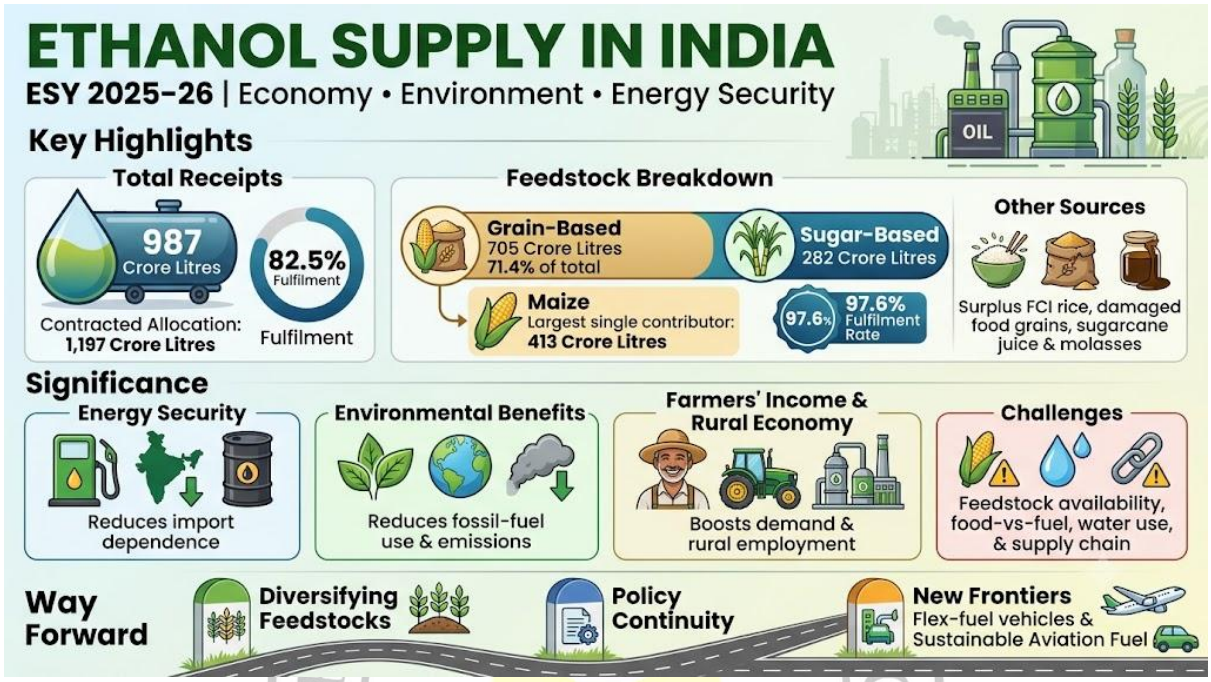
Answer: B. Eastern Ghats

Mains Question (GS Paper III):

How does mining threaten biodiversity in ecologically sensitive regions? Discuss the measures required to balance mineral development with environmental conservation. (150 words)

GS Paper III – Economy | Environment | Energy Security

Ethanol Supply in India



Key Highlights

- Total ethanol receipts: **987 crore litres by September 2026 under Ethanol Supply Year (ESY) 2025–26.**
- Total contracted allocation: **1,197 crore litres; fulfilment rate was 82.5%.**
- Major feedstock: **Grain-based sources contributed 705 crore litres, accounting for 71.4% of total receipts.**
- **Maize: Largest single contributor, supplying 413 crore litres.**
- **Sugar-based feedstocks: Supplied 282 crore litres, achieving a 97.6% fulfilment rate.**
- **Other sources: Surplus FCI rice, damaged food grains, sugarcane juice and molasses.**

Significance

1. Energy security: Reduces dependence on imported crude oil.

2. Environmental benefits: Ethanol blending can reduce fossil-fuel consumption and certain vehicular emissions.

3. Farmers' income: Creates additional demand for agricultural produce.

4. Rural economy: Supports distilleries and employment.

5. Challenges: Feedstock availability, food-versus-fuel concerns, water consumption and supply-chain constraints.

Way Forward:

Diversify feedstocks, ensure policy continuity and expand ethanol applications in flex-fuel vehicles and sustainable aviation fuel.

Prelims Question

Q. Consider the following statements regarding ethanol blending in India:

1. Ethanol can be produced from grain-based and sugar-based feedstocks.

2. Ethanol blending can help reduce dependence on imported crude oil.

3. The Ethanol Supply Year 2025–26 runs from November to October.

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

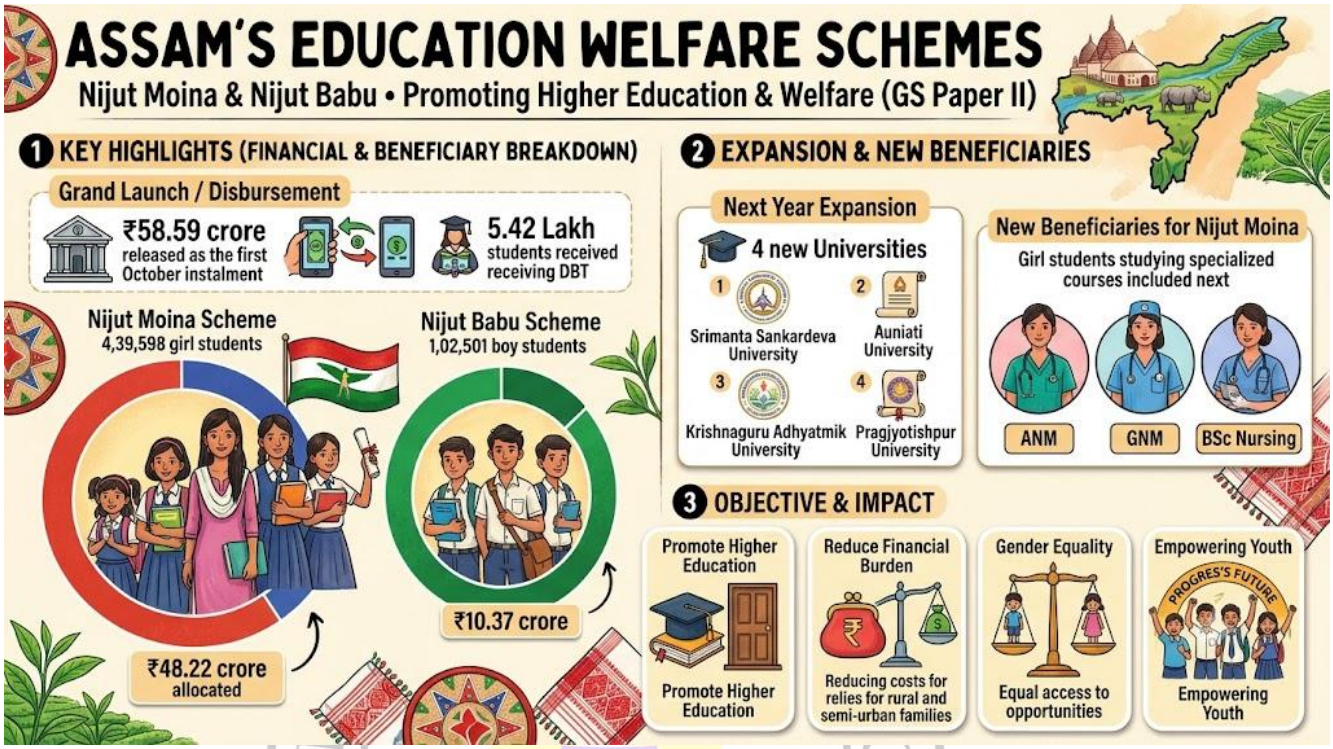
Mains Practice Question

Q. Examine the role of ethanol blending in strengthening India's energy security. Discuss the associated environmental and food-security challenges. (150 words)

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GS Paper II – Governance | Education | Welfare Schemes

Assam Current Affairs: Nijut Moina and Nijut Babu Schemes



Key Highlights

- Financial assistance: ₹58.59 crore released as the first October instalment to 5.42 lakh students.
- **Nijut Moina Scheme: Covers 4,39,598 girl students, with ₹48.22 crore allocated.**
- **Nijut Babu Scheme: Covers 1,02,501 boy students, with ₹10.37 crore allocated.**
- **Expansion: Four universities—Srimanta Sankardeva University, Auniati University, Krishnaguru Adhyatmik University and Pragjyotishpur University—will be included next year.**
- **New beneficiaries: ANM, GNM and BSc Nursing female students will be included under Nijut Moina.**
- **Objective: Promote higher education, reduce financial burdens on families and encourage gender equality in education**.

Prelims Question

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Assam's Nijut Moina and Nijut Babu schemes:

1. Nijut Moina aims to encourage girls to pursue higher education.

2. Nijut Babu provides financial assistance to boys pursuing higher education.

3. Nursing students will be included under Nijut Babu.

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 and 2 only

Explanation: Nursing students pursuing ANM, GNM and BSc Nursing courses will be included under Nijut Moina, not Nijut Babu.

Mains Practice Question

Q. How can educational welfare schemes such as Nijut Moina and Nijut Babu contribute to human capital development in Assam? (150 words)

GS Paper II – International Relations

India's UNSC Bid (2028–29)

Key Highlights

- **Election: June 2027 for the 2028–29 non-permanent term of the UN Security Council (UNSC).**
- **India's candidature: Announced by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar.**
- **Main challenge: Tajikistan is also contesting for the Asia-Pacific seat.**
- **Required votes: At least a two-thirds majority of UNGA members present and voting; the article estimates 129 votes in a 193-member Assembly.**
- **India's previous memberships: Eight terms—1950–51, 1967–68, 1972–73, 1977–78, 1984–85, 1991–92, 2011–12 and 2021–22.**
- **India's objective: Promote counter-terrorism, UNSC reforms and greater representation for developing countries.**

Why Is the Election Challenging for India?

1. **Competition from Tajikistan**: Tajikistan is seeking its first UNSC membership.

2. **Global South's expectations:** Smaller countries want fairer representation in global institutions.

3. **Regional support**: Tajikistan has support from Central Asian countries and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

4. **Foreign policy considerations**: India's relations with Israel and major powers may influence some countries' voting decisions.

5. **Previous electoral setbacks**: India lost contested elections in 1975 and 1996.

Way Forward

- **Strengthen diplomatic engagement with Global South countries.**
- **Advocate reforms that improve the representation of developing nations.**
- **Highlight India's contributions to UN peacekeeping and international development.**
- **Maintain strategic autonomy and build consensus on counter-terrorism.**
- **Balance immediate electoral ambitions with long-term diplomatic relationships.**

Prelims Question

Q. Consider the following statements about the United Nations Security Council (UNSC):

1. The UNSC has 15 members, including five permanent members.

2. The UN General Assembly elects non-permanent members for two-year terms.

3. All decisions of the UN General Assembly require a two-thirds majority.

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

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Answer: A) 1 and 2 only

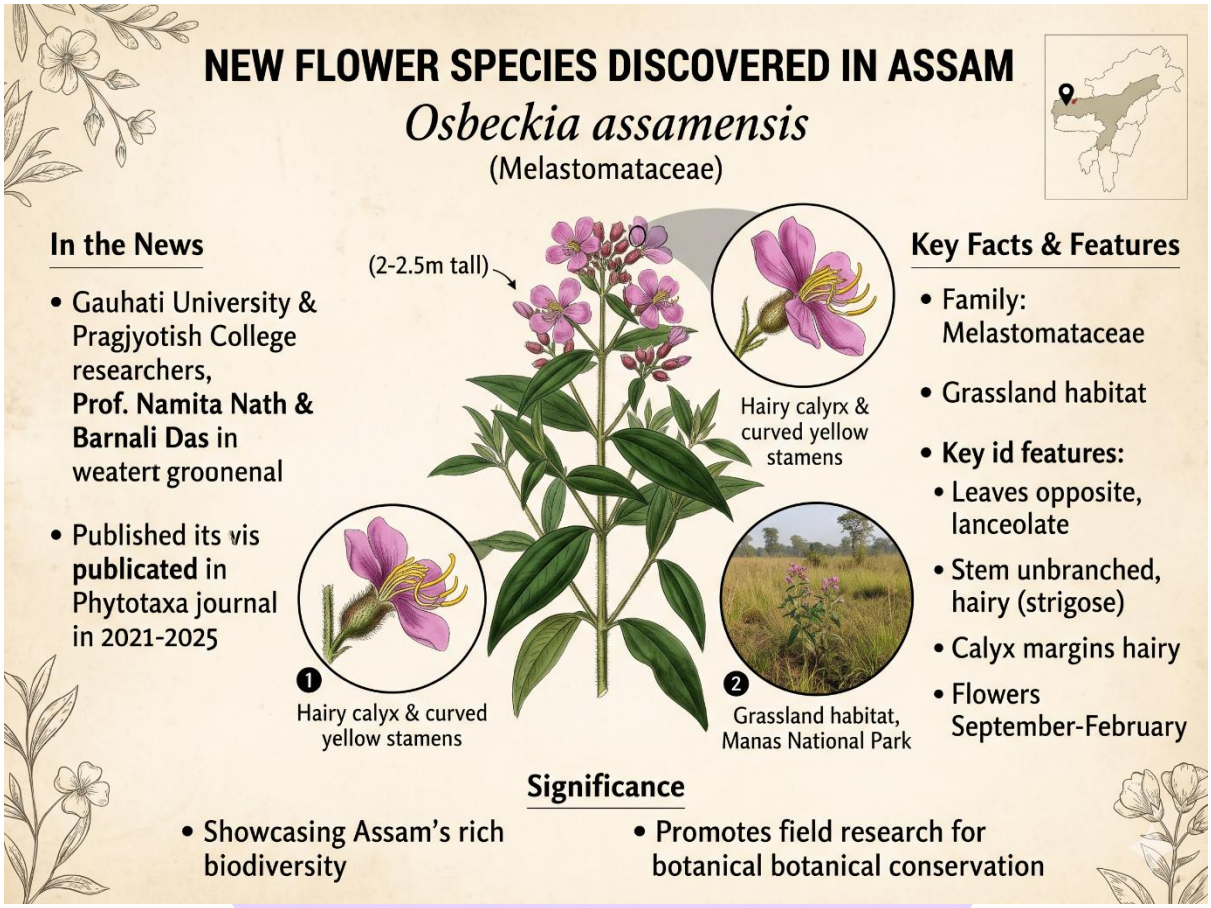
Explanation: Article 18 of the UN Charter requires a two-thirds majority for important questions, while other questions generally require a simple majority of members present and voting.

Mains Question

Q. India's quest for a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council reflects the need for reforms in global governance. Discuss the challenges and suggest a way forward. (150 words)

Environment and Ecology (GS Paper 3)

New Flower Species Discovered in Assam



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- A new flowering plant species, Osbeckia assamensis, has been discovered in Manas National Park, Assam.
- **Researchers**: **Prof. Namita Nath (Gauhati University) and Barnali Das (Pragjyotish College).**
- **Published in the international, peer-reviewed journal Phytotaxa**.

Key Facts

- **Family**: Melastomataceae.
- **Genus: Osbeckia.**
- **Habitat: Grasslands of Manas National Park, Assam**.
- **Distribution: Found in large, scattered populations in the park**.
- **Identification: Distinguished from related species by its stem, leaf features, hairy calyx margins and flower-bearing structures.**
- **Related species: Osbeckia nayarii.**
- **Research period: 2021–2025.**

Significance

- **Highlights Assam's rich floral biodiversity.**
- **Emphasises the importance of botanical research and field surveys.**
- **Supports the conservation of lesser-known plant species and their habitats.**

Prelims Questions

Q1. Osbeckia assamensis, recently reported in the news, belongs to which plant family?

A. Orchidaceae

B. Melastomataceae

C. Fabaceae

D. Poaceae

Answer: B. Melastomataceae

Agriculture (GS Paper 3)

Ladakh Declared India's First 100% Organic Union Territory

In News

- Lieutenant Governor V.K. Saxena declared Ladakh India's first 100% organic Union Territory.
- The administration prohibited the use, sale and distribution of chemical and synthetic fertilisers for agricultural purposes.

Key Facts

- Location: Ladakh, a Union Territory of India.
- **Major crops and produce: Apricots, sea buckthorn, buckwheat, barley and vegetables**.
- Policy measure: **Ban on chemical and synthetic fertilisers across Ladakh**.
- **Organic farming: Agriculture that avoids synthetic fertilisers and follows approved organic farming practices**.

Significance

- **Environmental protection: Conserves the fragile Himalayan ecosystem.**

- **Sustainable agriculture: Promotes environmentally friendly farming.**
- **Farmers' income: Can improve market access and prices for organic produce.**
- **Traditional knowledge: Encourages traditional farming practices supported by scientific methods.**
- **Biodiversity: Helps protect soil health and the natural environment**.

Challenges

- Maintaining organic certification and quality standards.
- Ensuring access to organic markets.
- Managing pests and maintaining soil fertility.
- Providing training and scientific support to farmers.

Prelims Questions

Q1. Ladakh was recently declared India's first 100% organic Union Territory. Who made the declaration, according to the news report?

A. The President of India

B. The Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh

C. The Union Agriculture Minister

D. The Prime Minister of India

Answer: B. The Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh

Mains Question:

Discuss the role of organic farming in promoting sustainable agriculture, improving farmers' income and conserving fragile Himalayan ecosystems.

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Internal Security (GS Paper 3)

Cybersecurity: A Critical Concern for India

In News

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) new Data Centre and Cybersecurity Training Institute in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.**
- He highlighted the growing threat of cybercrime and cyberterrorism to India's financial system.
- Cost mentioned in the report: ₹169 crore.

Why Is Cybersecurity Important?

- **Financial security**: Protects banks and financial institutions from cyberattacks.
- **Economic stability**: Cyberattacks can disrupt banking services and damage public confidence.
- **Digital India**: Protects digital payments and online banking.
- **National security**: Cyberattacks can be used as tools of economic warfare.
- **Data protection**: Helps safeguard customers' personal and financial information.

Major Cybersecurity Threats

- **Phishing and online financial fraud.**
- **Ransomware and malware attacks.**
- **Identity theft and data breaches.**
- **Attacks on banking systems and digital payment platforms.**
- **Cyberterrorism and attacks on critical infrastructure.**

Measures to Strengthen Cybersecurity

- **Develop modern cybersecurity infrastructure.**
- **Train skilled cybersecurity professionals.**
- **Improve cybercrime detection and response.**
- **Promote public awareness of online fraud.**
- **Strengthen coordination between banks, regulators and law enforcement agencies.**

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Prelims Questions

Q1. The RBI's new Data Centre and Cybersecurity Training Institute, mentioned in the news, was inaugurated in:

A. Guwahati

B. Bhubaneswar

C. Hyderabad

D. Mumbai

Answer: B. Bhubaneswar

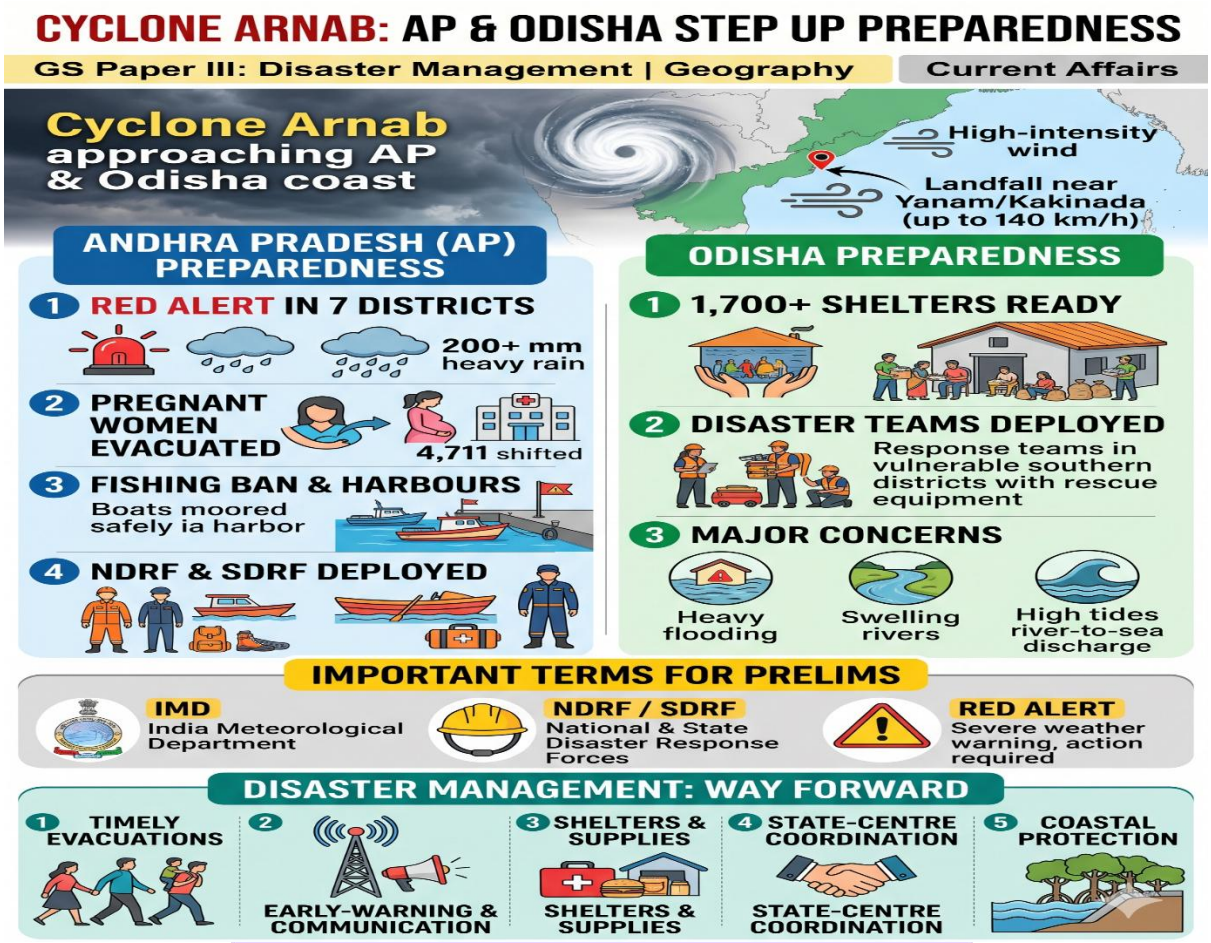
Mains Practice Question

"Cybersecurity is essential for India's financial stability in the era of digital banking." Discuss the major challenges and suggest suitable measures. (150 words)

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GS Paper III (Disaster Management)

Cyclone Arnab



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- **Event: Andhra Pradesh and Odisha intensified evacuation and disaster-preparedness measures as Cyclone Arnab approached the coast, according to the provided report.**
- Andhra Pradesh: **The IMD issued red alerts for seven districts, forecasting isolated extremely heavy rainfall of 200 mm or more.**
- **Expected impact: The storm was forecast to make landfall near Yanam or Kakinada, with wind gusts reaching 140 km/h.**
- **Evacuation: Andhra Pradesh planned to shift 4,711 pregnant women to safer healthcare facilities. Fishing boats returned to harbours.**
- **Disaster response: NDRF and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) teams were deployed in vulnerable areas.**
- **Odisha: More than 1,700 shelters were prepared, with disaster-response teams deployed in vulnerable southern districts.**
- **Major concern: Heavy rainfall, flooding, river swelling, storm-related damage and difficulties in discharging river water into the sea during high tides.**

Important Terms for Prelims

- **IMD: India Meteorological Department.**
- **NDRF: National Disaster Response Force.**
- **SDRF: State Disaster Response Force.**
- **Red Alert: Indicates the need for authorities to take action and prepare for potentially severe weather impacts.**

Disaster Management:

Way Forward

1. Ensure timely evacuation of vulnerable populations.

2. Strengthen early-warning systems and last-mile communication.

3. Prepare cyclone shelters, hospitals and emergency supplies.

4. Coordinate disaster response between States and the Centre.

5. Improve coastal protection and flood-resilient infrastructure.

Prelims Question

Q. Consider the following statements about tropical cyclones:

1. They generally develop over warm tropical ocean waters.

2. The India Meteorological Department issues cyclone warnings in India.

3. Storm surges can cause coastal flooding during cyclones.

4. Tropical cyclones form only during the summer monsoon.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 1, 2 and 3 only

C. 2, 3 and 4 only

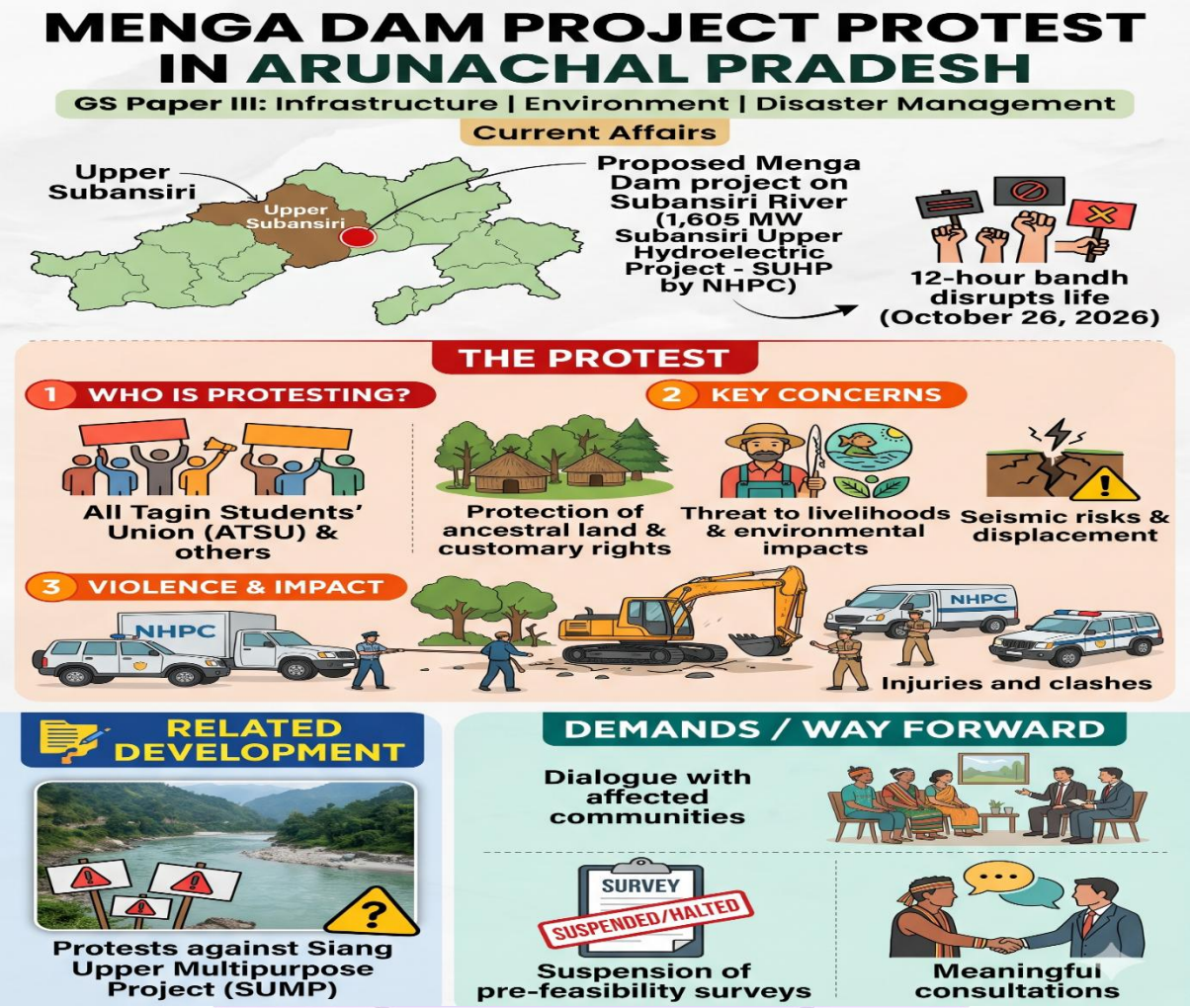
D. 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer: B. 1, 2 and 3 only.

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GS Paper III (Environment)

Menga Dam Project Protest in Arunachal Pradesh



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- **All Tagin Students' Union (ATSU) and other organisations protested against the proposed Menga Dam project.**
- **Project: The Menga Dam is part of the 1,605 MW Subansiri Upper Hydroelectric Project (SUHP) being developed by NHPC Ltd on the Subansiri River.**
- **Key concerns: Protection of ancestral land, customary rights, livelihoods, environmental impacts, seismic risks and displacement of affected communities.**
- **Violence: Protesters damaged NHPC equipment and vehicles, while two police vehicles were also damaged. Personnel were injured.**
- **Related development: Protests have also taken place against the proposed Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP).**

Way Forward

1. Conduct comprehensive environmental and seismic impact assessments.

2. Ensure free, prior and informed consultation with affected communities.

3. Protect customary land rights and provide fair rehabilitation and compensation.

4. Maintain law and order while respecting democratic protest.

5. Adopt transparent and participatory decision-making.

Prelims Question

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Menga Dam project:

1. It is part of the Subansiri Upper Hydroelectric Project.

2. The project is being developed by NHPC Ltd.

3. The project is located in Arunachal Pradesh.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 2 and 3 only

C. 1 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3

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Correct Answer: D. 1, 2 and 3

Explanation: All three statements are correct according to the provided news report.

GS Paper I (Indian Culture)

Mera Hou Chongba Festival, Manipur



- **Occasion**: Mera Hou Chongba is a traditional festival celebrated in Manipur to promote unity and brotherhood between hill and valley communities.
- **Venue**: Historic Kangla Fort, Imphal, Manipur.
- **Historical significance:** The tradition dates back to the reign of Ebudhou Nongda Lairen Pakhangba.
- **Key activities**: **Exchange of gifts between hill and valley representatives and the release of a festival souvenir.**
- **Significance: The festival symbolises communal harmony, cultural unity, mutual respect and peaceful coexistence among Manipur's diverse ethnic communities**.

Prelims Practice Question

Q. Mera Hou Chongba, recently seen in the news, is associated with which of the following?

A. A harvest festival of Assam

B. Promoting unity between hill and valley communities in Manipur

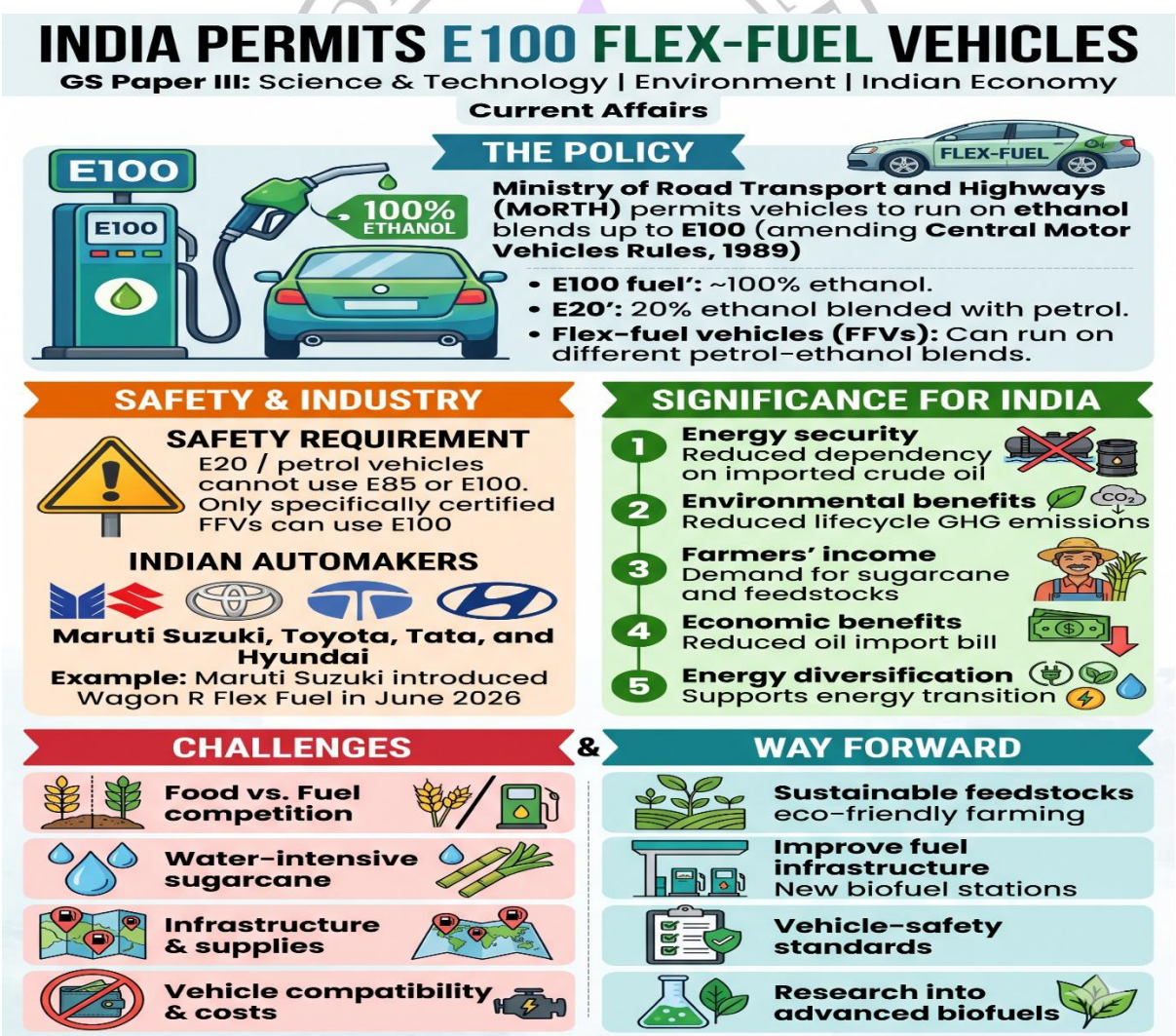
C. A Buddhist festival celebrated in Arunachal Pradesh

D. A traditional boat festival of Tripura

Answer: B. Promoting unity between hill and valley communities in Manipur.

GS Paper III (Science & Technology)

India Permits E100 Flex-Fuel Vehicles



- **Ministry: Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH).**
- **Recent development: The government amended the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989, permitting vehicles certified to run on ethanol blends up to E100.**
- **E100 fuel: Fuel consisting predominantly of ethanol, with nearly 100% ethanol.**
- **E20: Petrol blended with 20% ethanol.**
- **Flex-fuel vehicles (FFVs): Vehicles designed to operate on different petrol–ethanol blends, depending on their certification.**
- **Safety requirement: Vehicles designed for E20 or normal petrol cannot automatically use E85 or E100. Only vehicles specifically designed and certified for these fuels can use them.**
- **Indian automakers: Companies such as Maruti Suzuki, Toyota, Tata and Hyundai are exploring flex-fuel technology.**
- **Example: Maruti Suzuki introduced the Wagon R Flex Fuel vehicle in June 2026, according to the provided report.**

Significance for India

1. Energy security: Reduces dependence on imported crude oil.

2. Environmental benefits: Can reduce lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions, depending on ethanol production methods and fuel efficiency.

3. Farmers' income: Creates additional demand for sugarcane and other suitable ethanol feedstocks.

4. Economic benefits: May help reduce the crude oil import bill and pressure on the current account.

5. Energy diversification: Promotes alternative fuels and supports India's energy-transition goals.

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Challenges

- **Competition between food crops and fuel production.**
- **Water-intensive sugarcane cultivation in some regions.**
- **Availability of adequate ethanol supplies and refuelling infrastructure.**
- **Vehicle compatibility, fuel efficiency and consumer costs.**
- **Need to assess lifecycle emissions and sustainability.**

Way Forward

Promote sustainable ethanol feedstocks, improve fuel infrastructure, enforce vehicle-safety standards and encourage research into advanced biofuels.

Prelims Practice Question

Q. Consider the following statements about flex-fuel vehicles (FFVs):

1. They can operate on different petrol–ethanol blends within their certified fuel range.

2. Every petrol vehicle can use E100 fuel without modification.

3. Ethanol blending can help reduce dependence on imported crude oil.

4. E100 fuel consists predominantly of ethanol.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 1, 3 and 4 only

C. 2 and 3 only

D. 1, 2, 3 and 4

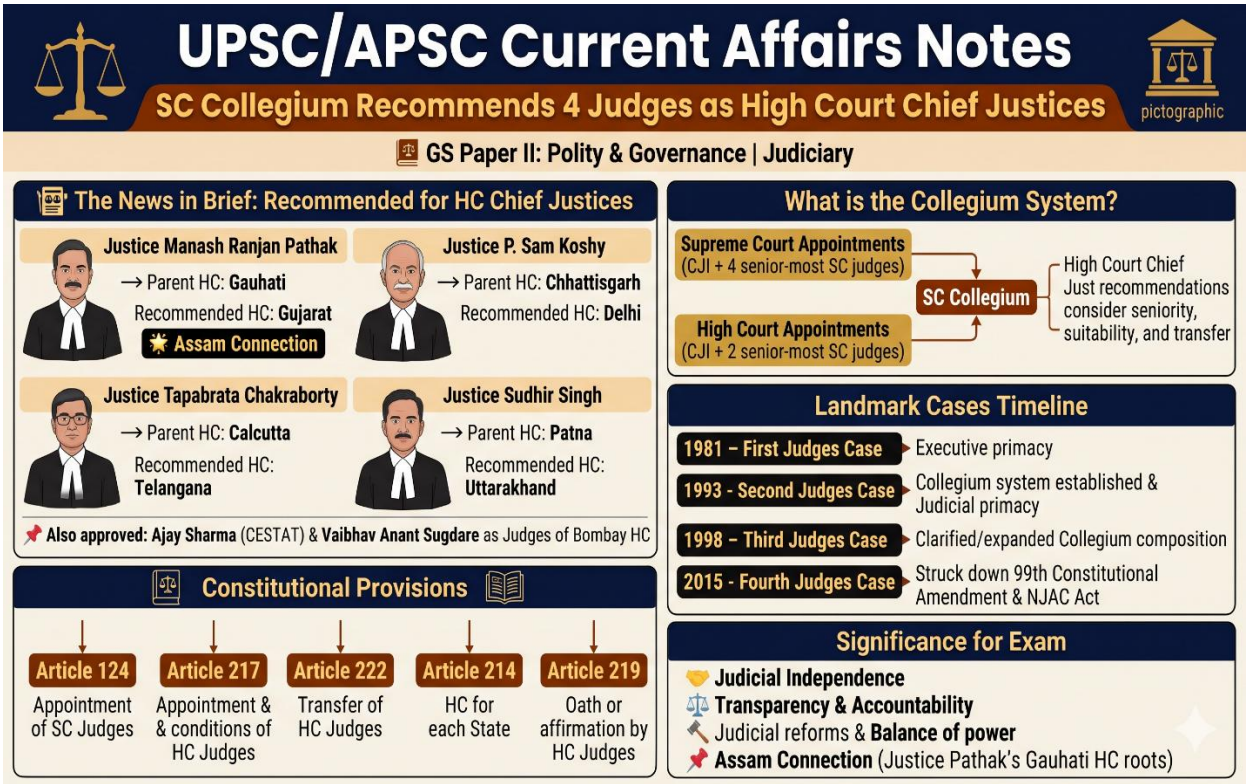
Answer: B. 1, 3 and 4 only

Explanation: Flex-fuel vehicles must be specifically designed and certified for the fuel blends they use. Ordinary petrol vehicles cannot automatically use E100.

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GS Paper II: Polity & Governance

SC Collegium Recommends Four Judges as High Court Chief Justices



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The Supreme Court Collegium, in its resolution dated October 26, recommended four judges for appointment as Chief Justices of the High Courts of Gujarat, Delhi, Telangana and Uttarakhand.

Judge	Recommended High Court	Parent High Court
Justice Manash Ranjan Pathak	**Gujarat**	**Gauhati**
Justice P. Sam Koshy	**Delhi**	**Chhattisgarh**
Justice Tapabrata Chakraborty	**Telangana**	**Calcutta**
Justice Sudhir Singh	**Uttarakhand**	**Patna**

Other development: The Collegium also approved the proposal to appoint Ajay Sharma, Judicial Member of CESTAT, Mumbai, and advocate Vaibhav Anant Sugdare as judges of the Bombay High Court.

What Is the Collegium System?

The Collegium System is the mechanism through which judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts are recommended for appointment and elevation.

- **Supreme Court appointments: Chief Justice of India (CJI) and four senior-most Supreme Court judges.**
- **High Court appointments: CJI and two senior-most Supreme Court judges, in consultation with relevant constitutional authorities and judges.**
- **High Court Chief Justice appointments: Recommendations are made by the Supreme Court Collegium, considering factors such as seniority, suitability and inter-High Court transfers.**

Constitutional Provisions

Article	Provision
Article 124	**Appointment of Supreme Court judges**
Article 217	**Appointment and conditions of office of High Court judges**
Article 222	**Transfer of High Court judges**
Article 214	**High Court for each State**
Article 219	**Oath or affirmation by High Court judges**

Important Supreme Court Judgments

- First Judges Case (1981): Established executive primacy in judicial appointments.
- Second Judges Case (1993): Established the Collegium System and gave primacy to the judiciary.
- Third Judges Case (1998): Clarified and expanded the Collegium's composition.
- Fourth Judges Case (2015): The Supreme Court struck down the 99th Constitutional Amendment and the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) Act.

Significance

- **Strengthens judicial administration through the appointment of High Court Chief Justices.**
- **Highlights the importance of judicial independence.**
- **Raises questions about transparency and accountability in judicial appointments.**
- **Relevant to the debate on judicial reforms and the balance of power between the executive and judiciary.**
- **Assam connection: Justice Manash Ranjan Pathak's parent High Court is the Gauhati High Court.**

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Prelims Question

Q1. The appointment of High Court judges is governed by which Article of the Indian Constitution?

A. Article 124

B. Article 217

C. Article 222

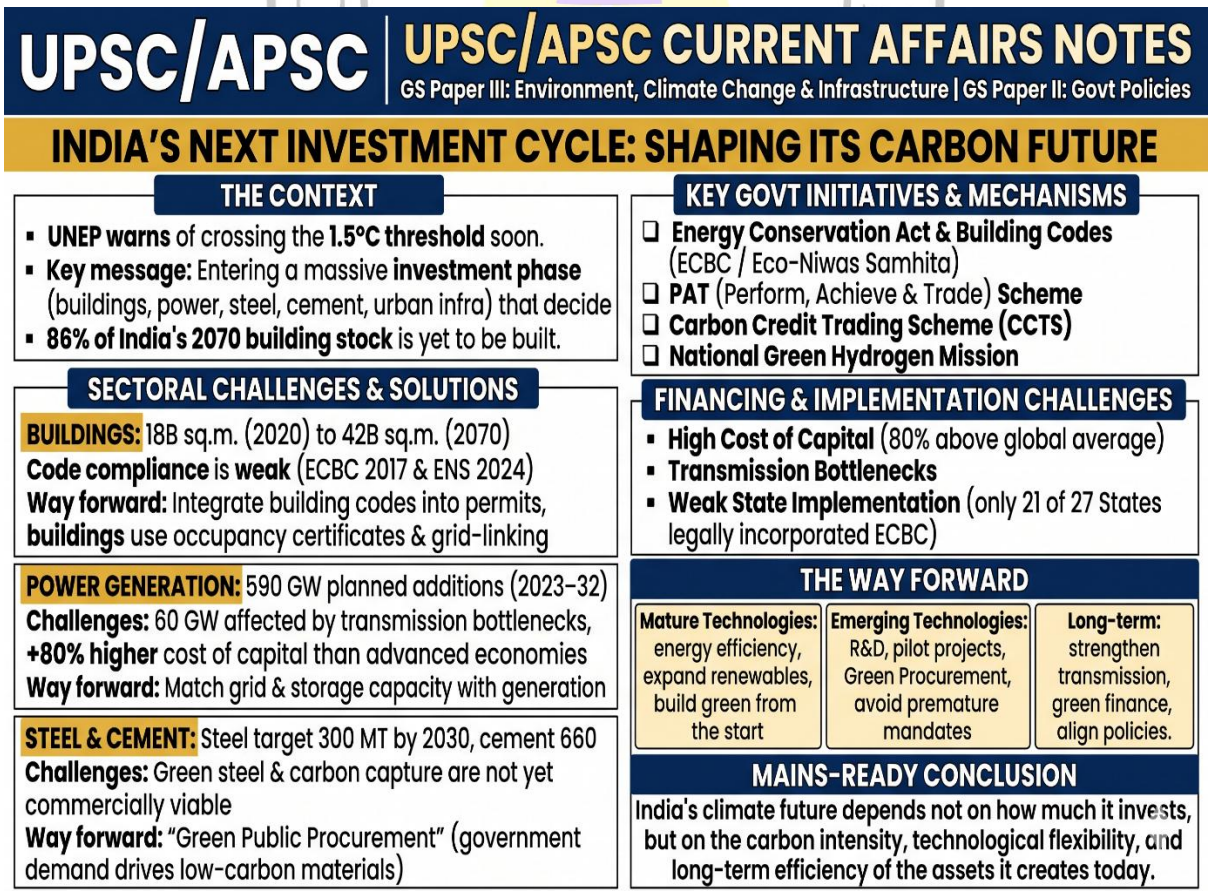
D. Article 226

Answer: B. Article 217

Explanation: Article 217 deals with the appointment and conditions of office of High Court judges.

GS Paper III: Environment, Climate Change

India's Next Investment Cycle Will Shape Its Carbon Future



The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has warned that the world could cross the 1.5°C global warming threshold within the next few years.

I**ndia is entering a major investment phase in buildings, electricity, steel, cement and urban infrastructure**. The **technologies and standards adopted during this phase will significantly influence the country's future carbon emissions.**

- India should pursue economic growth while investing in low-carbon infrastructure, energy efficiency and sustainable industrial development.

Important Facts and Figures

Indicator	**Data**
India's building stock yet to be built by 2070	86%
Projected building floor space	18 billion sq. m. (2020) to 42 billion sq. m. (2070)
India's crude steel capacity	Approximately 200 million tonnes in 2024–25
Targeted steel capacity	300 million tonnes by 2030–31
India's cement production	Approximately 427 million tonnes in 2024
Projected cement production	660 million tonnes by 2030
Renewable capacity affected by transmission bottlenecks	Approximately 60 GW
Planned power generation additions	Approximately 590 GW during 2023–2032

Major Issues Discussed

A. The Advantage of India's Development Stage

India's infrastructure deficit is often viewed as a barrier to decarbonisation. However, it also offers an opportunity to build infrastructure with cleaner technologies from the start.

Advantages:

- **Avoids locking in high-emission technologies.**
- **Reduces future retrofitting and renovation costs.**

- **Improves energy efficiency.**
- **Minimises the risk of stranded assets.**
- **Supports sustainable economic growth**.

Energy Efficiency in Buildings

Buildings consume significant energy for lighting, cooling, and other activities.

India has introduced several regulatory frameworks to improve building efficiency.

Energy Conservation Building Code (ECBC), 2017 = promotes energy efficiency in commercial buildings

Energy Conservation and Sustainable Building Code (ECSBC), 2024= Establishes sustainability and energy-efficiency standards for commercial and office buildings

Eco-Niwas Samhita (ENS), 2024= Promotes energy efficiency in residential buildings

Way forward:

- Integrate building-efficiency standards into building permits.
- Link compliance to occupancy certificates and grid connections.
- Strengthen monitoring and enforcement.
- Promote energy-efficient cooling and sustainable construction materials.

Challenges in the Power Sector

India has rapidly expanded renewable energy generation, but transmission infrastructure has not kept pace.

Major challenges:

1. Transmission bottlenecks delay renewable energy integration.

2. Renewable electricity may not reach areas with high demand.

3. Electrification of transport, cooling and industry will increase electricity demand.

4. Insufficient storage can make it difficult to balance variable renewable generation.

Way forward:

- **Develop transmission infrastructure alongside renewable energy projects.**
- **Expand battery and other energy-storage systems.**
- **Strengthen interstate electricity transmission.**
- **Improve grid planning and management.**
- **Coordinate generation, transmission and demand forecasting.**

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Prelims Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements regarding India's future building stock:

1. A significant proportion of India's building stock projected for 2070 is yet to be constructed.

2. Energy-efficient building standards can help reduce long-term electricity consumption.

3. Retrofitting existing buildings is always cheaper than incorporating energy efficiency during construction.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 only

B. 1 and 2 only

C. 2 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: B. 1 and 2 only

Explanation: Incorporating energy efficiency during construction can avoid expensive retrofits. Therefore, statement 3 is incorrect.

Mains Question

Q. India's next phase of infrastructure development presents an opportunity to align economic growth with decarbonisation. Discuss the major challenges and suggest measures to promote low-carbon infrastructure in India. (15 marks, 250 words)

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GS Paper II: International Relations

India Discusses Maritime Partnerships with South Korea and Cyprus

Key Highlights

- Union Minister: Sarbananda Sonowal, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- South Korea: Cooperation in shipbuilding, marine equipment, green propulsion and maritime technology.

- Cyprus: Collaboration in shipping, maritime investment, ship recycling and seafarer welfare.
- Target: Make India a globally competitive shipbuilding and maritime services hub by 2047.
- KOMERI: Korea Marine Equipment Research Institute; potential cooperation in research, testing and certification.
- HMM: Discussions covered Indian seafarer recruitment, vessel registration and expansion of shipping services.
- Ship recycling: India seeks EU recognition for eligible Indian ship-recycling facilities.

Significance for India

- **Attracts foreign investment and technology.**
- **Generates employment in shipbuilding and shipping.**
- **Strengthens port infrastructure and maritime supply chains.**
- **Promotes green shipping and sustainable ship recycling.**
- **Supports India's maritime ambitions under Maritime India Vision 2030 and Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047**.

Prelims Questions

Q. KOMERI, mentioned in the context of India's maritime cooperation, is associated with which country?

A. Cyprus

B. South Korea

C. Japan

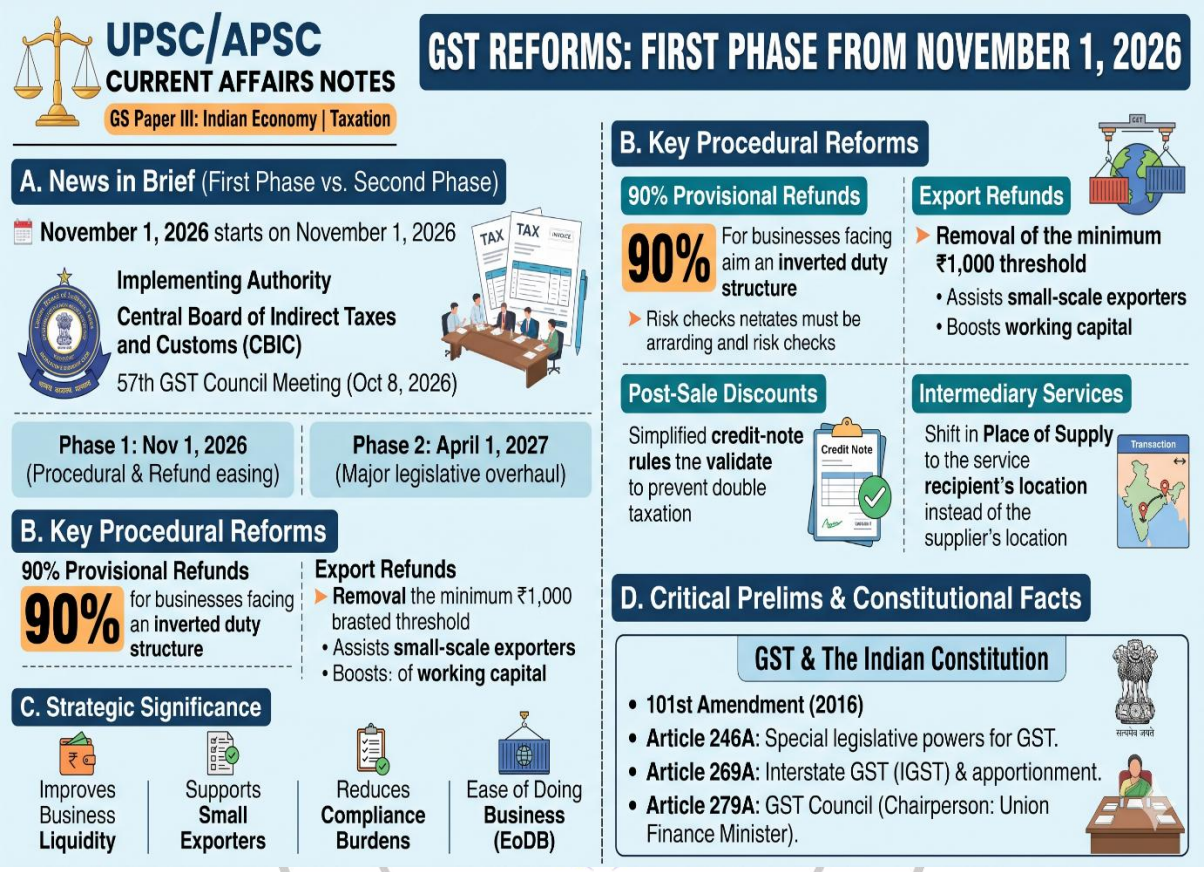
D. Singapore

Answer: B. South Korea

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GS Paper III: Indian Economy

GST Reforms: First Phase from November 1, 2026



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- Implementing authority: Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC).
- **GST Council meeting**: **57th meeting, October 8, 2026**.
- **90% provisional refunds: For eligible businesses facing an inverted duty structure, subject to risk checks.**
- **Export refunds: Removal of the minimum ₹1,000 threshold.**
- **Post-sale discounts: Simplified credit-note provisions.**
- Intermediary services: Place of supply shifts to the service recipient's location.
- Second phase: Major legislative changes targeted for April 1, 2027.

Significance

- **Improves business liquidity.**
- **Supports small exporters.**
- **Reduces compliance burdens.**
- **Promotes ease of doing business.**

Important Prelims Facts

- **101st Constitutional Amendment Act, 2016: Introduced GST.**
- **Article 246A: Legislative powers regarding GST.**
- **Article 269A: GST on inter-State supplies.**
- **Article 279A: GST Council.**
- **GST Council Chairperson: Union Finance Minister.**

Practice Questions

Q. The GST Council is constituted under which Article?

A. Article 246A

B. Article 269A

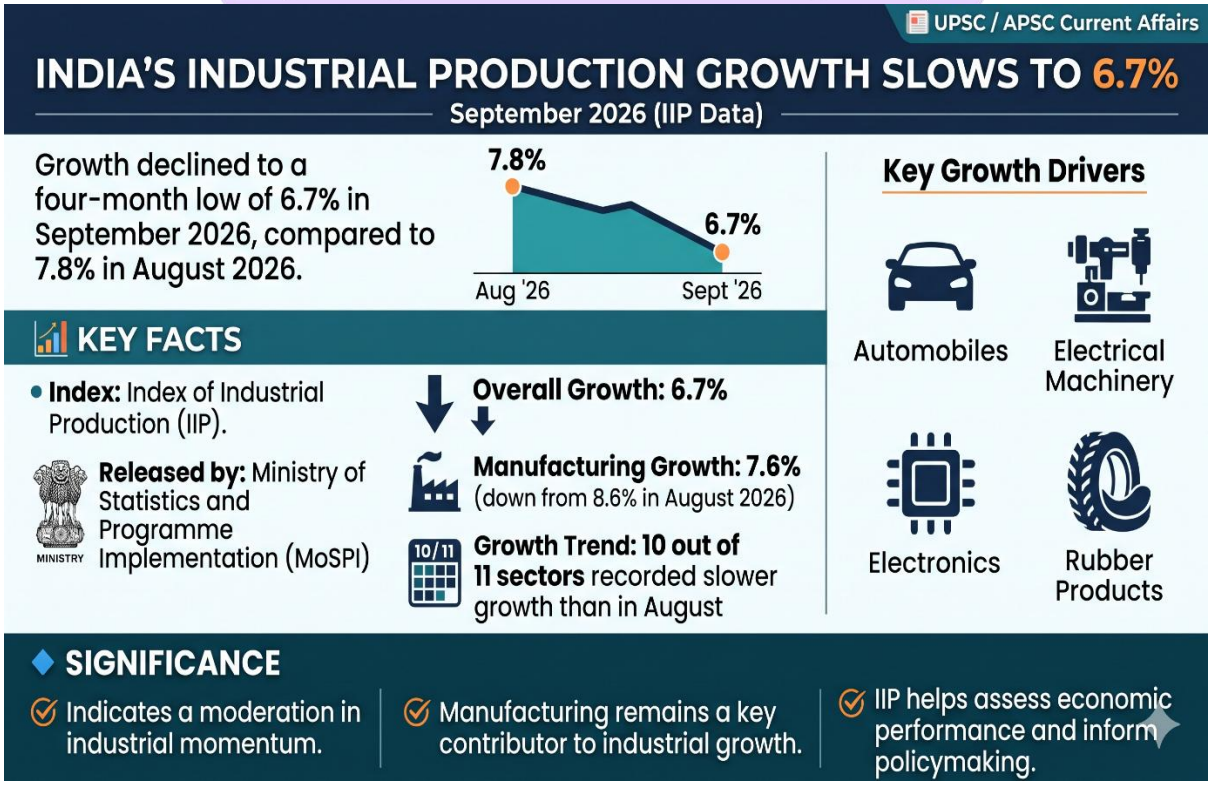
C. Article 279A

D. Article 280

Answer: C. Article 279A

ECONOMY (GS Paper 3)

Industrial Production Growth Slows to 6.7%



India's industrial production growth declined to a four-month low of 6.7% in September 2026, compared with 7.8% in August 2026.

Key Facts

- Index: **Index of Industrial Production (IIP).**
- **Released by: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).**
- **Overall growth: 6.7% in September 2026.**
- **Manufacturing growth: 7.6%, down from 8.6% in August 2026.**
- **Growth trend: 10 out of 11 sectors recorded slower growth than in August.**
- **Key growth drivers: Automobiles, electrical machinery, electronics and rubber products**.

Significance

- Indicates a moderation in industrial momentum.
- Manufacturing remains a key contributor to industrial growth.
- IIP helps assess economic performance and inform policymaking.

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Prelims Questions

Q1. The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is released by which organisation?

A. RBI

B. NITI Aayog

C. MoSPI

D. Ministry of Commerce and Industry

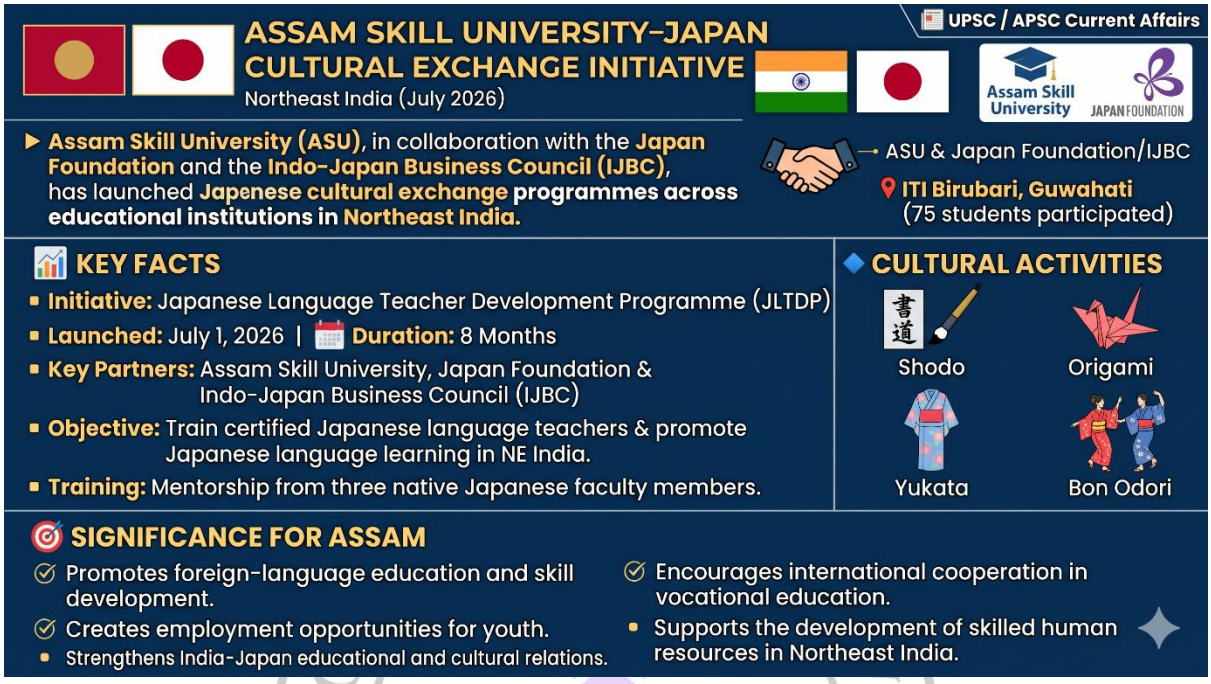
Answer: C. MoSPI

Mains Question

Q. Discuss the significance of the Index of Industrial Production in assessing India's economic growth. (150 words)

International Relations (GS Paper 2)

Assam Skill University–Japan Cultural Exchange Initiative



Assam Skill University (ASU), in collaboration with the Japan Foundation and the Indo-Japan Business Council (IJBC), has launched Japanese cultural exchange programmes across educational institutions in Northeast India.

Key Facts

- **Initiative: Japanese Language Teacher Development Programme (JLTDP).**
- Launched: July 1, 2026.
- Duration: Eight months.
- **Key partners: Assam Skill University, Japan Foundation and Indo-Japan Business Council.**
- **Objective: Train certified Japanese language teachers and promote Japanese language learning in Northeast India.**
- **Training: Mentorship from three native Japanese faculty members.**
- **Recent event: 75 students participated in a cultural exchange programme at ITI Birubari, Guwahati.**

Cultural Activities

- **Shodo: Japanese calligraphy.**
- **Origami: Traditional paper folding.**
- **Yukata: Traditional Japanese summer garment.**
- **Bon Odori: Traditional Japanese folk dance.**

IAKSHASHEELA ESTD 2022 SHAPING LEADERS OF TOMORROW

Significance for Assam

1. Promotes foreign-language education and skill development.

2. Creates employment opportunities for youth.

3. Strengthens India–Japan educational and cultural relations.

4. Encourages international cooperation in vocational education.

5. Supports the development of skilled human resources in Northeast India.

Prelims Questions

Q1. The Japanese Language Teacher Development Programme (JLTDP) is associated with which state?

A. Meghalaya

B. Assam

C. Manipur

D. Nagaland

Answer: B. Assam

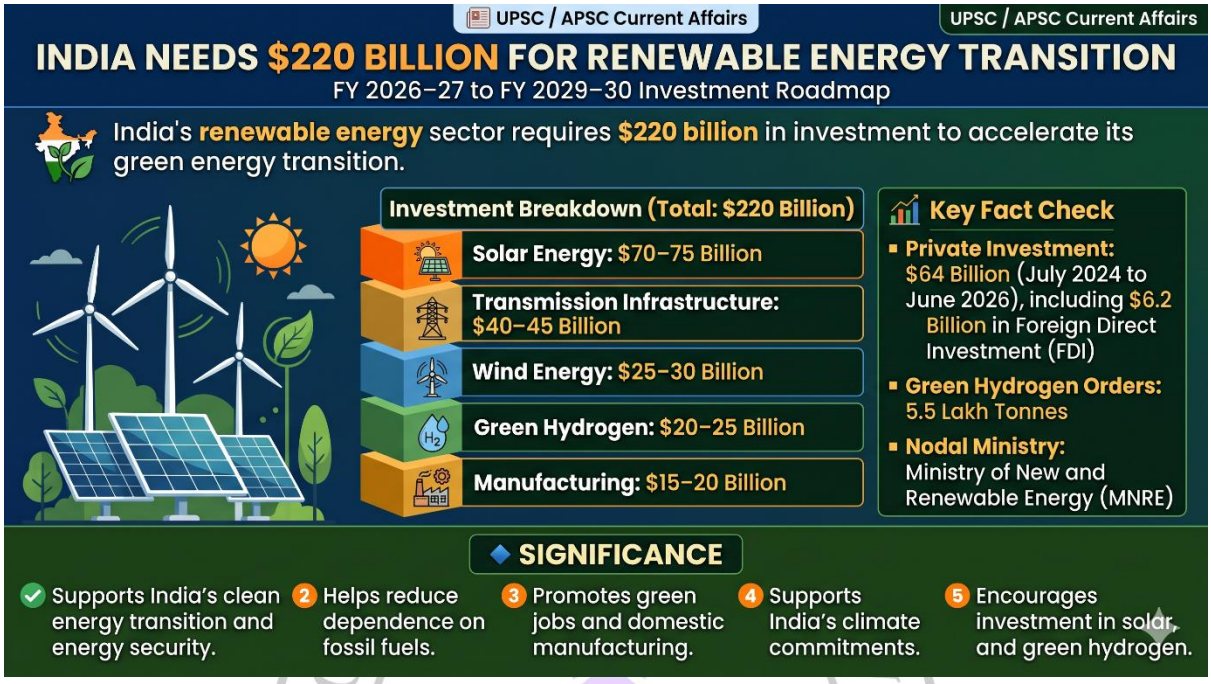
Mains Practice Question

Q. Discuss the role of international educational and cultural collaborations in promoting skill development and employment opportunities for youth in Northeast India. (150 words)

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Environment (GS Paper 3)

India Needs 220 Billion for Renewable Energy Transition



India's renewable energy sector requires 220 billion in investment during FY 2026–27 to FY 2029–30 to accelerate its green energy transition.

Key Facts

- Total investment required: 220 billion.
- Solar energy: 70–75 billion.
- Transmission infrastructure: 40–45 billion.
- Wind energy: 25–30 billion.
- Green hydrogen: 20–25 billion.
- Manufacturing: 15–20 billion.
- Private investment: 64 billion between July 2024 and June 2026, including 6.2 billion in FDI.
- Green hydrogen orders: 5.5 lakh tonnes.

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE).

Significance

1. Supports India's clean energy transition and energy security.

2. Helps reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

3. Promotes green jobs and domestic manufacturing.

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4. Supports India's climate commitments.

5. Encourages investment in solar, wind and green hydrogen.

Prelims Questions

Q1. Which ministry is responsible for renewable energy development in India?

A. Ministry of Power

B. Ministry of New and Renewable Energy

C. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

D. Ministry of Heavy Industries

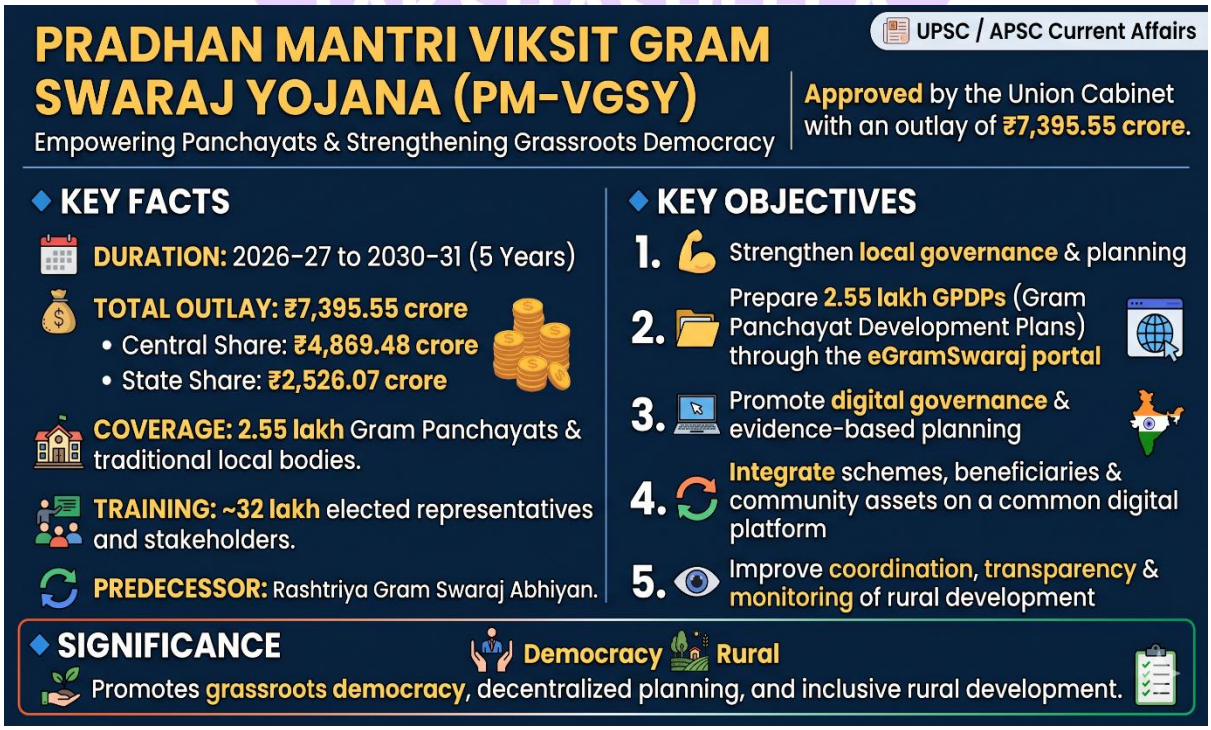
Answer: B. Ministry of New and Renewable Energy

Mains Question

Q. Discuss the major challenges and opportunities in India's transition towards renewable energy. (150 words)

Governance (GS Paper 2)

Pradhan Mantri Viksit Gram Swaraj Yojana (PM-VGSY)



The Union Cabinet approved PM-VGSY with an outlay of 7,395.55 crore to strengthen Gram Panchayats.

Key Facts

- **Duration: 2026–27 to 2030–31 (5 years).**
- **Total outlay: 7,395.55 crore.**
- **Central share: 4,869.48 crore.**
- **State share: 2,526.07 crore.**
- **Coverage: 2.55 lakh Gram Panchayats and traditional local bodies.**
- **Training: Approximately 32 lakh elected representatives and stakeholders.**
- **Predecessor: Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan**.

Key Objectives

1. Strengthen local governance and planning.

2. Prepare 2.55 lakh Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDPs) through the eGramSwaraj portal.

3. Promote digital governance and evidence-based planning.

4. Integrate government schemes, beneficiaries and community assets on a common digital platform.

5. Improve coordination, transparency and monitoring of rural development.

Significance:

Promotes grassroots democracy, decentralised planning and inclusive rural development.

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Prelims Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements about PM-VGSY:

1. The scheme aims to strengthen Gram Panchayats.

2. It will be implemented from 2026–27 to 2030–31.

3. It focuses on providing individual stipends to elected representatives.

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

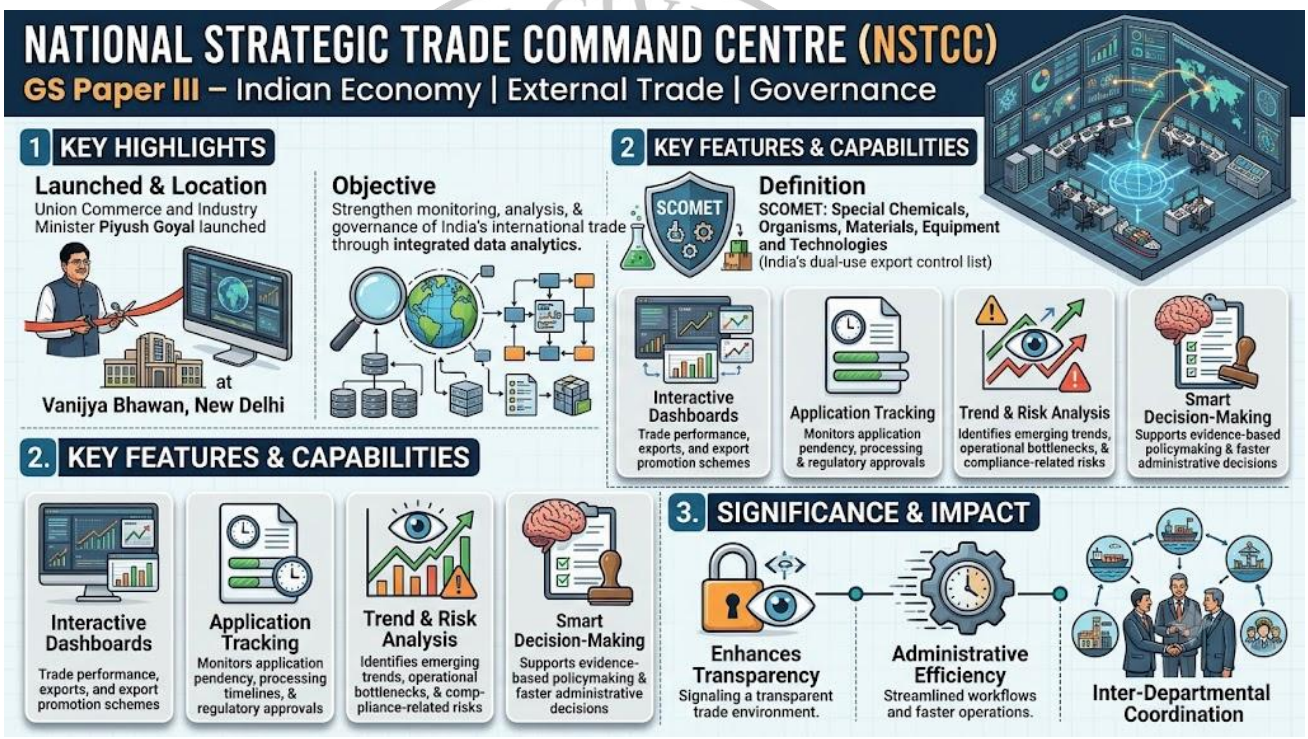
Answer: B. 1 and 2 only

Mains Question

Q. How can strengthening Gram Panchayats contribute to grassroots democracy and rural development in India? (150 words)

GS Paper III – Indian Economy

National Strategic Trade Command Centre (NSTCC)



Key Highlights

- **Launched by: Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal.**
- **Objective: Strengthen monitoring, analysis and governance of India's international trade through integrated data analytics.**

Key Features:

- **Provides interactive dashboards on trade performance, exports and export promotion schemes.**
- **Monitors application pendency, processing timelines and regulatory approvals.**

- **Identifies emerging trends, operational bottlenecks and compliance-related risks.**
- **Supports evidence-based policymaking and faster administrative decisions.**
- **SCOMET: Special Chemicals, Organisms, Materials, Equipment and Technologies.**
- **Significance: Enhances transparency, administrative efficiency and coordination among government departments.**

Prelims Question

Q. Consider the following statements about the National Strategic Trade Command Centre (NSTCC):

1. It aims to improve international trade governance through integrated data analytics.
2. It provides dashboards to monitor trade performance and application pendency.
3. SCOMET refers to Special Chemicals, Organisms, Materials, Equipment and Technologies.

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, 2 and 3

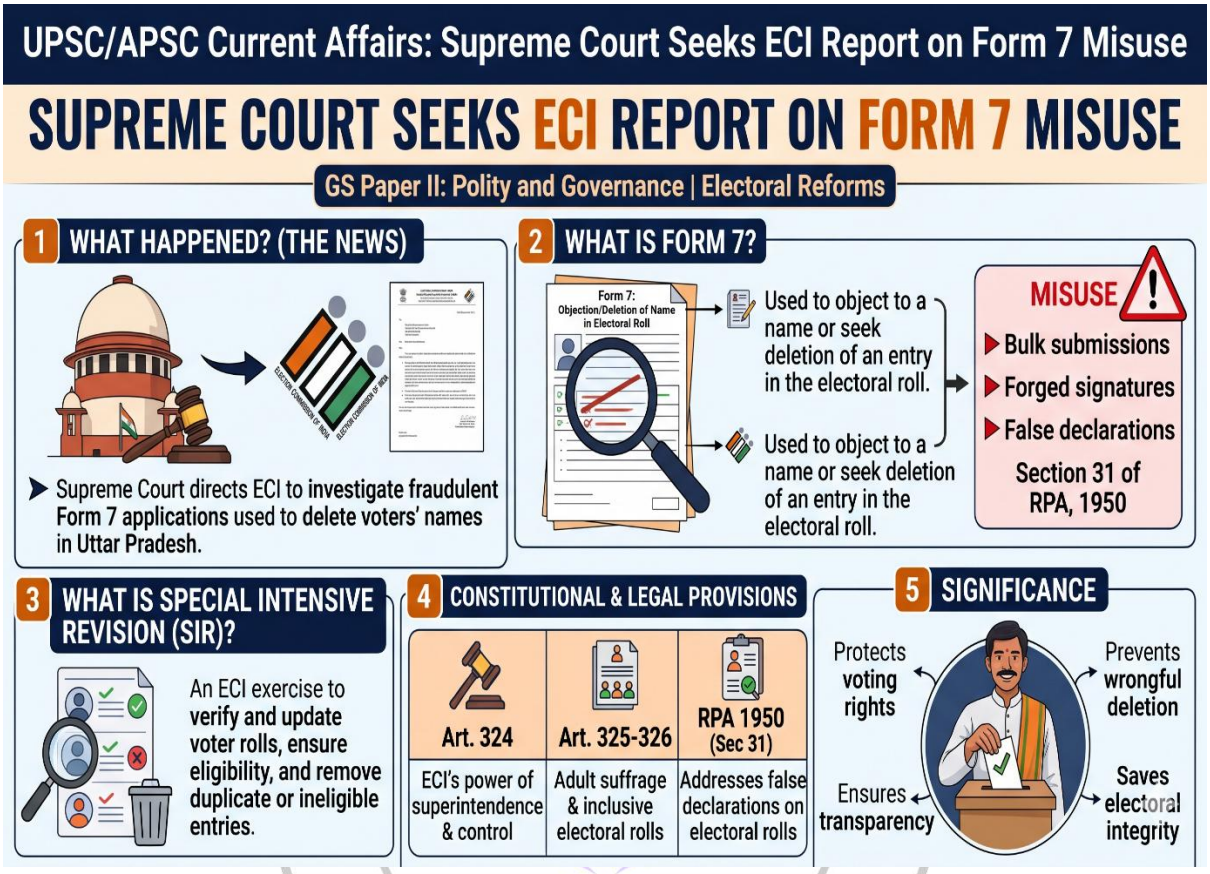
Mains Practice Question

Q. Discuss the role of data-driven governance in improving India's international trade performance and export competitiveness. (150 words)

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Supreme Court Seeks ECI Report on Form 7 Misuse

GS Paper II: Polity and Governance



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The Supreme Court directed the Election Commission of India (ECI) to investigate allegations of **fraudulent use of Form 7 during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls** in Uttar Pradesh and submit a compliance report.

The ECI stated that although false Form 7 applications were detected, none of the identified fraudulent applications was accepted.

Key Facts

- **Institution: Election Commission of India (ECI).**
- Court: Supreme Court of India.
- Issue: Alleged fraudulent applications for deleting voters' names.
- State: Uttar Pradesh.
- **Form 7: Used to object to the inclusion of a name or seek deletion of an entry in the electoral roll, subject to applicable rules.**
- **Legal provision: Section 31 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, concerning false declarations.**

- Concern: Electoral integrity and the risk of wrongful voter deletion.

What is Form 7?

Form 7 is an electoral form used for:

- **Objecting to the inclusion of a person's name in the electoral roll.**
- **Requesting deletion of an entry on permissible grounds under election rules.**

Alleged misuse included:

- **Forged signatures and false declarations.**
- **Incomplete or invalid details of applicants.**
- **Bulk submission of pre-filled forms.**
- **Filing objections in the names of people who denied submitting them.**

What is Special Intensive Revision (SIR)?

SIR is a detailed exercise conducted by the ECI to verify and update electoral rolls.

Objectives:

- Ensure eligible citizens are included.
- Identify duplicate or ineligible entries.
- Correct errors in electoral rolls.
- Improve the accuracy of voter lists.

Constitutional and Legal Provisions

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Provision	**Significance**
Article 324	Vests the ECI with powers of superintendence, direction and control over elections.
Article 325	Provides for one general electoral roll and prohibits exclusion on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex.
Article 326	Provides for elections to the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies on the basis of adult suffrage, subject to constitutional provisions.
Representation of the People Act, 1950	**Deals with electoral rolls and related matters.**
Section 31, RPA 1950	Addresses false declarations in connection with electoral rolls.

Significance

- Protects citizens' voting rights.
- Prevents wrongful deletion of eligible voters.
- Strengthens transparency and accountability in electoral-roll revision.
- Reinforces public confidence in the electoral process.
- Highlights the need for verification of objections and safeguards against impersonation.

Prelims MCQs

Q1. Consider the following statements about Form 7:

1. It can be used to object to the inclusion of a name in the electoral roll.

2. It can be used to seek deletion of an entry in the electoral roll.

3. Every Form 7 application automatically results in deletion of a voter.

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. 1 and 2 only

Explanation: A Form 7 application is subject to verification and the prescribed legal procedure; deletion is not automatic.

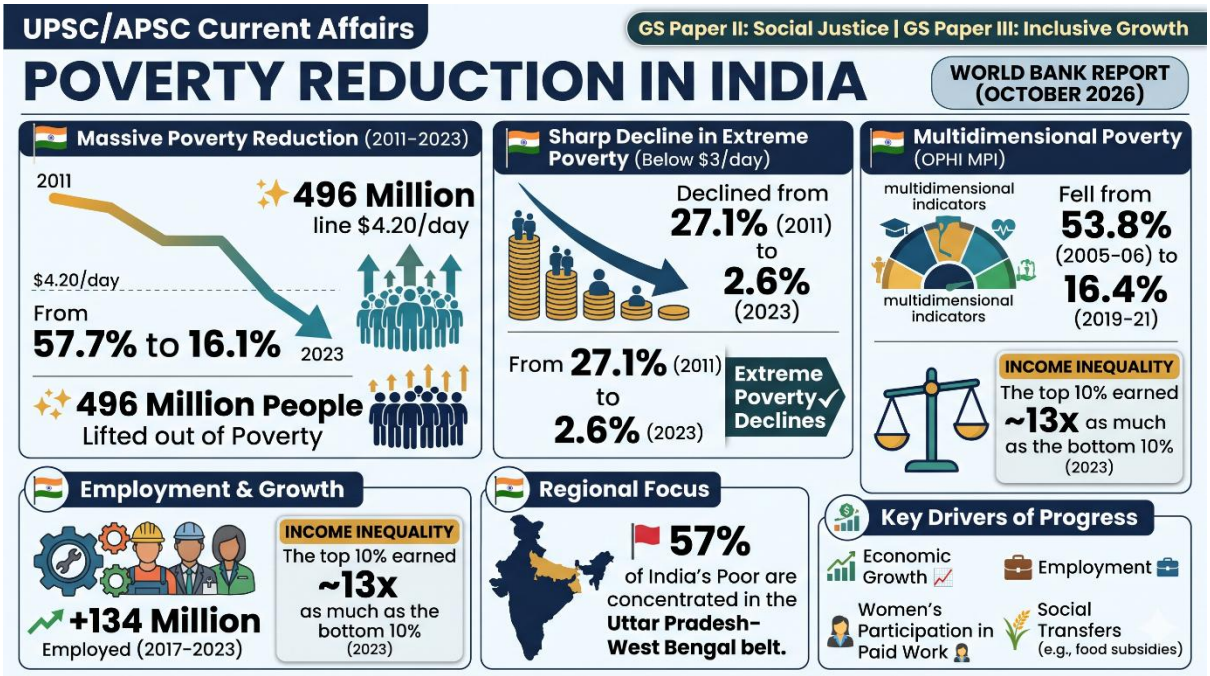
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Mains Question

Q. Examine the significance of electoral-roll revision in strengthening Indian democracy. What safeguards are necessary to prevent the wrongful deletion of eligible voters? (150 words)

Poverty Reduction in India

GS Paper II: Social Justice



Key Facts (World Bank Report, October 2026)

- **Poverty reduction (2011–2023):** Poverty below the 4.20/day line fell from 57.7% to 16.1%, lifting an estimated 496 million people out of poverty.
- **Extreme poverty**: Declined from 27.1% to 2.6% (below 3/day).
- **Multidimensional poverty**: OPHI MPI poverty fell from 53.8% (2005–06) to 16.4% (2019–21).
- **Employment**: Increased by approximately 134 million people (2017–2023).
- **Income inequality**: The top 10% of workers earned about 13 times as much as the bottom 10% in 2023.
- **Regional concentration**: Uttar Pradesh–West Bengal belt accounted for 57% of India's poor.
- **Key drivers**: Economic growth, employment, women's participation in paid work and social transfers, including food subsidies.

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Prelims Questions

1. The World Bank's lower-middle-income poverty line mentioned in the report is:

A. 2.15/day

B. 3.00/day

C. 4.20/day

D. 5.50/day

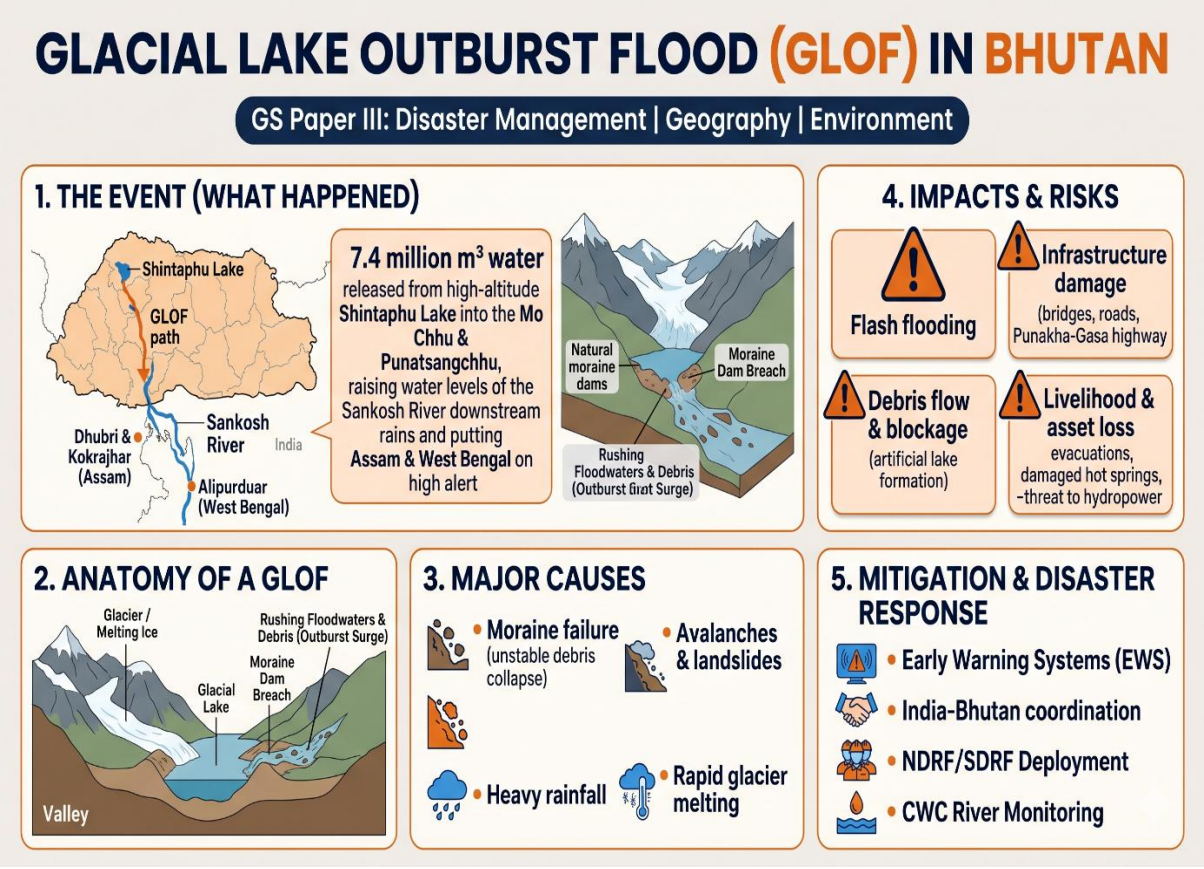
Answer: C. 4.20/day

Mains Question

Q. Despite India's progress in poverty reduction, what challenges remain in achieving inclusive growth?

Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) in Bhutan

GS Paper III: Disaster Management



A Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) occurred at Shintaphu Lake in Bhutan, triggering **flood alerts in Dhubri and Kokrajhar districts of Assam and parts of West Bengal** due to the possible sudden **rise in the Sankosh River**.

Key Facts

- Location: Shintaphu Lake, Gasa district, northwestern Bhutan.
- River system: Punatsangchhu–Sankosh River system.
- Water released: Approximately 7.4 million cubic metres.

- Affected areas in Assam: Dhubri and Kokrajhar.
- Response: Authorities alerted residents; SDRF and NDRF teams were kept on standby.
- Major concerns: Flash floods, erosion, damage to infrastructure and loss of life.

What is GLOF?

A Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) is the **sudden release of water stored in a glacial lake when its natural barrier fails or is overtopped.**

Causes:

- Landslides and rockfalls.
- Ice avalanches and earthquakes.
- Failure of moraine dams.
- Heavy rainfall and excessive meltwater inflow.
- Rising temperatures and glacier melting.

Impacts of GLOF

- Sudden flooding of downstream areas.
- Loss of human and animal lives.
- Destruction of bridges, roads and settlements.
- Soil erosion and deposition of rocks and debris.
- Damage to agriculture and livelihoods.
- Disruption of communication and transport networks.

Disaster Management Measures

- Early-warning systems and river-level monitoring.
- Hazard mapping and regular risk assessment.
- Evacuation of vulnerable communities.
- Coordination among India, Bhutan, CWC, ASDMA, SDRF and NDRF.
- Community awareness and disaster-preparedness drills.
- Long-term monitoring of high-risk glacial lakes.

Prelims Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements about GLOFs:

1. GLOFs involve the sudden release of water from glacial lakes.

2. Landslides and ice avalanches can trigger GLOFs.

3. GLOFs affect only areas located near glaciers.

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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. 1 and 2 only

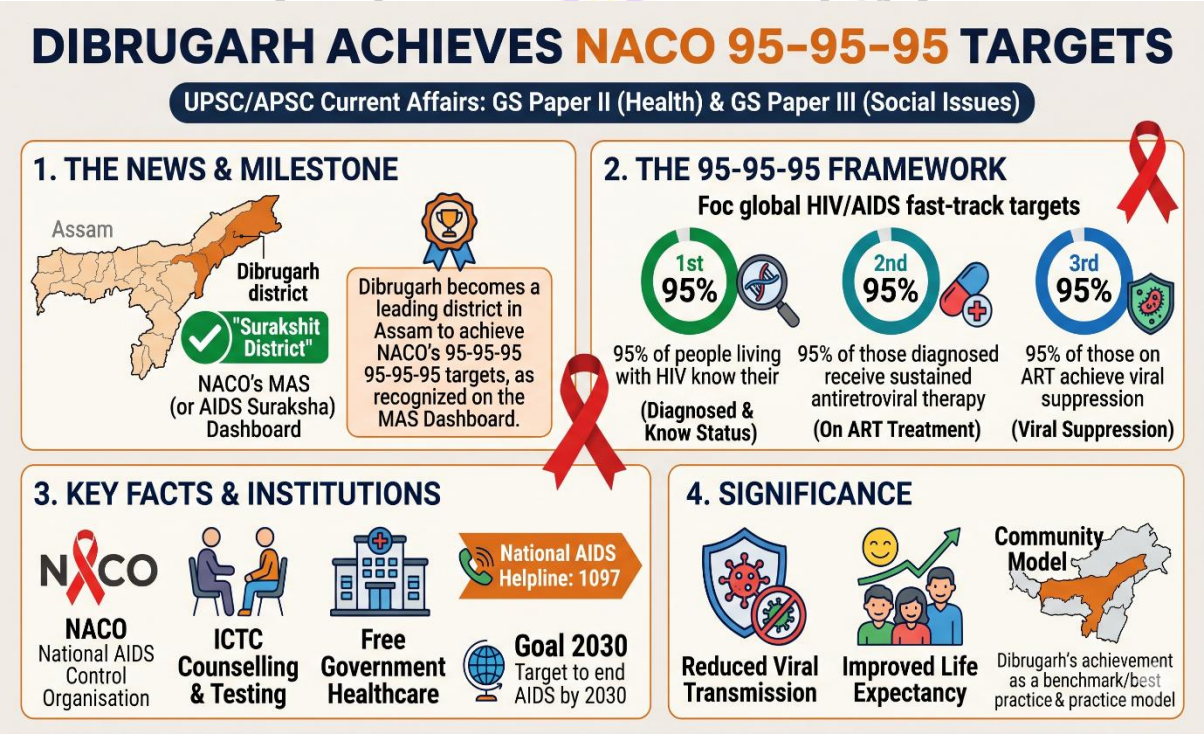
Explanation: GLOFs can cause destructive floods far downstream, affecting areas distant from glaciers.

Mains Question

Q. What are Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs)? Discuss their causes, impacts and mitigation measures, with special reference to Northeast India. (150 words)

Dibrugarh Achieves NACO's 95-95-95 Targets

GS Paper II: Health



Dibrugarh has become the first among Assam's six identified high-priority districts to achieve all three targets under the 95-95-95 framework, earning 'Surakshit District' status on the NACO's Mobilization for AIDS Suraksha (MAS) Dashboard.

Key Facts

- **NACO**: National AIDS Control Organisation.
- **Programme**: National AIDS Control Programme (NACP).
- **MAS**: Mobilization for AIDS Suraksha.
- **Goal**: End AIDS as a public health threat by 2030.
- **Key achievement**: Meeting all three 95-95-95 targets.
- **Free services**: HIV testing and treatment at government health facilities.
- **National AIDS Helpline**: 1097.

What is the 95-95-95 Framework?

Target	Objective
First 95%	People living with HIV know their HIV status.
Second 95%	People diagnosed with HIV receive antiretroviral therapy (ART).
Third 95%	People receiving ART achieve viral suppression.

Important Terms

- **HIV**: Human Immunodeficiency Virus, which attacks the immune system.
- **AIDS**: Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome, the advanced stage of HIV infection.
- **ART**: Antiretroviral Therapy, which suppresses HIV and helps people live longer, healthier lives.
- **ICTC**: Integrated Counselling and Testing Centre.
- **DAPCU**: District AIDS Prevention and Control Unit.

Significance

- Strengthens HIV prevention, testing and treatment.
- Improves access to healthcare services.
- Encourages community participation.
- Supports India's commitment to ending AIDS as a public health threat by 2030.
- Provides a model for other high-priority districts in Assam.

Prelims Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements about the 95-95-95 framework:

1. It aims to increase awareness of HIV status.

2. It promotes access to antiretroviral therapy.

3. It aims to achieve viral suppression among people receiving treatment.

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: D. 1, 2 and 3

Mains Question

Q. Explain the significance of the 95-95-95 framework in controlling HIV/AIDS in India. (150 words)

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