# CURRENT AFFAIRS WEEKLY

WEEK 5
JULY, 2025

## MAINS ARTICLE

### GS II

- JUDICIAL PENDENCY IN INDIA
- GAPS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POSH ACT
- NATIONAL COOPERATION POLICY 2025
- INDIA–UK VISION 2035
- 60 YEARS OF INDIA–MALDIVES DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

### GS III

- RENEWABLE ENERGY ALONE CANNOT CURB GLOBAL EMISSIONS
- STAMPEDE AT HARIDWAR'S
- GLACIAL LAKE OUTBURST FLOODS (GLOFS)

## PRELIMS ARTICLE

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# DISCLAIMER

The current affairs articles are segregated from prelims and mains perspective, such separation is maintained in terms of structure of articles. Mains articles have more focus on analysis and prelims articles have more focus on facts.

However, this doesn't mean that Mains articles don't cover facts and PT articles can't have analysis. You are suggested to read all of them for all stages of examination.

# CONTENT

## 5th WEEK - JULY, 2025

## SECTION - A



## SECTION - B

# IAS MAINS 2026

**GO INTENSIVE! GO ALL IN 4 MONTHS**

# IMP

# INTENSIVE MAINS PROGRAMME

**COMPLETE GS MAINS READINESS**
(GS PAPER 1, 2, 3, 4 & ESSAY)
*in*

**4 MONTHS**
08 AUGUST 2025 TO 20 DECEMBER 2025

₹

**COURSE FEE**
₹ 38,000 +GST

**12 AUGUST**
02:00 PM TO 06:30 PM

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01 Intensive & in-depth classes covering GS Paper 1,2,3,4 & Essay

02 Daily Answer Writing for effective Retention & Articulation

03 Critical Thinking & Analytical Skill Development to excel in Mains

04 Classes on Ethics, Case Studies and Essay Writing

05 Comprehensive Mains Test Series of 21 Tests: (12 Sectional + 5 Essay + 4 Mock)

06 Personalised Mentorship to track individual progress

07 Mains Previous Year Questions Practice Module with detailed Discussion

08 120+Hr Mains Updation Classes after Prelims

09 Advance Study Material

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# SECTION -A

# MAINS ISSUES

## JUDICIAL PENDENCY IN INDIA

**CONTEXT**

The staggering pendency of over 5 crore cases in Indian courts, alongside recent remarks by President Droupadi Murmu on the "black coat syndrome", has renewed attention to judicial delays and the need for systemic reform.

### Judicial Backlog, Case Management Deficits, and Alternative Dispute Resolution as a Path to Reform

#### Scale of Judicial Pendency in India

- Over **5 crore cases** are pending across all levels:
  - **Supreme Court (SC):** ~86,700 cases
  - **High Courts (HCs):** ~63.3 lakh cases
  - **District/Subordinate Courts:** ~4.6 crore cases
- These numbers are reflective of chronic systemic bottlenecks and a sluggish justice delivery mechanism.

#### Institutional Bottlenecks Hindering Timely Justice

- **Human Resource Deficit**
  - Judiciary operates at **79% of its sanctioned strength**.
  - **5,665 vacancies** out of 26,927 sanctioned posts.
  - **Judge-to-population ratio:** 15 per 10 lakh (current) vs **50 per 10 lakh** recommended by the **Law Commission (1987)**.
  - District judiciary averages **18 judges per 10 lakh population**, despite handling 87% of litigation volume.

#### Inefficient Case Management

- Absence of clear **timelines for filings**, hearings, and **witness examination**.
- **No national framework** for scheduling or monitoring of court processes.
- Frequent **adjournments and procedural delays** severely impair the timeline of justice.

#### Disparity in Disposal Timelines

- **Criminal vs Civil Case Disposal**
  - **Criminal Cases Resolved within 1 Year:**
    - High Courts: **85.3%**
    - Supreme Court: **79.5%**
    - District Courts: **70.6%**
  - **Civil Cases Disposal within 1 Year:**
    - District Courts: **Only 38.7%**
    - ~20% of civil cases stretch beyond **5 years**.

#### Structural and Procedural Gaps

- **Infrastructural Deficiencies:** Many district courts operate without adequate space, digital facilities, or trained personnel.
- **No Mandated Timelines:** Unlike the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) which mandates speedier disposal in criminal trials, civil codes lack stringent deadlines.
- **Absence of Digital Integration:** Lack of universal e-court infrastructure impairs tracking and automatic scheduling.

### Role of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

- **Significance**
  - ADR includes **mediation, arbitration, conciliation**, and **Lok Adalats**.
  - Provides **cost-effective, time-bound** redressal, especially for civil and pre-litigation disputes.

### Way Forward

- **Structural Reforms**
  - **Implement All India Judicial Services (AIJS)** to ensure timely recruitment and quality judgeship.
  - Create **specialised benches** for tax, environment, and commercial cases to decongest general courts.
- **Process Re-engineering**
  - **Mandate strict timelines** for various case types (especially civil) through statutory backing.
  - **Integrate AI-driven case scheduling** and prioritisation tools into the e-courts system.
- **Strengthen ADR Ecosystem**
  - Institutionalise **pre-litigation mediation** under Section 12A of the Commercial Courts Act.
  - Encourage **community mediation centres** in rural/semi-urban areas.
- **Judicial Performance Monitoring**
  - Set up a **National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG)-based performance review mechanism**.
  - Introduce Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for case disposal and pendency reduction.

# GAPS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POSH ACT

**CONTEXT**

A student in Balasore, Odisha died by self-immolation following inaction by the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) on her sexual harassment complaint.

## Structural and Legal Deficiencies in Enforcement of the POSH Act, 2013

**Background and Legal Evolution of the ICC Mechanism**

### Vishaka Guidelines (1997): Judicial Genesis

- Originated from the *Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan* judgment.
- Issued by the Supreme Court in the wake of Bhanwari Devi's gang rape.
- Mandated complaint committees with gender balance and third-party representation.

### POSH Act, 2013: Codifying Workplace Safety

- Enacted post-Nirbhaya incident.
- Formally institutionalised the ICC for workplaces with 10 or more employees.
- Provided for Local Committees (LCs) at the district level for unorganised sector grievances.

## Institutional Structure and Powers of the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC)

### Composition and Membership

- Headed by a senior woman employee (Presiding Officer).
- Two members with experience in social work/legal knowledge.
- One external member from an NGO or expert on sexual harassment.
- Minimum 50% representation of women is mandated.

### Jurisdiction and Timelines

- Complaints must be filed within three months of the incident.
- Inquiry to be completed within 90 days; findings to be acted upon in 60 days.

### Quasi-Judicial Powers

- ICC has powers equivalent to a civil court under the Civil Procedure Code.
- Confidentiality is legally mandated under Section 16 of the POSH Act.
- Employers are obligated to assist the aggrieved woman if she seeks to file a criminal case.

## Implementation Deficit and Systemic Challenges

### Poor Compliance Across Institutions

- As of 2024, the Supreme Court observed significant non-compliance, both in private and public institutions.
- District Officers, tasked with monitoring and compiling annual reports, have failed to enforce accountability.

### Lack of Inter-Ministerial Coordination

- Ministry of Women and Child Development is nodal agency.
- However, Labour and Industry Ministries oversee workplaces—leading to fragmented accountability.

## Way Forward: Institutional and Legal Reform

### Capacity Building of ICCs

- Mandatory training and certification for all ICC members.

- Inclusion of psychologists or trauma-informed professionals for sensitive handling.

### Robust Monitoring Mechanism

- Mandatory public disclosure of number of complaints filed, redressed, and pending.
- Annual compliance audits by District Officers with penalties for non-reporting.

### Strengthening Victim-Centric Redressal

- Provision for anonymous or third-party complaint filing mechanisms.
- Legal aid support and witness protection protocols for complainants.

### Technology Integration

- Centralised digital grievance redressal portal with tracking system and escalation mechanisms.

## NATIONAL COOPERATION POLICY 2025

**CONTEXT**

Union Home and Cooperation Minister Shri Amit Shah unveiled the National Cooperation Policy 2025 in New Delhi.

Unveiling of the National Cooperation Policy 2025 and its Vision for 'Sahkar Se Samriddhi'

### Background and Evolution of Cooperation Policy

- The **first National Cooperation Policy** was introduced in **2002** under the leadership of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- In **2021**, the **Ministry of Cooperation** was established under the Modi government to revamp and strengthen the cooperative ecosystem.
- A **40-member high-level committee**, led by Shri Suresh Prabhu, formulated the 2025 policy after extensive consultations with over **750 stakeholders**, **RBI**, and **NABARD**.

### Vision, Mission, and Objectives

- **Vision:**
  - "To achieve **Viksit Bharat @2047** through **Sahkar Se Samriddhi** (Prosperity through Cooperation)."
- **Mission:**
  - To build a network of **professional, transparent, self-reliant, and digitally-enabled** cooperative institutions across rural and urban India.

### Key Objectives:

- Triple the contribution of the cooperative sector to GDP by **2034**.
- Ensure **one cooperative unit per Panchayat** (PACS, Dairy, Fisheries, etc.).
- Target inclusion of **50 crore** people into the cooperative movement.
- Increase total number of cooperative societies by **30%** (from 8.3 lakh existing).

### Structural Pillars of the Policy

- **Strengthening Institutional Foundations:**
  - Legal and regulatory reforms, model by-laws, capacity building, and credit access.
- **Enhancing Inclusivity & Expanding Reach:**
  - Focus on **Dalits, tribals, women**, and youth participation.
  - Five **Model Cooperative Villages** per tehsil.
- **Technology & Transparency:**
  - Digitalization of PACS.
  - Cluster-based management & monitoring system.
- **Diversification into Emerging Sectors:**
  - Cooperative participation in **green energy, insurance, taxi services**, etc.
  - Launch of **'Sahkar Taxi'** initiative and **PM Jan Aushadhi Kendras** via PACS.
- **Global Outreach:**
  - Establishment of **National Cooperative Export Limited (NCEL)** for accessing international markets.
- **Capacity Building:**
  - Launch of **Tribhuvan Sahkari University** for cooperative education and skilling.

### Socio-Economic Impacts Envisaged

- Strengthening **grassroots democracy** through **member-centric governance**.
- Integration of rural poor, women SHGs, and MSMEs into formal economy.
- Facilitating **employment generation**, **credit delivery**, and **last-mile service delivery**.
- Promoting **environmental sustainability** and **local entrepreneurship**.

### Challenges in Implementation

- State-level capacity to implement policy uniformly.
- Political interference and bureaucratic inertia.
- Trust deficit in existing cooperatives in certain regions.
- Integration of traditional cooperatives with new-age tech-enabled operations.

### Way Forward

- **Capacity Building**: Train over 50 lakh cooperative workers and managers in next 5 years.
- **Institutional Strengthening**: Encourage audits, transparency, and accountability mechanisms.

- **Legal Reforms**: Uniform cooperative legislation across states to avoid federal discrepancies.
- **Monitoring & Evaluation**: Strong M&E framework linked to KPIs for cooperative performance.
- **Public Awareness**: Launch outreach programs to revive trust in cooperative institutions.

# INDIA–UK VISION 2035

**CONTEXT**

The Prime Ministers of India and the United Kingdom endorsed the "India–UK Vision 2035" during a bilateral meeting in London to advance a future-oriented Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

## Strategic Foundations of India–UK Vision 2035

- Elevates bilateral ties under the **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership** (established in 2021).
- Anchored in **mutual growth**, **technological leadership**, **defence cooperation**, and **climate action**.
- Vision structured around **five core pillars**: **Growth**, **Technology**, **Defence**, **Climate**, and **Education**.

## Growth and Trade Cooperation

- Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)
  - Boosts bilateral trade in **goods and services**.
  - Lays the groundwork for a **Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT)** and **Double Contribution Convention**.
- Institutional Mechanisms
  - Strengthening of JETCO, Economic and Financial Dialogue (EFD), and Financial Markets Dialogue (FMD).
  - Enhancing capital market connectivity and financial sector innovation.
- Sectoral Focus
  - Collaboration in renewable energy, health sciences, creative industries, AI in financial services, and green finance.
  - Strengthening legal cooperation, air connectivity, and WTO-centric trade reform.

## Technology and Innovation Partnership

- **Science and Technology Corridors**
  - Launch of UK–India Research & Innovation Corridor and Joint AI Centre.
  - Integration of innovation hubs, start-up ecosystems, and catapult programmes.
- **Critical Technologies**
  - Cooperation in semiconductors, quantum tech, cybersecurity, biotech, and space technology.
  - Joint actions in 6G, biofoundries, and digital public infrastructure.
- **Resilient Supply Chains**
  - Formation of UK–India Critical Minerals Guild.
  - Prioritisation of R&D, circular economy, and traceability protocols.

## Defence and Security Cooperation

- Defence Industrial Roadmap
  - Launch of a **10-year Roadmap** with monitoring by senior officials.
  - Joint projects: **Jet Engine Advanced Core Technologies (JEACT)** and **Electric Propulsion Capability Partnership (EPCP)**.
- Indo-Pacific Engagement
  - Expansion of India's role as a **logistical hub** in the Indian Ocean Region.
  - Setting up of a **Regional Maritime Security Centre of Excellence** under IPOI.
- Security and Counterterrorism
  - Joint condemnation of terrorism in all forms.
  - Action against **terror financing**, **radicalisation**, and **cross-border threats**.
  - Enhanced **cybersecurity cooperation** and **migration Polity and Governance** under the **Migration and Mobility Partnership**.

## Climate and Clean Energy Partnership

- Clean Energy Initiatives
  - Formation of India–UK Offshore Wind Taskforce.
  - Cooperation in energy storage, nuclear decommissioning, and SMR development.
- Climate Finance and Innovation
  - Leverage UK's British International Investment (BII) and UK–India Green Investment Fund.
  - Joint research in AI for climate, hydrogen, and carbon capture.
- Global Climate Engagement
  - Coordination in **ISA**, **OSOWOG**, **CDRI**, and **ZEVTC**.
  - Collaboration on **blue carbon**, **early warning systems**, and **agroforestry**.

## Educational and Cultural Exchange

- **Academic Integration**
  - Encouraging transnational education, dual degrees, and UK university campuses in India.
  - Operationalisation of India–UK Mutual Recognition of Qualifications Agreement.
- **Youth and Skill Development**

- Launch of **Green Skills Partnership** for sustainable growth.
- Enhancement of **Young Professionals Scheme** and **Study India Programme**.

## Way Forward:

- Ensure **time-bound delivery** of action points, particularly in **FTA, BIT**, and **climate finance**.
- Strengthen **public-private participation** in critical sectors.
- Expand **track-II diplomacy** to harness academic, business, and civil society inputs.
- Enhance **data-sharing protocols** for cybersecurity, defence tech, and counterterrorism.
- Institutionalise **diaspora engagement strategies** to deepen people-to-people ties.

**PYQ:**

**Q: 'India has recently signed a free trade agreement with several countries.' Discuss the challenges in ensuring that such agreements are mutually beneficial in the context of India's economy. (2020)**

# 60 YEARS OF INDIA–MALDIVES DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

**CONTEXT**

On July 25, 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Maldivian President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu jointly released commemorative stamps to mark the 60th anniversary of the establishment of India–Maldives diplomatic relations.

## India–Maldives Diplomatic Relations

### Historical Context & Evolution of Ties

- **Establishment of Relations (1965)**: Diplomatic ties began post-British withdrawal from Maldives.
- **India's Role Post-2008**: India built wide-ranging ties with Maldivian political, military, and civil society stakeholders post-Maldives' democratic transition.
- **Operation Cactus (1988)**: India thwarted a coup attempt, showcasing commitment to Maldives' sovereignty.

## Strategic and Geopolitical Significance

- **Strategic Location**: Maldives is positioned along vital Indian Ocean shipping lanes and south of Lakshadweep; crucial for India's maritime surveillance.
- **Eight Degree Channel**: Separates India's Minicoy Island from the Maldives; a critical sea route for global trade and naval logistics.
- **Indian Ocean Stability**: Maldives' peace aligns with India's "Neighbourhood First" and SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) doctrine.

## Cultural and Historical Linkages

- **Buddhist Past**: Until the 12th century, Maldives practised Vajrayana Buddhism; Indic civilizational influence is deeply rooted.
- **People-to-People Ties**: Common heritage fosters goodwill, bolstered by Indian diaspora and education ties.

## Economic and Developmental Engagement

- **Essential Commodities**: India exports rice, medicines, vegetables, etc., critical for Maldives' sustenance.
- **Infrastructure Assistance**: Supply of cement, rock boulders; large-scale projects under India's Line of Credit (LoC).
- **Indian Tourists**: India has been the top tourist source for Maldives post-COVID, contributing over 11% of tourist arrivals in 2023.

## Education and Capacity Building

- **Higher Education Destination**: India is a preferred hub for Maldivian students; scholarships and medical education are key areas.
- **Human Resource Development**: Technical and professional training under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme.

## Defence and Security Cooperation

- **Military Presence**: India maintains a limited defence presence for humanitarian assistance, maritime surveillance, and radar integration.
- **Joint Exercises**:
  - *Dosti* (Coast Guard with Sri Lanka),
  - *Ekuverin* (Bilateral army exercise),
  - *Ekatha* (Special forces/maritime exercises).
- **Disaster Relief Partner**: India helped during 2004 tsunami, drinking water shortages (2014), and COVID-19 crisis.

## Challenges in India–Maldives Defence Ties

### Geopolitical Rivalries

- **China's Strategic Presence**:
  - Chinese projects like **Sinamale Bridge** and port development under BRI signal a power shift.
  - Risk of Maldives becoming part of China's **'String of Pearls' strategy** in the Indian Ocean.
- **Debt-Trap Diplomacy Concerns**:
  - Maldives has incurred significant debt to China, reducing strategic autonomy and raising sovereignty risks.

### Internal Political Volatility

- **"India Out" Campaign (2023):**
  - Spearheaded by opposition forces citing threats to sovereignty due to Indian troop presence.
  - Led to public resentment and government pressure to **remove Indian military personnel**.
- **Frequent Policy Reversals:**
  - Shift in power from India-friendly to pro-China regimes undermines strategic consistency.

### Security Concerns

- **Terrorism and Radicalization**:
  - Maldives has the **highest per capita foreign fighters** for ISIS from South Asia.
  - Presence of **Pakistan-backed jihadi networks** raises red flags for India's maritime and regional security.
- **Maritime Vulnerabilities**:
  - Increasing militarization around **strategic chokepoints** like the Eight Degree Channel.

### Way Forward

- **Multilateral and Trilateral Engagement**
  - **IORA, SAGAR Initiative**: Push Maldives' participation in **regional maritime cooperation frameworks**.
  - **Trilateral Maritime Dialogue (India–Maldives–Sri Lanka)**: Revive and institutionalize it for counter-piracy, HADR (Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief), and intel-sharing.
- **Infrastructure and Strategic Projects**
  - **Fast-track Completion of Indian Projects**: Projects like **Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP)** must serve as visible alternatives to Chinese-funded infrastructure.
  - **Dual-Use Facilities**: Develop ports, radar stations, and airstrips that can serve both civilian and security purposes.

### Soft Power & Public Diplomacy

- **Civil-Military Assistance**: Enhance India's visibility via humanitarian missions, **medical diplomacy**, and climate resilience efforts.
- **Education and Cultural Linkages**: Scholarships, Hindi/Malayalam language courses, and student exchanges to shape a positive Indian image.

### Security Cooperation with Transparency

- **Clarity on Military Presence**: Clearly communicate the **non-combat role** of Indian military personnel (e.g., operating aircraft gifted to Maldives).
- **Counterterrorism Training**: Joint training programs for Maldivian forces to tackle radicalization and improve internal security.

# RENEWABLE ENERGY ALONE CANNOT CURB GLOBAL EMISSIONS

**CONTEXT**

The International Renewable Energy Association (IRENA) reported a record global addition of 582 GW in renewable energy capacity in 2024, yet fossil fuel use remains unabated, leading to persistent growth in global emissions.

## Challenges in Global Energy Transition and Climate Mitigation

- **Rising Renewable Capacity but Limited Climate Gains**
  - **Annual Growth in Renewables:**
    - The world added 582 GW of renewable energy capacity in 2024, a 15% increase over 2023 (IRENA).
    - This marks the highest annual rise in renewable capacity addition recorded to date.
  - **Fossil Fuel Dominance Persists:**
    - Despite this boom, fossil fuels still constitute over **70% of global electricity production**.
    - Fossil fuel electricity generation grew from **15,556 TWh (2000)** to **over 29,867 TWh (2022)**.
    - Renewables' share rose from **18.3% (2000)** to **29.9% (2022)**, but this has not displaced fossil generation in absolute terms.
- **Global Imbalance in Renewable Deployment**
  - **Uneven Regional Progress:**
    - Europe and China have led renewable deployment; Africa, West Asia, and parts of South Asia lag significantly.
    - In 2024, **China accounted for 36.4%** of global renewable capacity addition (212 GW of the total 582 GW).
  - **Monopoly of Supply Chains:**
    - China dominates manufacturing and supply chains of solar panels, wind turbines, and batteries, leading to dependency risks for developing nations.
- **Challenges to Transitioning Energy Systems**
  - **Energy Security vs Climate Goals:**
    - Countries are prioritising energy security due to geopolitical tensions (e.g., Russia-Ukraine war), thereby reinforcing fossil fuel dependence.
  - **Technical and Economic Constraints:**
    - Renewable intermittency and insufficient grid infrastructure hinder large-scale transition, particularly in developing economies.

- Limited storage solutions and high costs also obstruct full-scale replacement of thermal power.

### Misalignment Between Installed Capacity and Emission Reduction

- **Electricity:**
  - Electricity is only **20% of final global energy consumption**; sectors like transport and industry still rely heavily on fossil fuels.
  - Hence, emissions from oil and gas use in these sectors continue to rise despite the decarbonisation of electricity production.

## Way Forward

- **Phasing Out Fossil Subsidies:** Redirect fossil fuel subsidies to storage and green hydrogen development.
- **Global Technology Transfer:** Encourage North-South collaboration on renewable technologies and battery storage.
- **Universal Energy Access:** Ensure that energy transition policies do not compromise access in the Global South.
- **Diversified Supply Chains:** Reduce dependency on single-nation dominance (like China) by encouraging decentralised manufacturing.
- **Integrated Climate Policy:** Decarbonisation must expand to sectors beyond electricity—transport (EVs, biofuels), heating, and industry (green steel, hydrogen).

While renewables are expanding, they are merely supplementing—**not replacing**—fossil fuel-based generation. The **absolute use of fossil fuels continues to grow**, driven by rising global energy demand.

## International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)

### Establishment & Headquarters

- **Established**: 26 January 2009 (officially operational in 2011)
- **Headquarters**: Abu Dhabi, **United Arab Emirates**

### Membership

- **Members**: 169 countries (as of 2025), including **India**
- **Significance**: First international agency focusing exclusively on **renewable energy**

### Objective

- To promote the widespread adoption and sustainable use of renewable energy globally
- Act as a platform for policy, technology, and financial cooperation

### Reports: Publishes flagship reports like:

- World Energy Transitions Outlook
- Renewable Capacity Statistics

### India and IRENA

- India is a full member
- Collaborates with IRENA on:
  - ISA (International Solar Alliance) synergy
  - RE-Invest events and clean energy projects
- India's focus: solar, wind, green hydrogen under **Mission LiFE & Panchamrit**

# STAMPEDE AT HARIDWAR'S

**CONTEXT**

Eight pilgrims were killed and over 30 injured in a stampede at the Mansa Devi temple in Haridwar, Uttarakhand, on July 28, 2024.

## Definition & Nature of a Stampede

- **Stampede** refers to a sudden, uncontrolled surge of a large crowd, often triggered by **panic**, **fear**, or **excitement** in congested spaces.
- A stampede becomes fatal when **movement is restricted** and pressure builds up, resulting in **trampling or suffocation**.

## Key Causes of Stampedes

### Organizational Failures

- **Inadequate Crowd Management:** Absence of trained marshals or **police supervision**.
- **Poor Planning:** Lack of **crowd modelling**, **emergency drills**, or **early warning systems**.
- **Communication Breakdown:** No **public announcement system** or **exit signage**.

### Human Factors

- **Panic/Fear:** Often triggered by **rumours**, **explosions**, or **fire** threats.
- **Excitement/Euphoria:** Seen during **festivals**, **political rallies**, or **concerts**.
- **Aggression/Impatience:** Linked to **limited access**, **long queues**, or **poor crowd discipline**.

### Infrastructure-Related Causes

- **Overcrowding:** Density exceeding **4-5 persons per square metre** becomes dangerous.
- **Poor Design: Narrow passageways**, **blocked exits**, and **lack of emergency escape routes**.
- **Adverse Conditions: Slippery terrain**, **low visibility**, and **staircases** increase risk.

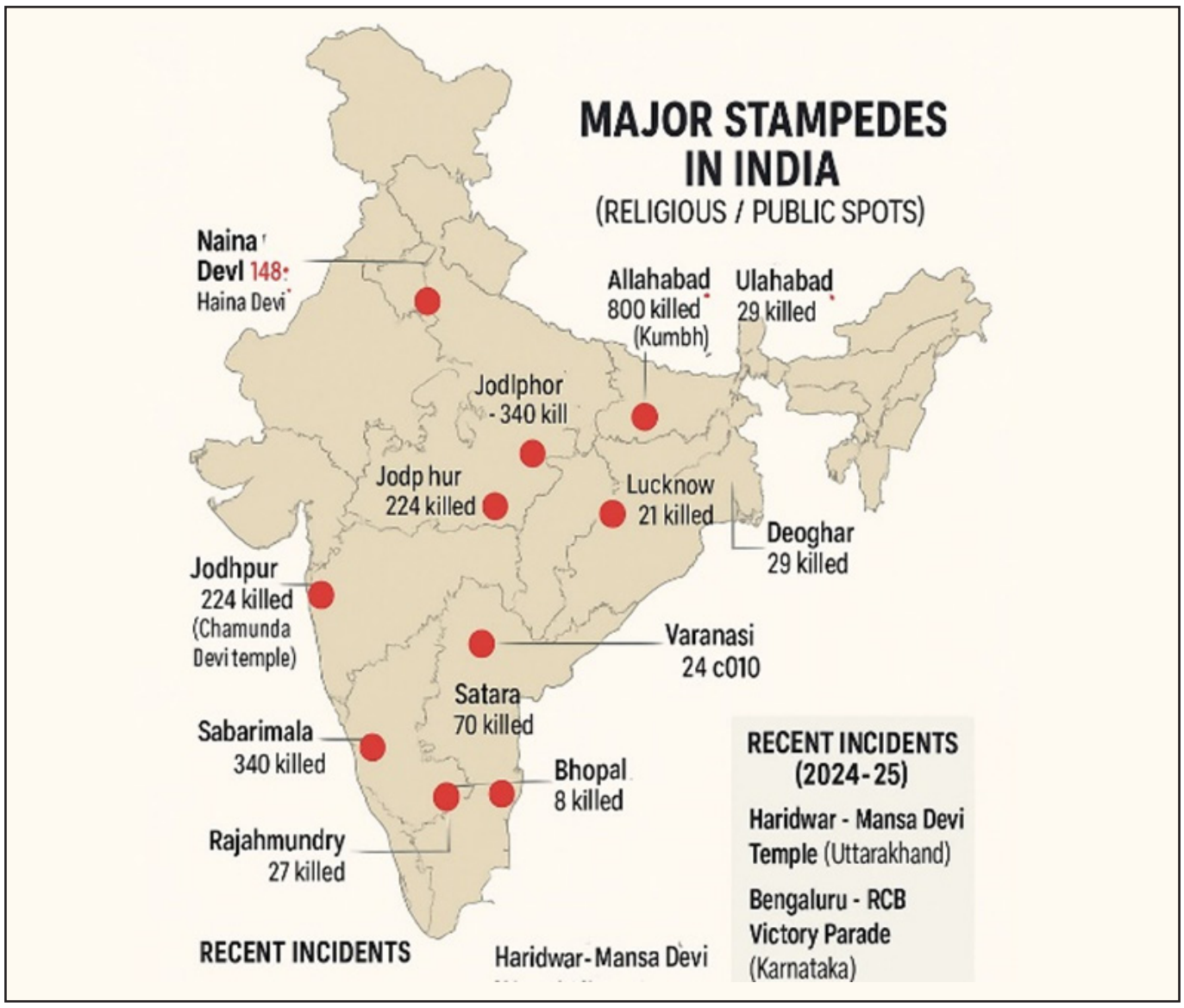


***Figure No. 01***

## Impacts of Stampedes

### Human Costs

- **Fatalities and Injuries:** Severe fractures, **internal injuries**, and high death tolls.
- **Psychological Trauma:** Survivors often suffer from **PTSD**, **panic attacks**, or **grief disorder**.

### Economic and Infrastructure Loss

- Damage to **public property**, **temporary structures**, and **religious or event infrastructure**.
- Post-disaster expenditures on **relief**, **rehabilitation**, and **structural upgrades**.

### Administrative & Legal Fallout

- Investigations, **judicial inquiries**, and **compensation claims**.
- Demands for **regulatory reforms**, **accountability**, and **standardised protocols** for crowd events.

## Stampede Incidents in India

- **2025 – Haridwar, Mansa Devi Temple**: Panic triggered by a rumour about a snapped electric wire; led to chaos on a densely crowded stairway.
- **2025 – Bengaluru, Karnataka (RCB Final Celebration):** Dozens injured during victory celebration of Royal Challengers Bengaluru at Brigade Road; crowd swelled beyond capacity, police overwhelmed.
- **2024 – Hathras, UP**: Over 121 deaths due to lack of crowd control at a religious congregation.
- **2017 – Mumbai Station**: 22 deaths during rush hour on an overcrowded footbridge.
- **2013 – Allahabad (Kumbh Mela)**: 36 deaths due to confusion over platform changes.
- **2008 – Naina Devi Temple, HP**: 145 deaths after rumours of a landslide triggered panic.
- **2005 – Mandhardevi Temple, Maharashtra**: Over 265 deaths during pilgrimage overcrowding.

## NDMA Guidelines to Control Stampedes:

- **Infrastructure Development**: Ensure wide, safe pathways and adequate open spaces to accommodate large crowds, especially in high-risk areas.
- **Route Segregation**: Separate routes for normal, emergency, and express flows reduce congestion and aid vulnerable groups like children and elderly.
- **Panic Management**: Rapid response by trained staff is essential to defuse panic from triggers like rumors, loud sounds, or sudden movements.
- **Community-Based Crowd Control**: Emphasizes communication, cooperation, and volunteer involvement over force to manage public gatherings.
- **Demand Management**: Uses data on crowd trends, peak timings, and advance registration to regulate crowd inflow and avoid surges.
- **Fire Safety**: Enforces safe electrical setups and cautious use of LPG and fireworks to prevent secondary disasters during events.

### Way Forward

- **Use of Technology:** Drone monitoring, AI-based crowd density estimation, mobile alerts.
- **Urban Planning:** Venue certification based on capacity, emergency pathways.
- **Legal Measures:** Enforcing **Model Guidelines for Crowd Management (MHA, 2016)** and **NDMA guidelines**.
- **Training & Simulation:** Mandatory **mock drills** before mass gatherings.
- **Public Awareness:** Clear signage, communication channels, and citizen participation.

# GLACIAL LAKE OUTBURST FLOODS (GLOFS)

**CONTEXT**

On July 8, 2025, a Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) originating in Tibet caused devastation in Nepal, highlighting transboundary vulnerabilities and climate-induced risks in the Himalayas.

### Understanding GLOFs and Their Triggers

#### What is a GLOF?

- A Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) is a sudden release of water from a glacial lake due to dam failure, often leading to catastrophic downstream flooding.

#### Types of Glacial Lakes in the Himalayas

- **Supraglacial Lakes**: Formed on glaciers; prone to melting during high summer temperatures.
- **Moraine-Dammed Lakes**: Blocked by loose sediment or ice; vulnerable to sudden collapse due to structural weakness.

#### Major Triggers

- Ice or rock avalanches, Earthquakes, Excessive glacial meltwater pressure, Landslides into glacial lakes etc.

### GLOF Impacts in Nepal and the Himalayas

#### July 2025 Event

- Washed away a China-built bridge on the Lende River in Nepal
- Damaged four hydroelectric plants, cutting off ~8% of Nepal's power supply
- Lack of early warning from China cited by Nepalese officials

#### Previous GLOF Incidents in Nepal

- **Solukhumbu (2024)**, **Mustang (2025)**, **Humla (2025)**
- **Historical Cases**: Cirenma Co (1981), Dig Tsho (1985), Tama Pokhari (1998)
- Demonstrates a repeated pattern of high vulnerability without transboundary alert mechanisms

### India's GLOF Vulnerability

#### Geographic Exposure

- **28,000+ glacial lakes in Indian Himalayan Region (IHR)**
- Over 7,500 lakes above 4,500m; inaccessible for most of the year
- **Risk hotspots:** Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh

#### Recent Incidents

- **Sikkim (2023):** South Lhonak GLOF damaged the $2 billion Chungthang Dam
- **Kedarnath (2013):** Chorabari lake outburst, compounded by cloudbursts and landslides — caused massive devastation

#### Environmental and Infrastructure Risks

- Riverbed siltation (Teesta), dam failures, and displacement of communities
- Increased frequency due to record global temperatures (2023–2024 were hottest years globally)

### India's National Response and Mitigation Strategy

#### NDMA & CoDRR Initiatives

- Shift from reactive to proactive disaster risk reduction
- Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction (CoDRR) formulated a national strategy

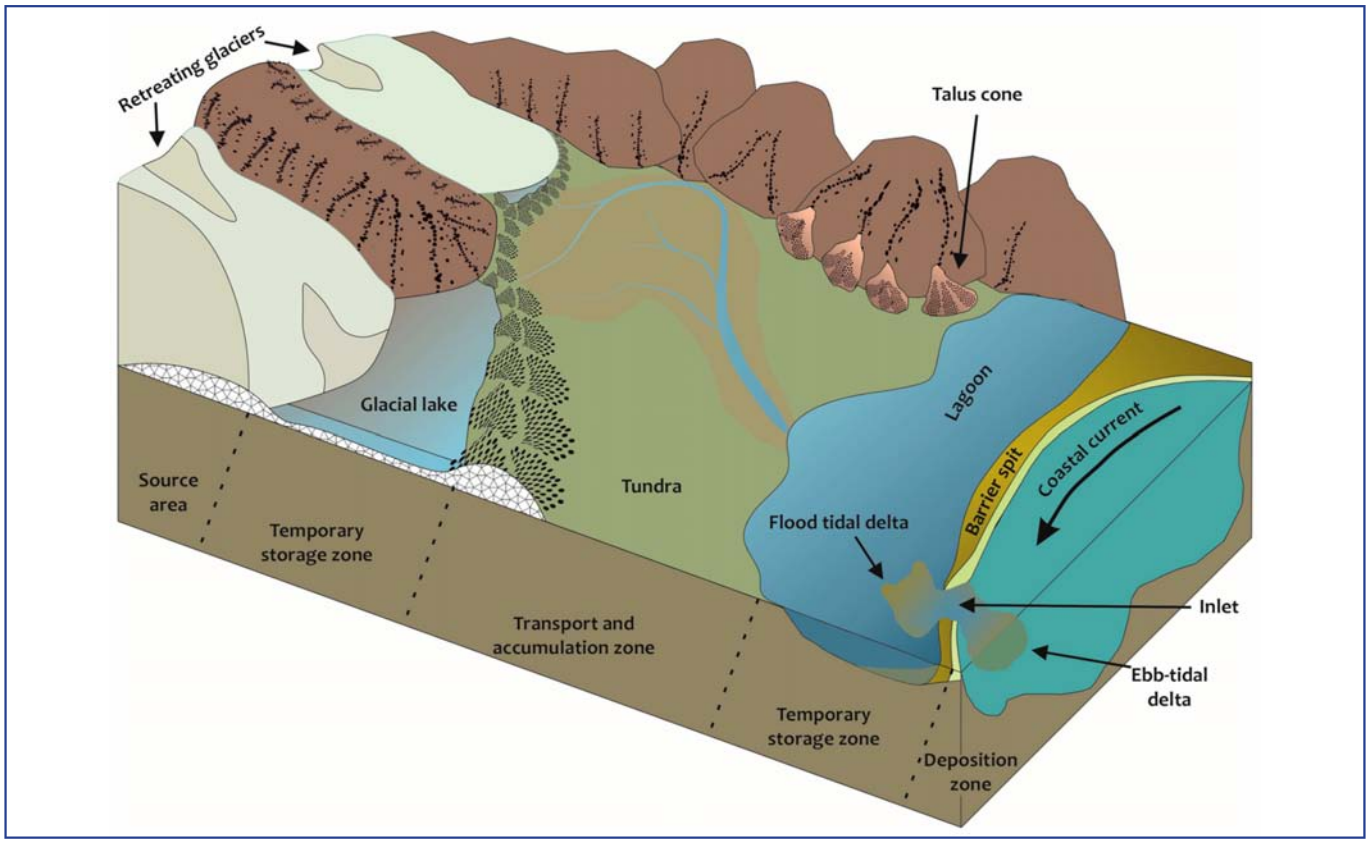


*Figure No. 02*

## Key Features of the National Programme

- $20 million initiative for 195 at-risk glacial lakes
- Risk categorized in four levels
- **Five-fold objectives:**
  - **Hazard Assessment**
  - **Automated Weather and Water Stations (AWWS)**
  - **Early Warning Systems (EWS)**
  - **Risk Mitigation** (e.g., drawdown channels, retention walls)
  - **Community Engagement**

## Use of Technology

- **Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) Interferometry**: Detects micro-changes in slope stability
- **Electrical Resistivity Tomography (ERT)**: Assesses moraine dam integrity
- **UAVs and Bathymetric Surveys**: Determine lake volume and topography

## Field Implementation

- Expeditions to 40 high-risk lakes in 2024
- Local communities engaged to ensure cultural and ecological sensitivities are respected
- Monitoring stations in Sikkim providing near real-time lake data every 10 minutes

## Challenges Identified

- **Lack of Transboundary Early Warning**: No formal mechanism with China despite repeated cross-border GLOFs
- **Data Deficiency**: Inadequate monitoring stations; surveys possible only in brief summer window
- **Technological Gaps**: Limited indigenous innovation and underutilisation of advanced geospatial tools
- **Community Disconnect**: Cultural resistance and inadequate awareness among local populations

## Way Forward

- **Bilateral/Regional Cooperation**: Formalise early warning agreements with China, Nepal, and Bhutan through multilateral platforms (e.g., BIMSTEC, SCO)
- **Technological Investment**: Expand use of SAR, UAVs, EWS and geospatial modelling tools in IHR
- **Local Capacity Building**: Involve local communities, NGOs, and mountaineering institutions in field surveillance
- **Policy Integration**: Align glacial risk mapping with national climate adaptation and infrastructure planning
- **Cryosphere Research Funding**: Support Indian R&D institutions for long-term climate-glacier-disaster research synergy

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# SECTION -B

# QUICK BYTES

## KALA UTSAV 2025

**CONTEXT**

Twenty-nine artists practicing Sohrai, Pattachitra, and Patua art from Jharkhand, Odisha, and West Bengal participated in the **Artists in Residence Programme** (Kala Utsav 2025) at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

### Art Forms Featured:

#### Sohrai Art:

- **Origin**: **Tribal art** of **Jharkhand**, especially among the Santhal tribe.
- **Medium:** Natural colours on mud walls.
- **Themes:** Agriculture, fertility, and domestic life.

#### Pattachitra:

- **Origin**: **Odisha** (also practised in West Bengal).
- **Meaning:** 'Patta' (cloth) + 'Chitra' (painting).
- **Themes**: Jagannath cult, Vaishnavism, mythological narratives.
- **Technique:** Intricate detailing with natural colours on palm leaves or cloth.

#### Patua Art:

- **Origin: West Bengal**, especially in rural districts.
- Itinerant scroll painters and singers (Patuas).
- Narrative scrolls often combined with oral storytelling.
- **Subjects:** Religious epics, folk tales, and even modern themes (e.g., social awareness).

## RETURN OF PIPRAHWA RELICS

**CONTEXT**

The sacred Piprahwa relics of Lord Buddha, once scheduled for auction in Hong Kong, have been successfully repatriated to India through a strategic public-private partnership.

### Discovery and Provenance:

- The Piprahwa relics were discovered in 1898 by William Claxton Peppé, a British civil engineer, in Piprahwa, Siddharthnagar district, Uttar Pradesh.
- These relics are associated with the mortal remains of Lord Buddha and are considered among the earliest archaeological links to Buddhism in India.
- The relics are believed to date back to the 3rd century BCE and were likely enshrined by Shakyas, the clan to which Gautama Buddha belonged.

### Significance of Repatriation:

- This act of cultural repatriation reflects India's *assertive stance on reclaiming spiritual and historical artefacts* as part of its global heritage mission.

### Broader Cultural Diplomacy:

- The initiative is aligned with India's increasing use of *soft power and cultural diplomacy*, particularly in its outreach to Buddhist-majority countries in South and Southeast Asia.
- It enhances India's image as the *custodian of global Buddhist heritage* and strengthens its civilisational leadership narrative.

# GANGAIKONDA CHOLAPURAM

**CONTEXT**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed devotees during the *Aadi Thiruvathirai Festival* at Gangaikonda Cholapuram, commemorating 1000 years of the Brihadeshwara Temple and the Chola Empire's legacy.

## Gangaikonda Cholapuram

### Historical Background

- **Founded by**: *Rajendra Chola I* (son of Rajaraja Chola I) in **1025 CE**.
- **Reason for establishme2`nt**: To commemorate his successful **northern military campaign** up to the **Ganges River**.
- **Symbolic gesture**: Brought Ganga water and poured it into a reservoir — *Chola Gangam* — as a mark of conquest.

### Political Importance

- **Capital of the Chola Empire**: 1025–1279 CE.
- Controlled a vast territory — from the **Tungabhadra river in the north to Sri Lanka** in the south.
- Served as a **strategic centre** for administration, military command, trade, and culture.
- Palace known as *Chola-Keralan Thirumaaligai* (per Vira Rajendra's inscriptions) — emphasized pan-regional rule.

### Architectural Features

### Gangaikonda Cholisvaram Temple:

- Built in **Dravidian architectural style**.
- Modeled after **Brihadisvara Temple at Thanjavur**, but **graceful and intricate** rather than massive and bold.

### Unique Features:

- *Jalasthambam* or "Liquid Pillar of Victory"
- Exquisite stone carvings, refined **vimana** (temple tower).
- Sculptures of *Nataraja*, *Chandesanugrahamurti*, and *Ardhanarishvara* display **Chola artistic finesse**.
  - Recognized as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** under the "Great Living Chola Temples".

### Aadi Thiruvathirai (also known as Aadi Ardra)

- Date Observed: July 23
- Astrological Basis: Celebrated when the Thiruvathirai (Ardra) nakshatra falls in the Tamil month of Aadi (mid-July to mid-August)
- Commemoration: Marks the birth star of Rajendra Chola I, the illustrious Chola emperor (r. 1014–1044 CE)

# ANCIENT CHOLA ELECTORAL SYSTEM

**CONTEXT**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during his visit to the Brihadeeswara Temple at Gangaikonda Cholapuram on July 27, 2025, highlighted the Chola Empire's early democratic practices, notably the "Kudavolai" system of ballot-based elections.

## Historical Polity and Governance Mechanism:

- The Cholas, especially under Rajendra Chola I, developed an advanced form of **local self-government** that predates many Western democratic models. This system was institutionalized through **Uttaramerur inscriptions**, which codified rules for local administrative councils.

## Kudavolai System ("Ballot Pot Election"):

- The process was not symbolic but **regulated and merit-based**. Names of eligible candidates (landowners, tax-payers aged 35–70 years with Vedic knowledge) were written on palm leaves and placed in a pot (kudam). The draw was supervised and based on civic trust and **transparency**.

## Eligibility & Disqualification Criteria:

- Candidates had to be free from debt, criminal charges, alcohol abuse, and close kinship with sitting officials. These stringent norms ensured **moral rectitude in public service**, which resonates with modern disqualification laws under **Representation of the People Act, 1951**.

# INTERLINKING OF RIVERS

**CONTEXT**

The Ministry of Jal Shakti released the latest status report on the National Perspective Plan (NPP) for Inter-Linking of Rivers (ILR), highlighting ongoing developments such as the Ken-Betwa Link Project and associated flood management initiatives.

## National Perspective Plan (NPP):

- The NPP was formulated by the Government of India to address regional water imbalances by transferring water from **surplus** river basins to **deficit** regions.

## Executing Agency:

- The **National Water Development Agency (NWDA)** is entrusted with the formulation of link proposals, feasibility studies, and detailed project reports.

## Ken-Betwa Link Project (KBLP):

- First ILR project under implementation
- Approved in **December 2021**
- Estimated cost: **₹44,605 crore** (at 2020–21 price level)
- Central support: **₹39,317 crore**
- Special Purpose Vehicle: **Ken Betwa Link Project Authority (KBLPA)**
- **Status:** Work on the **Daudhan Dam**, a major component, has been awarded

### Kosi-Mechi Intra-State Link Project

- The project has been approved under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana – Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (PMKSY-AIBP), which aims to expedite completion of long-pending irrigation projects.
- **Implementing Ministry:** Ministry of Jal Shakti.
- **Geographical Coverage:** It covers four flood-prone districts in **Bihar**: Araria, Purnea, Kishanganj, and Katihar.

### About Project

- Involves remodelling the Eastern Kosi Main Canal (EKMC) and to connect with the Mechi River.
- Aims to ensure inter-basin water transfer within Bihar.
- **Timeline:** Targeted for completion by **March 2029**.

### Benefits:

- Irrigation coverage for **2.15 lakh hectares**.
- Significant contribution to **flood mitigation**, particularly in a flood-prone region.
- Enhances agricultural productivity and rural livelihood resilience in North Bihar.

# MASSIVE 8.8 EARTHQUAKE JOLTS RUSSIA

**CONTEXT**

A powerful 8.8 magnitude earthquake struck Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula, triggering tsunami waves across the Pacific region.

## Kamchatka Peninsula

### Location & Geography

- Located in **Far Eastern Russia**, between the **Sea of Okhotsk** (west) and the **Pacific Ocean/Bering Sea** (east).
- Forms part of **Kamchatka Krai** administrative region.
- Lies on the **Pacific Ring of Fire** – a tectonically active zone.
- **Dimensions**: ~1,200 km (N-S length), ~480 km (width).
- **Area**: ~370,000 sq. km (about the size of **New Zealand**).

## Volcanic and Seismic Activity

- One of the world's **densest geothermal hotspots**.
- Hosts **>150 volcanoes**, of which **29 are active**.
- Example: **Klyuchevskaya Sopka** – highest volcano (4,750 m), and most active.
- Frequently experiences **earthquakes and volcanic eruptions** due to subduction of the **Pacific Plate beneath the Eurasian Plate**.

## Climate

- Harsh and subarctic.
  - **Winters**: Long, cold, and snowy.
  - **Summers**: Wet and cool.
- **Permafrost** and frequent **blizzards** are common

***(Figure No. 01 on next page)***

# FLASH FLOOD VULNERABILITY IN INDIA

**CONTEXT**

A recent study by researchers at IIT Gandhinagar, published in *Nature*, analysed flash flood patterns in the Indian subcontinent, identifying highly vulnerable river basins and key driving factors.

## Flash Flood Hotspots:

- Most flash floods occur in the **Himalayan, Central Indian, and West Coast regions**.
- The **Brahmaputra, Narmada-Tapi, Mahanadi, Godavari, Ganga, Mahi, Krishna, and Indus** river basins have been identified as either "extremely prone" or "highly susceptible" to flash flooding.


*Figure No. 01*

## Increase in Flash Flood Events:

- Flash flood events in India **increased from 132 in 2002 to 184 in 2020** (as per official figures).
- Notable increases observed especially in **the Brahmaputra basin**, followed by **Ganga and Krishna basins** since 1995.

## Driving Factors:

- **Only 25%** of flash floods are triggered solely by **extreme precipitation**.
- Remaining **75%** result from **compound effects**:
  - High antecedent soil moisture,
  - Prolonged heavy rainfall,
  - Rapid rainfall event after wet soil saturation.

## Role of Climate Change:

- Between **1981–2020**, rise in **extreme rainfall frequency** due to warming trends.
- **Every 1°C increase** in temperature raises moisture-holding capacity by **7%**, causing **more intense precipitation** events.

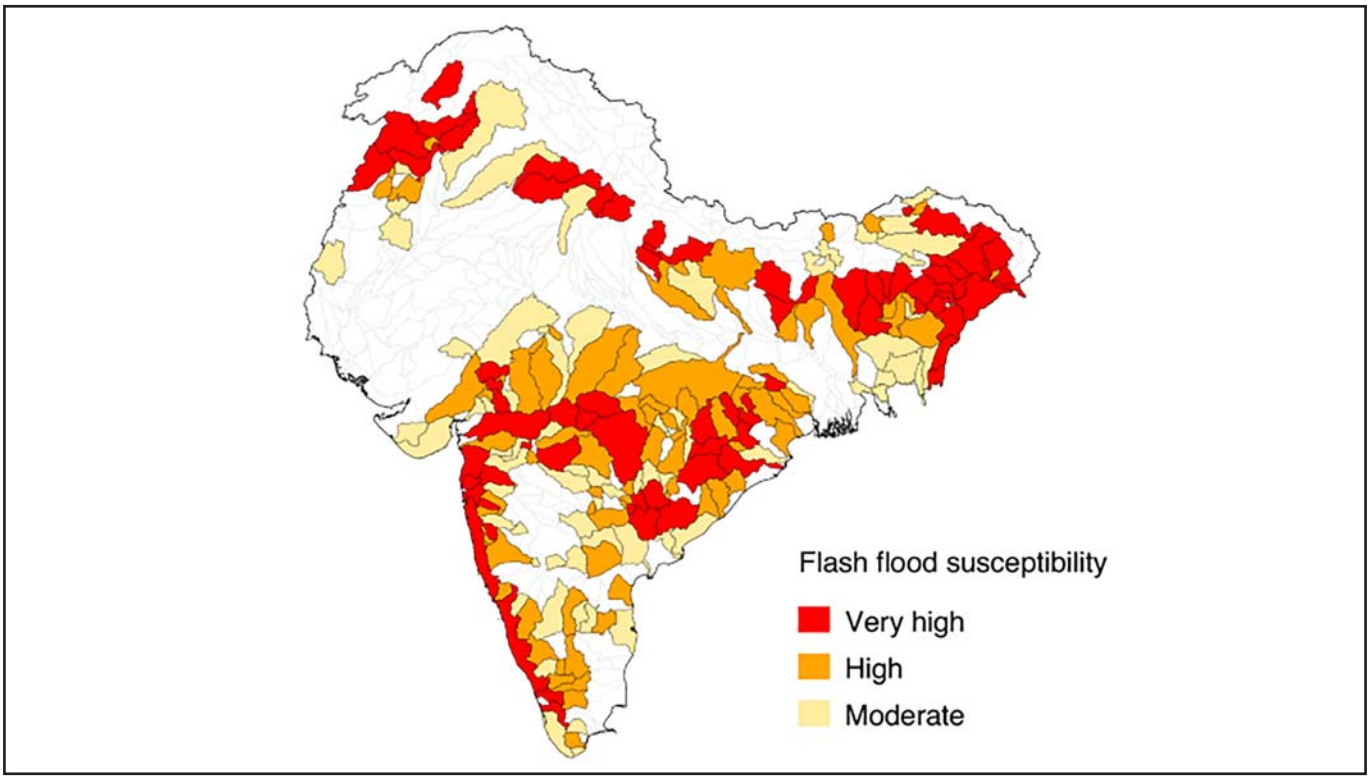


*Figure No. 02*

### Geomorphological Factors:

- **Steep slopes and high relief** in Himalayan and Western Ghats sub-basins contribute to faster runoff and flood onset.
- In **central India**, flashiness is driven more by **rainfall concentration**.

### Adaptation and Mitigation:

- Calls for **basin-specific strategies** based on **rainfall intensity, soil type, slope**, and **geomorphology**.
- Importance of **resilient infrastructure, early warning systems**, and **region-specific adaptation planning** emphasized.

# ECI APPOINTS OFFICIALS FOR VICE-PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, 2025

**CONTEXT**

The Election Commission of India has appointed the Returning Officer and Assistant Returning Officers for the conduct of the Vice-Presidential Election, 2025.

## Constitutional Basis:

- The **Vice-President of India** is elected under the authority of **Article 66** of the Indian Constitution.
- The **Election Commission of India (ECI)** derives its power from **Article 324** to conduct such elections.

## Governing Law and Rules:

- The election is conducted as per The Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections Act, 1952.
- Supplemented by The Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections Rules, 1974.

## Electoral College:

- The Vice-President is elected by an electoral college comprising only the members of both Houses of Parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha) using proportional representation by means of a single transferable vote, and voting is conducted by secret ballot.
- **Nominated members** are also **eligible to vote** in this election (unlike in the Presidential election).

## Returning Officer Appointment:

- **Under Section 3 of the 1952 Act**, the ECI appoints a Returning Officer in consultation with the Central Government.
- The **Secretary General of Rajya Sabha is conventionally appointed as the Returning Officer** if the Secretary General of Lok Sabha was appointed in the previous election, maintaining a rotational convention.

# GOVERNMENT SCHEMES TO MITIGATE POST-HARVEST LOSSES IN INDIA

**CONTEXT**

MoFPI released findings from a 2022 NABCONS study assessing post-harvest losses across 54 agri-commodities in 15 agro-climatic zones during 2020–22.

## Extent of Post-Harvest Losses (as per NABCONS 2022 Study):

- **Cereals:** 3.89% – 5.92%
- **Pulses:** 5.65% – 6.74%
- **Fruits:** 6.02% – 15.05%
- **Vegetables:** 4.87% – 11.61%
- **Milk:** 0.87%, **Meat:** 2.34%, **Marine Fisheries:** 8.76%, **Egg:** 6.03%
- Losses largely due to **inefficient harvesting, handling, storage, and transportation**.

## Key Government Schemes Addressing Post-Harvest Losses:

- **MIDH (Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture):** Promotes cold storages, ripening chambers, pack houses for horticultural produce.
- **Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF):** Offers medium/long-term debt financing for building warehousing, cold chains, processing units.
- **Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure (AMI):** Provides support for storage and market infrastructure development.
- **e-NAM (National Agriculture Market):** Digitally integrates markets; enhances price discovery and minimizes transit losses.
- **10,000 FPO Scheme:** Encourages aggregation, processing, and collective marketing.
- **PMKSY (Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana):** Since 2016–17, aims to reduce agri-waste through post-harvest and processing infrastructure.

# PRADHAN MANTRI BHARTIYA JANAUSHADHI PARIYOJANA (PMBJP)

**CONTEXT**

As of 30 June 2025, 16,912 Jan Aushadhi Kendras (JAKs) are operational; target revised to 20,000 Kendras by 31 March 2026.

## Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP)

### About the Scheme:

- **Launched by**: Government of India (Under Dept. of Pharmaceuticals)

- **Nodal Implementing Agency**: **Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Bureau of India (PMBI)**
- **Objective**: Provide **quality generic medicines** at **affordable prices** to all.
- **Discount Range**: Generic medicines sold at **50%–80% cheaper** than branded equivalents.

# EXPANSION OF TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT FUND SCHEME

**CONTEXT**

The Government has approved an additional ₹500 crore corpus under the TDF Scheme to support Deep-Tech and cutting-edge defence projects.

## Technology Development Fund (TDF) Scheme:

- **Launched by**: Ministry of Defence
- **Implementing Agency**: Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)
- **Objective**: Facilitate **indigenous development of defence technologies** by **MSMEs** and **startups**, including collaboration with academia.
- **Latest Expansion**: Additional ₹500 crore allocated for supporting **Deep-Tech projects** as a **separate vertical**.

# SANCHAR MITRA SCHEME:

**CONTEXT**

The Sanchar Mitra Scheme has been launched nationwide to involve technical students in promoting telecom awareness and digital safety across India.

## Sanchar Mitra Scheme:

### Scheme Overview:

- **Implementing Body:** The Sanchar Mitra Scheme is implemented by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Ministry of Communications.
- **Target Group:** The scheme is targeted at students from technical institutes with active programmes in telecom, electronics, computers, cybersecurity, etc.
- **Mode of Implementation:** DoT's field offices—License Service Areas (LSAs)—coordinate directly with institutes to nominate students as 'Sanchar Mitras'.

### Objectives and Activities:

- **Awareness Generation:** Sanchar Mitras are tasked with conducting community outreach activities to spread awareness on telecom frauds, mobile safety, and responsible telecom usage.
- **Capacity Building:** Participants are provided training on cybersecurity, telecom regulations, emerging telecom technologies, and policy frameworks.
- **Experiential Learning:** Selected students may participate in R&D projects, ITU standardization work, and industry conferences, aligning with India's vision of becoming a telecom innovation hub.

### Strategic Relevance:

- **Digital Empowerment:** The initiative is aligned with national goals of digital inclusion and safe telecom practices.
- **Skilling Youth:** It supports capacity-building in future telecom professionals and promotes research and innovation culture in the sector.
- **Security and Governance:** The scheme indirectly contributes to securing India's digital infrastructure by building a digitally literate and security-conscious population.

# BIMA SAKHI YOJANA

**CONTEXT**

The Union Minister for Rural Development launched the *Bima Sakhi Yojana* in partnership with LIC to promote rural insurance penetration and women-led economic empowerment.

## Bima Sakhi Yojana

### Scheme Overview:

- Bima Sakhi Yojana is a social security initiative under the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) in collaboration with LIC (Life Insurance Corporation of India).
- It falls under the ambit of the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) and aims to realise the government's vision of "Insurance for All by 2047."

### Key Features:

- Trained *Self-Help Group (SHG)* women will be appointed as *Bima Sakhis* at the Gram Panchayat level.
- These women will act as last-mile facilitators of insurance enrolment, renewal, and claim assistance.
- It integrates with existing rural insurance schemes and targets economically vulnerable populations.

# M VIKSIT BHARAT ROZGAR YOJANA (PM-VBRY)

**CONTEXT**

The Union Cabinet has approved the implementation of *PM Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana* (PM-VBRY) from 1st August 2025 to incentivize job creation in India.

## M Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PM-VBRY)

### Objective and Design:

- PM-VBRY is an *Employment Linked Incentive (ELI)* Scheme with an outlay of **₹99,446 crore**.
- It aims to **generate over 3.5 crore jobs** from *01 August 2025 to 31 July 2027*.
- It supports the Government's *Viksit Bharat* vision by targeting *inclusive and sustainable employment*.

### Structure of the Scheme:

- **Part A – Incentive to *First-Time Employees*:**
  - Targets EPFO-registered new employees.
  - Offers **EPF wage support up to ₹15,000** in two installments.
  - Eligibility: Salaried individuals earning up to **₹1 lakh/month**.
  - A portion of the benefit is retained in a *savings/deposit account* to promote saving habits.
- **Part B – Incentive to *Employers*:**
  - Applies across sectors, with special focus on the manufacturing sector.
  - Applicable to additional employees drawing salary up to ₹1 lakh/month.
  - Duration: 2 years; extended to 3rd and 4th years for manufacturing.
  - **Minimum hiring requirement:**
    - At least **2 new employees** for firms with <50 employees.
    - At least **5 new employees** for firms with ≥50 employees.

### Payment Mechanism:

- **Part A payments:** Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) using Aadhaar-Based Payment System (ABPS).
- **Part B payments:** Credited to PAN-linked employer accounts.

# C-FLOOD PLATFORM

**CONTEXT**

The Government of India has launched the web-based C-Flood platform to provide advance flood inundation forecasts up to the village level.

### About C-Flood Platform:

- It is a web-based inundation forecasting system developed to issue two-day advance flood forecasts including water depth and spatial extent of inundation.
- The platform is based on 2D hydrodynamic modelling, integrating outputs from various national and regional agencies across all river basins.
- Currently, Godavari, Tapi, and Mahanadi river basins are included in the initial phase.

### Forecast Specifics:

- Provides village-level forecasts using inundation maps and water level predictions.
- Offers information in three languages: Hindi, English, and Odia.

### Alert System:

- Uses **three flood alert categories** based on predicted inundation depth:
  - Yellow Alert: < 0.5 metre
  - Orange Alert: < 1.5 metre
  - Red Alert: > 1.5 metre

### Significance:

- Aims to improve flood disaster preparedness and **early warning capacity**.
- Supports **climate resilience**, real-time disaster response, and **community-level awareness**.
- Facilitates **decentralised disaster risk reduction (DRR)** strategies by integrating **village-level data**.

# NATIONAL CAREER SERVICE (NCS) PORTAL

**CONTEXT**

NCS portal has recorded over 48 lakh active employers and over 40 lakh active vacancies, marking a significant rise in digital employment facilitation.

## National Career Service (NCS) Portal

### About the NCS Portal:

- Launched by the Ministry of Labour and Employment in 2015, the National Career Service (NCS) portal is a mission-mode project under the e-Polity and Governance Plan aimed at transforming the national employment services digitally.

### Objectives and Functions:

- It provides a wide array of career-related services such as:
  - Job listings from both government and private sectors
  - Skill development course information
  - Vocational guidance and career counselling
  - Details on online and offline job fairs
  - Job matching and search functionalities

### Key Statistics as of July 2025:

- **Active Employers:** Over 48 lakh
- **Active Vacancies:** Over 40 lakh
- New Employers Registered in FY 2024–25: Over 17 lakh
- New Jobseekers Registered in FY 2024–25: Over 1.45 crore

# NATIONAL FINANCIAL REPORTING AUTHORITY (NFRA)

**CONTEXT**

Shri Nitin Gupta has assumed the charge of Chairperson, National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA)

## National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA)

- **Statutory body** established under **Section 132 of the Companies Act, 2013**.
- Regulates the **auditing profession** and **accounting standards** in India.
- Aims to ensure **high-quality, transparent, and fair financial reporting**.

### Composition:

- Chairperson + up to 15 members appointed by the Central Government.
- Members must have expertise in **accountancy, auditing, finance, or law**, and declare no **conflict of interest**.
- Members cannot be associated with audit firms during tenure and for **2 years post-tenure**.

### Functions:

- Recommend accounting/auditing standards.
- Monitor compliance with standards.
- Oversee and improve audit quality.

### Powers:

- Can **investigate misconduct** of Chartered Accountants (CAs) and audit firms.
- Has powers of a **civil court** under CPC, 1908.
- Can impose **penalties/punishments**; orders appealable to **Appellate Authority**.

### Jurisdiction:

- **Listed companies**, large unlisted public companies.
- Others as referred by the **Central Government** in **public interest**.

# THAILAND–CAMBODIA BORDER CONFLICT

**CONTEXT**

Thailand declares martial law along Cambodia border; PM's 'state of war' warning

## Background:

- **Nature**: Territorial dispute over **border demarcation and temple ownership**.
- **Disputed Sites**:
  - **Preah Vihear Temple** (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
  - **Prasat Ta Muen Thom Temple Complex**
- **Colonial Legacy**: Based on a **1907 map** drawn during **French colonial rule** in Cambodia; Thailand contests its accuracy.
- **Ethnic and Historical Roots**: Both temples were built by the **Khmer Empire** (11th–12th century), currently lying near the **Dângrêk Mountains**.


*Figure No. 03*

## Strategic and Cultural Significance:

### Preah Vihear Temple:

- Hindu temple dedicated to **Lord Shiva**.
- Located atop a cliff, offering strategic military advantage.
- Cambodia secured **UNESCO status in 2008**, triggering Thai backlash.

### Prasat Ta Muen Thom Complex:

- Shiva temple; part of a tri-complex with religious and medicinal roles.
- Located along the **ancient Khmer road system**, indicating its importance in trade and religion.

## International Legal Dimension

### ICJ Rulings:

- **1962**: Preah Vihear Temple awarded to Cambodia.
- **2013**: ICJ reaffirmed its verdict, stating the land around the temple also belongs to Cambodia.

- **Thailand's Position**: Accepted 1962 ruling but **rejected** 2013 clarification.
- **Proposed Demilitarized Zone**: ICJ suggested this in 2013 to prevent future clashes.

## Recent Development:

### Military Escalation:

- Armed clashes resumed in the **Dangrek Mountains region** (2024–25).
- Use of airstrikes and heavy artillery.

### Diplomatic Fallout:

- Borders closed.
- **Cambodia imposed trade restrictions** on Thai imports.
- Embassies scaled down.

# 25% US TARIFF ON INDIAN EXPORTS

**CONTEXT**

The United States has announced a 25% tariff on select Indian exports amid stalled trade negotiations, with significant implications for India's export-driven sectors.

## Key Sectors Affected:

- The tariff primarily targets labour-intensive sectors such as marine products (especially shrimps), textiles, pharmaceuticals, automobiles, iron & steel, and leather goods.
- The pharmaceutical sector may face incremental downside risk as the US accounts for over 30% of India's pharma exports, particularly in generics.

## Strategic Trade Concerns:

- Competing Asian economies (e.g., **Vietnam at 20%**, **Indonesia at 19%**, **Japan at 15%**) have **secured preferential tariff access**, thereby eroding India's relative competitiveness in the US market.
- The tariff differential especially disadvantages India in **labour-intensive** and **electronic goods** sectors where ASEAN peers hold a cost advantage.

## Long-Term Outlook:

- Experts caution against a **rushed trade agreement**, especially if it entails politically sensitive concessions in **agriculture** and **dairy** sectors.
- A **well-calibrated deal**, like the India-UK FTA template, could unlock preferential access without compromising domestic livelihood safeguards.
- Despite short-term headwinds, India's **service exports**, which reached **$387.5 billion in FY25**, are expected to cushion the overall impact.

# INDIA'S GINI INDEX RANKING

**CONTEXT**

India has been ranked among the world's most equal societies by the Gini Index with a score of 25.5, which contradicts prevailing socio-economic inequalities on the ground.

## About the Gini Index:

- The **Gini Index** or **Gini Coefficient** is a statistical measure used to gauge income or wealth distribution within a population.
- A Gini score of **0** represents perfect equality, while a score of **100** denotes perfect inequality.
- India has been scored **25.5** in the recent ranking, suggesting **moderately low inequality**, placing it among the world's most equal nations.

## Critique of the Gini Methodology:

- The Gini Index often relies on **formal economic data**, which **excludes the informal sector**, a major component of the Indian economy.
- Disparities in **wealth**, **gender**, **education**, and **technology access** are often underrepresented.
- In India, a significant portion of the population is outside the formal tax and data systems, skewing inequality assessments.

## Forms of Inequality in India (Despite Gini Score):

### Wealth Inequality:

- The top **1% of the population** commands over **22.6%** of national income (2022–23), while a large section earns subsistence-level income.

### Gender Inequality:

- Female participation in the workforce stands at **35.9%**.
- Only **12.7%** of leadership roles and **7.5%** of start-ups are held/led by women.

### Digital Inequality:

- Only **52.7%** schools have functional computers; internet availability exists in just **53.9%** of schools.
- Only **41.8%** of households have access to broadband.
- A stark **gender digital divide** persists—only **25%** of rural women have internet access versus **49%** of men.

### Educational Inequality:

- Students lacking digital access are excluded from virtual education during school shutdowns due to pollution or other emergencies.
- This limits future job prospects and perpetuates intergenerational poverty.

### New and Emerging Inequalities:

- **Banking Inequality**: Limited digital literacy and poor internet access restrict marginalized groups from participating in formal financial systems.
- **Intersectional Inequality**: Inequalities are often **interlinked**, e.g., a poor, rural, female student without internet access faces a triple burden—economic, gender, and digital discrimination.

## ATMANIRBHAR OILSEEDS ABHIYAN

**CONTEXT**

The Government has intensified implementation of the National Mission on Edible Oils – Oilseeds (NMEO-OS) to enhance domestic oilseed production and reduce import dependency.

### National Mission on Edible Oils – Oilseeds (NMEO-OS):

#### Background & Rationale:

- India imports ~9 million tonnes of palm oil annually, worth approx. ₹40,000 crore, comprising around **56% of total edible oil imports**.
- The heavy import burden threatens **food security**, **fiscal prudence**, and **self-reliance in agriculture**.

#### Mission Objectives:

- **Expand oil palm cultivation area** from 3.5 lakh ha (2019-20) to **10 lakh ha by 2025-26**, with 3.22 lakh ha in general states and 3.28 lakh ha in NE states.
- **Increase Crude Palm Oil (CPO) production** from 0.27 lakh tonnes (2019-20) to **11.2 lakh tonnes** by 2025-26.
- **Maintain per capita consumption** of edible oils at **19 kg/person/annum** till 2025-26.

### Key Strategic Interventions:

- **Seedling availability**: Development of **seed gardens and nurseries** for oil palm.
- **Productivity push**: Adoption of **drip irrigation**, **FFB productivity enhancement**, and **intercropping** during the 4-year gestation period.
- **Area substitution**: Divert low-yielding cereal cultivation areas to oil palm cultivation.
- **Mission-mode implementation** with **multi-stakeholder engagement**: State Agriculture Departments, ICAR, SAUs, KVKs, DD Kisan, AIR, and oil palm processors.

**Governance and Monitoring:**

- Centralized fund disbursement and monitoring to ensure **timely benefit delivery** and **target achievement**.

## INDIA'S FIRST HYDROGEN TRAIN COACH

**CONTEXT**

Indian Railways has successfully conducted trial tests of India's first hydrogen-powered coach at the Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai, marking a critical step towards sustainable rail transport.

### India's First Hydrogen Train:

- India's hydrogen-powered train coach is part of a green initiative to decarbonize railway operations by shifting from diesel to hydrogen fuel cell-based propulsion. The coach was tested at ICF, Chennai, and the full project is being implemented by the Northern Railway zone.

### Key Features and Technical Aspects:

- Two 1600-HP diesel power cars converted to hydrogen fuel cell-powered cars.
- A 10-coach DEMU rake will be powered with these units.
- The train can carry over 2,600 passengers and will have zero tailpipe emissions.
- The hydrogen will be stored in cylinders at 350 bar pressure.

**Q: With reference to fuel cells in which hydrogen-rich fuel and oxygen are used to generate electricity, consider the following statements: (2020)**

(1) If pure hydrogen is used as a fuel, the fuel cell emits heat and water as by-products.

(2) Fuel cells can be used for powering buildings and electric vehicles.

(3) Fuel cells generate electricity by the combustion of hydrogen and oxygen.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

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

(c) 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

## CROPIC APP

**CONTEXT**

The Ministry of Agriculture highlighted the objectives and functioning of the CROPIC app as a digital support tool under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY).

### What is CROPIC?

- **CROPIC (Collection of Real-Time Observations and Photographs of Crops)** is a digital application developed under PMFBY to collect geotagged, time-series photographs of crop fields.

- It enables near real-time crop surveillance, verification of insured crops, and assessment of damage due to localised calamities.

### Objectives of CROPIC:

- To enhance **transparency** in crop insurance claim validation.
- To provide **visual evidence** of crop health and damage due to climatic perils.
- To support **yield estimation** models like **YESTECH** for actuarial and policy purposes.
- To strengthen **data-driven decision-making** in the crop insurance ecosystem.

## PARAMETRIC INSURANCE AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**CONTEXT**

In the wake of intensified climate-related disasters, Indian states like Nagaland have adopted parametric insurance to finance rapid disaster relief using predefined climate thresholds.

### Definition and Core Mechanism:

- *Parametric insurance* is a non-traditional insurance model that provides payouts automatically when a **predefined threshold** of a measurable event is breached (e.g., rainfall, temperature, wind speed, seismic activity).
- Unlike indemnity-based models, parametric insurance does **not require post-disaster damage assessment**, significantly reducing claim-processing time.

### Trigger and Verification Mechanism:

- Thresholds are based on **independently verified datasets** from agencies such as the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)**, **NASA MERRA**, and other accredited global or national data sources.
- Payouts are processed automatically upon **data confirmation** of a threshold breach.

### Application Sectors:

- **Agriculture:** Protects small-holder farmers from losses due to **droughts**, **rainfall deficits**, or **extreme temperatures**.
- **Renewable Energy:** Solar firms link payouts to **solar irradiance data** for compensation against low productivity.

## LAKSHADWEEP CORAL REEF DECLINE

**CONTEXT**

A 24-year-long coral reef monitoring study in Lakshadweep reveals a nearly 50% decline in coral cover since 1998, linked to repeated marine heatwaves intensified by climate change.

### Location and Scope of Study:

- The study, conducted by the **Nature Conservation Foundation (NCF)**, monitored coral reefs at three atolls—**Agatti, Kadmat, and Kavaratti**—in the **Lakshadweep archipelago** over 24 years (1998–2022).

### Decline in Coral Cover:

- Coral cover declined from **37.24% in 1998** to **19.6% by 2022**, marking an approximate **50% reduction**.
- The key driver of this decline is **recurring marine heatwaves**, especially those associated with **El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO)** events in **1998, 2010, and 2016**.

### Climate Change Connection:

- The frequency and intensity of **marine heatwaves** in the Indian Ocean have increased, in alignment with **IPCC AR6 findings**, placing tropical coral systems at heightened risk.
- This reaffirms India's vulnerability to **climate-induced marine ecosystem degradation**, with implications for **fisheries**, **livelihoods**, and **biodiversity conservation**.

### Global Implication and India's Role:

- The findings gain prominence in the backdrop of India's **leadership in Ramsar Wetlands Conservation** and the need for integrating **coastal marine ecosystems** in climate adaptation frameworks.

### Coral Reefs:

- Underwater ecosystems formed by calcium carbonate skeletons of coral polyps.
- **Location**: Found in warm, shallow tropical waters (23.5°N to 23.5°S).
- **Ecological Role**: Called "Rainforests of the Sea" – host high biodiversity (fish, mollusks, turtles, etc.).

### Ecosystem Services

- **Coastal Protection**: Act as natural barriers against waves, storms, and erosion.
- **Economic Value**: Support fisheries, marine tourism, and livelihoods.
- **Carbon Sink**: Sequester carbon via **calcification**, aiding climate regulation.

### Threats to Coral Reefs

- **Climate Change**: Marine heatwaves → coral bleaching → death.
- **Ocean Acidification**: Reduces calcification → weaker reef growth.
- **Overfishing & Pollution**: Disrupt food chains and reef health.
- **Physical Damage**: From dredging, anchoring, and tourism.

# NISAR SUCCESSFULLY LAUNCHED VIA GSLV-F16

**CONTEXT**

India successfully launched the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) satellite aboard GSLV-F16 from Sriharikota.

## NISAR (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar)

- **Purpose:** Earth observation with high-resolution, all-weather, day-and-night imaging capability.
- **Orbit:** Sun-synchronous polar orbit at **747 km altitude**; completes revisit every **12 days**.

## Key Technological Features:

- First Earth observation satellite with **dual-frequency SAR**:
  - **L-band SAR** (by NASA).
  - **S-band SAR** (by ISRO).
- Mounted on a single integrated platform.
- Uses ISRO's I-3K satellite bus and is launched on GSLV-F16 with indigenous cryogenic upper stage.
- Total launch mass: 2,393 kg.

## Launch Significance:

- First successful placement of a satellite in Sun-synchronous orbit by GSLV.
- 18th GSLV mission, 12th with indigenous cryogenic stage.
- Reflects ISRO's technological advancement in high-mass satellite launch capability.

## Applications and Impact:

- Climate change monitoring, glacier dynamics, forest biomass estimation, and agricultural productivity.
- Earthquake and volcano activity detection, coastal zone management, aviation safety, and infrastructure planning.
- Enhances disaster preparedness and resilience through timely geospatial data.

# ICGS ATAL

**CONTEXT**

Goa Shipyard Limited launched the sixth indigenously-designed Fast Patrol Vessel, ICGS ATAL, for the Indian Coast Guard.

## ICGS ATAL

### Indigenous Design & Build:

- ICGS ATAL is part of a series of eight Fast Patrol Vessels (FPVs), all designed in-house by Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL).
- GSL is a Defence Public Sector Undertaking (DPSU) under the Ministry of Defence.
- This reflects India's push towards self-reliance in defence production under the *Aatmanirbhar Bharat* initiative.

## Strategic Capabilities of FPVs:

- These FPVs are 52 metres in length, with an 8-metre beam and a displacement of 320 tonnes.
- The vessels are capable of high-speed coastal patrolling, island security, offshore asset protection, and maritime surveillance.
- Additional roles include anti-smuggling, anti-piracy, and search & rescue operations—critical for national maritime security.

# SUCCESSFUL TRIALS OF PRALAY MISSILE

**CONTEXT**

DRDO conducted two successful flight-tests of the Pralay missile on July 28 and 29, 2025, as part of User Evaluation Trials to validate its minimum and maximum range capabilities.

## Pralay Missile:

- **Type:** Solid-propellant quasi-ballistic missile.
- **Range:** Estimated operational range of **150–500 km**, extendable further with modifications.
- **Accuracy**: High precision enabled through advanced guidance, navigation, and control systems.
- **Warhead Flexibility:** Capable of carrying **conventional warheads** including fragmentation, penetration-cum-blast, and runway denial sub-munitions.

## Developmental Agencies:

- **Lead Agency:** Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad.
- **Collaborators**: DRDL, ASL, ARDE, HEMRL, DMRL, TBRL, R&DE(Engrs) and ITR.
- **Industry Partners:** Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), along with several MSMEs.

## Strategic Significance:

- Reinforces India's indigenous missile manufacturing capability under **'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'**.
- Contributes towards **precision strike capability** essential in short-duration, high-intensity conflicts.

# NISAR MISSION

**CONTEXT**

The NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) satellite is scheduled for launch on **30th July 2025** from Sriharikota aboard GSLV-F16, marking India's first Earth observation mission with the United States.

## NISAR (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar):

- It is the **first joint Earth observation satellite mission** between the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** and the **National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)**.

## Launch Details:

- **Launch Date:** 30 July 2025
- **Launch Vehicle: GSLV-F16** (first time a GSLV is being used for sun-synchronous orbit)
- **Launch Site:** Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota
- **Orbit:** Sun-synchronous polar orbit
- **Satellite** Mass: 2,392 kg

## Key Technological Features:

- **Dual-frequency radar** system (L-Band by NASA, S-Band by ISRO)
- Uses **SweepSAR technology** for **high-resolution, day-and-night, all-weather imaging**
- **Imaging swath:** 242 km
- **Revisit cycle:** 12 days

## Applications and Global Relevance:

- Monitoring of ecosystem disturbances, glacier dynamics, soil moisture, crop patterns, and urban expansion
- Tracking of earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic activity, landslides, sea-level rise, and storm surges
- Will provide critical real-time data for climate resilience, agricultural planning, and disaster mitigation
- All data to be made freely accessible within 1–2 days, and near real-time during disasters

***(See Figure No. 04 below)***

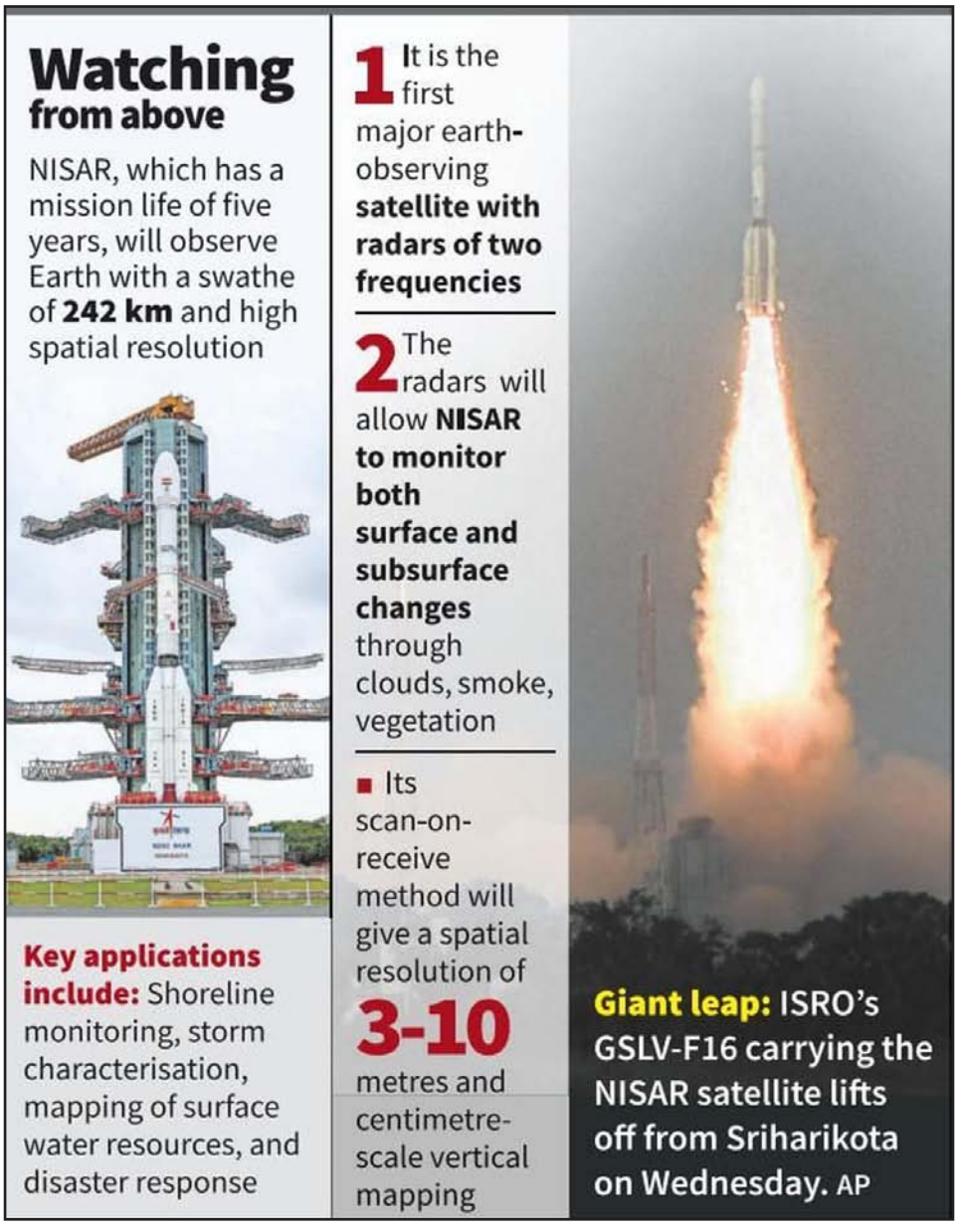


***Figure No. 04***

# EXERCISE BOLD KURUKSHETRA 2025

**CONTEXT**

The 14th edition of Exercise Bold Kurukshetra between the Indian Army and Singapore Armed Forces began on 27 July 2025 at Jodhpur, Rajasthan.

## Exercise Overview:

- Exercise Bold Kurukshetra is a bilateral joint military exercise conducted between India and Singapore.
- Initiated in 2005, this is the 14th edition, held from 27 July to 04 August 2025.
- The current format includes a Table Top Exercise (TTX) and a Computer-Based Wargame (CBWG), focusing on mechanised warfare under UN mandate scenarios.

## Strategic and Tactical Objectives:

- Enhances **interoperability** between mechanised units of both countries.
- Facilitates **joint training**, development of **standard operating procedures (SOPs)**, and **combat preparedness** in multilateral peacekeeping operations under the **UN Charter**.
- Builds **military-to-military confidence** and deepens **strategic cooperation** in the Indo-Pacific framework.

## Geopolitical Significance:

- Exercise Bold Kurukshetra reflects **India's Act East Policy** and its commitment to **rules-based regional order** in Southeast Asia.
- Complements other India–Singapore defence engagements like **SIMBEX (naval)** and **Agni Warrior (artillery)** exercises.
- Strengthens **bilateral defence diplomacy**, which is guided by the **India–Singapore Defence Cooperation Agreement (renewed in 2015)**.

# NLSIU–QUEEN MARY REPORT

**CONTEXT**

A new report titled *"Unmaking Citizens"* by NLSIU and Queen Mary University (London) has raised serious concerns over the functioning of Assam's Foreigners' Tribunals, alleging systematic procedural violations and constitutional infractions in citizenship adjudication.

## Foreigners' Tribunals (FTs) – Legal and Institutional Background:

- Foreigners' Tribunals in Assam function under the *Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964*, issued under the *Foreigners Act, 1946*.
- These are quasi-judicial bodies empowered to determine whether a person residing in India is a foreigner, particularly in Assam.

## Key Findings of the "Unmaking Citizens" Report (2025):

- As of 2025, approximately 1.66 lakh individuals have been declared 'foreigners' by these tribunals.
- The report analyzed over 1,200 Gauhati High Court orders and found systematic arbitrariness, such as:
  - Rejection of valid oral and documentary evidence
  - Absence of uniform evidentiary standards
  - Lack of procedural safeguards
- Over 85,000 cases are pending, with millions of appeals from NRC-excluded individuals anticipated.

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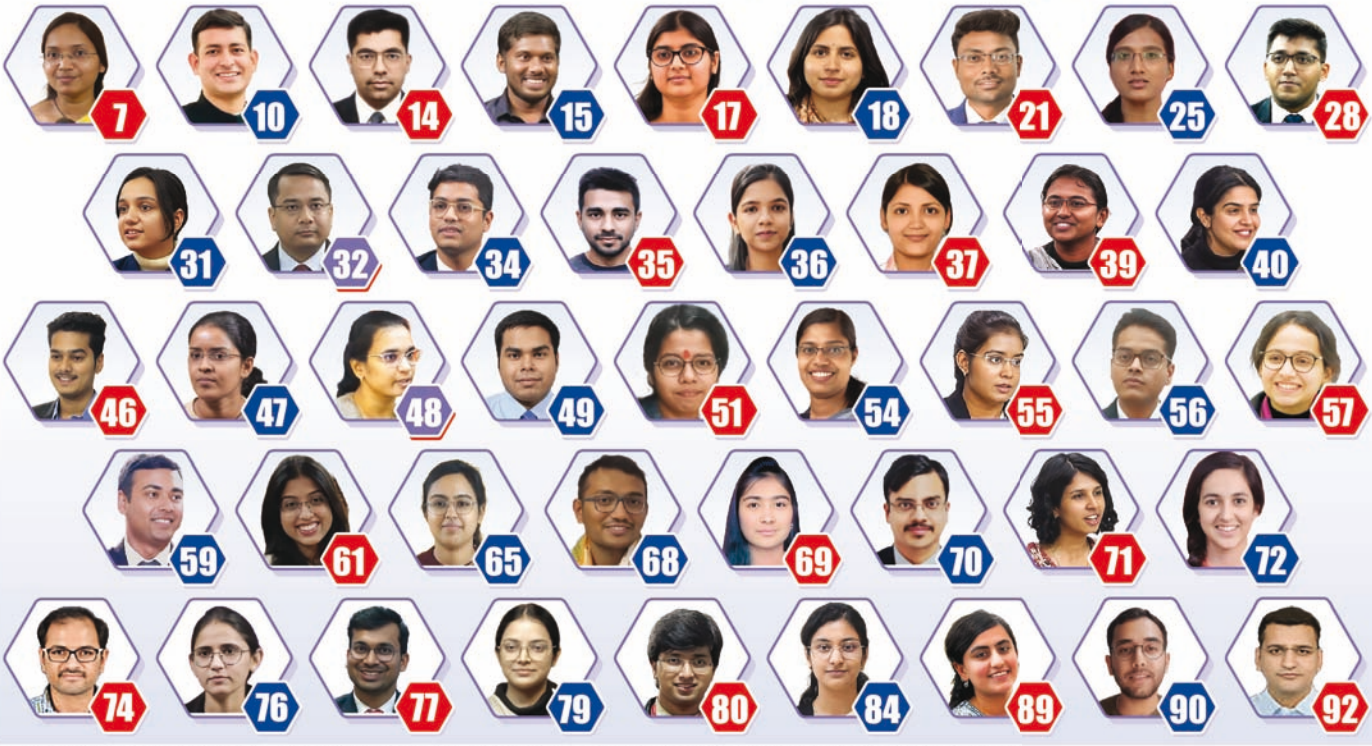


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