

1 समुद्र मंथन – राष्ट्रीय अपतटीय अन्वेषण योजना

- कैबिनेट ने ₹84,084 करोड़ की योजना को मंजूरी दी।
- अपतटीय हाइड्रोकार्बन अन्वेषण को तेज करने का लक्ष्य।
- ऊर्जा सुरक्षा एवं आयात निर्भरता कम होगी।
- पेट्रोलियम एवं प्राकृतिक गैस संभाल द्वारा क्रियान्वित।
- HELP और OALP नीतियों के साथ पूरकता।
- ब्लू इकोनॉमी व घरेलू रोजगार को बढ़ावा।



अन्वेषण → उत्पादन → ऊर्जा सुरक्षा → आर्थिक विकास

मूल्य संवर्धन:
भारत लगभग 85% कच्चे तेल का आयात करता है। यह योजना अपतटीय बेसिन में अन्वेषण को बढ़ाएगी।

मुख्य कीवर्ड:
HELP, OALP, DGH, EEZ, ब्लू इकोनॉमी

2 दिल्ली-जयपुर NH-48 पर मल्टी-लेन फ्री फ्लो टोलिंग (MLFFT)

- NHA ने दिल्ली-जयपुर NH-48 पर MLFFT सिस्टम शुरू किया।
- ANPR कैमरा, FASTag और AI आधारित प्रणाली।
- बैरियर-फ्री टोल संग्रह।
- भीड़भाड़ में कमी, समय और ईंधन की बचत।
- लॉजिस्टिक्स दक्षता और उत्सर्जन में कमी।
- भारत में ITS की दिशा में बड़ा कदम।



ANPR + FASTag → स्वचालित कटीती → बैरियर-फ्री मुवमेंट → दक्षता व पारदर्शिता

मूल्य संवर्धन:
यह सिस्टम ईंधन की खपत, उत्सर्जन और समय को कम करता है।

मुख्य कीवर्ड:
MLFFT, ANPR, FASTag, ITS, स्मार्ट हाईवे

3 भारत-रवांडा संयुक्त व्यापार समिति बैठक

- भारत और रवांडा के बीच पहली संयुक्त व्यापार समिति बैठक हुई।
- द्विपक्षीय व्यापार और निवेश सहयोग को गहरा करने पर चर्चा।
- प्रमुख क्षेत्र: फार्मास्यूटिकल, कृषि, डिजिटल, खनिज, शिक्षा।
- अफ्रीका और ग्लोबल साउथ के साथ भारत की भागीदारी मजबूत।
- रवांडा AfCFTA और EAC का सदस्य।
- SAGAR और एक्ट ईस्ट नीति से संगत।



मूल्य संवर्धन:
भारत-अफ्रीका व्यापार FY 2024-25 में \$100 अरब से अधिक हुआ।

मुख्य कीवर्ड:
AfCFTA, EAC, ग्लोबल साउथ, रणनीतिक साझेदारी, SAGAR

4 राज्यों को कर हस्तांतरण

- केंद्र सरकार ने राज्यों को अग्रिम कर हस्तांतरण के रूप में ₹1,09,019 करोड़ जारी किए।
- राज्यों के चुंजीगत व्यय और विकास परियोजनाओं को समर्थन।
- सहकारी संघवाद और वित्तीय स्थिरता को बढ़ावा।
- संवैधानिक आधार: अनुच्छेद 270 और 280।
- वित्त आयोग की सिफारिशों पर आधारित।
- राज्यों की तरलता, कल्याण और अवसर योजनाओं में सहायक।



कर संकलन → राज्यों को हस्तांतरण → विकास कार्य → समावेशी विकास

मूल्य संवर्धन:
कर हस्तांतरण राज्यों की वित्तीय स्वायत्तता और योजनाओं को गति देता है।

मुख्य कीवर्ड:
अनुच्छेद 270, 280, वित्त आयोग, संघवाद, राजकोषीय सुदृढ़ता

5 कच द रेन अभियान (ओडिशा)

- वर्षा जल संचयन और भूजल रिचार्ज को बढ़ावा देता है।
- जल सुरक्षा और जलवायु लचीलापन को मजबूत करता है।
- सामुदायिक भागीदारी और जल संरक्षण को प्रोत्साहन।
- जल शक्ति अभियान और जल जीवन मिशन से समन्वय।
- सूखा-प्रवण क्षेत्रों में टिकाऊ कृषि को बढ़ावा।
- जल शासन का सामुदायिक मॉडल।



वर्षा जल संचयन → भूजल रिचार्ज → जल सुरक्षा → समवायु लचीलापन

मूल्य संवर्धन:
भूजल स्तर बढ़ता है, पेयजल उपलब्धता और कृषि उत्पादकता में सुधार।

मुख्य कीवर्ड:
वर्षा जल संचयन, भूजल रिचार्ज, जल सुरक्षा, जल शक्ति अभियान

6 विरासत अपशिष्ट उपचार – भलसवा डंपसाइट

- दिल्ली के भलसवा डंपसाइट में विरासत अपशिष्ट उपचार की समीक्षा।
- बायोमाइनिंग, बायोरेमेडिएशन और वैज्ञानिक अपशिष्ट प्रबंधन पर जोर।
- मिथेन उत्सर्जन और प्रदूषण में कमी।
- परिपत्र अर्धव्यवस्था और शहरी सततता को प्रोत्साहन।
- स्वच्छ भारत मिशन (शहरी) से जुड़ा।
- सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य और पर्यावरण गुणवत्ता में सुधार।



बायोमाइनिंग → सामग्री पुनर्प्राप्ति → प्रदूषण में कमी → परिपत्र अर्धव्यवस्था

मूल्य संवर्धन:
बायोमाइनिंग से मिश्रित कचरे से ऊर्जा और रीसायकलेबल सामग्री मिलती है।

मुख्य कीवर्ड:
विरासत अपशिष्ट, बायोमाइनिंग, बायोरेमेडिएशन, परिपत्र अर्धव्यवस्था

7 NEET-PG 2026 सुधारों की समीक्षा

- सरकार ने NEET-PG 2026 की तैयारियों की समीक्षा की।
- पारदर्शिता, निष्पक्षता और छात्र-केंद्रित सुधारों पर जोर।
- डिजिटल अवसंरचना और सुरक्षित परीक्षा प्रक्रिया।
- रीयल-टाइम मॉनिटरिंग और त्रिवांस रिडेंसल तंत्र।
- चिकित्सा प्रवेश परीक्षाओं में विध्वंसनीयता और समान अवसर सुनिश्चित करना।



सुरक्षित परीक्षा → पारदर्शिता → समान अवसर → बेहतर गवर्नंस

मूल्य संवर्धन:
छात्रों के विश्वास और चिकित्सा शिक्षा की गुणवत्ता में सुधार।

मुख्य कीवर्ड:
NEET-PG, पारदर्शिता, डिजिटल मॉनिटरिंग, परीक्षा सुधार, समान अवसर

8 PIB पृष्ठभूमि – नक्सल-मुक्त भारत

- PIB ने नक्सल-मुक्त भारत पर पृष्ठभूमि जारी की।
- पिछले दशक में LWE घटनाओं में 70% से अधिक कमी।
- 'SAMADHAN' सिद्धांत पर आधारित रणनीति (सुरक्षा + विकास)।
- सड़क संपर्क, शिक्षा, आजीविका प्रमुख स्तंभ।
- LWE जिलों को विशेष केंद्रीय सहायता।
- आकांक्षी जिलों और समावेशी विकास से स्थायी शांति की दिशा।



SAMADHAN सिद्धांत → सुरक्षा + विकास → संपर्क + आजीविका → नक्सल-मुक्त भारत

मूल्य संवर्धन:
समेकित दृष्टिकोण से स्थायी शांति और समावेशी विकास सुनिश्चित।

मुख्य कीवर्ड:
LWE, SAMADHAN, सुरक्षा, विकास, SCA, आकांक्षी जिले

9 PM-VBRY – रोजगार सृजन पहल

- PIB पृष्ठभूमि: प्रधानमंत्री विकसित भारत रोजगार योजना (PM-VBRY)।
- रोजगार और औपचारिक नौकरियों के सृजन पर केंद्रित।
- विनिर्माण, MSME एवं सेवाओं को बढ़ावा।
- युवाओं के कौशल विकास और रोजगारयोग्यता पर जोर।
- श्रम औपचारिकीकरण और सामाजिक सुरक्षा को प्रोत्साहन।
- 2047 के विकसित भारत लक्ष्य में योगदान।



कौशल + उद्यमिता + औपचारिकरण → रोजगार → समावेशी विकास → विकसित भारत

मूल्य संवर्धन:
जनसांख्यिकीय लाभांश को उत्पादक पूंजी में परिवर्तित करने की पहल।

मुख्य कीवर्ड:
PM-VBRY, रोजगार, औपचारिकीकरण, MSME, कौशल विकास, समावेशी विकास

अन्य महत्वपूर्ण एक-पंक्ति समाचार

कोल इंडिया ने व्यापक कल्याण और पेंशन सुधारों के माध्यम से सेवानिवृत्ति पश्चात देखभाल को मजबूत किया।

भारतीय सेना ने पूर्व चीफ ऑफ आर्मी स्टाफ जनरल वी.एन. शर्मा को मानद उपाधि से सम्मानित करने की बोलोलाई।

भारत और रवांडा व्यापार, निवेश और लोगों के बीच संपर्क बढ़ाने के लिए प्रतिबद्ध हुए।

भारतीय रेल ने नई एक्सप्रेस सेवाओं, मल्टीप्लेक्स परियोजनाओं और क्षेत्रीय रेल संपर्क को मंजूरी दी।

136वाँ ETF ने NCR में पर्यावरण अनुपालन और प्रवर्तन कार्यों की समीक्षा की और सुदृढ़ीकरण पर चर्चा की।

1 Samudra Manthan – National Offshore Exploration Scheme

- Cabinet approved scheme with outlay of ₹84,084 crore.
- To accelerate offshore hydrocarbon exploration in India.
- Reduces import dependence and strengthens energy security.
- Implemented by Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas.
- Complements HELP and Open Acreage Licensing Policy.
- Boosts Blue Economy and jobs.



Exploration → Production
→ Energy Security
→ Economic Growth

Value Addition: India has sedimentary basins ~2.1 billion tonnes of oil & oil equivalent gas.

Keywords: Offshore, HELP, OALP, E&P, Energy Security, Blue Economy

2 Multi-Lane Free Flow Tolling (MLFFT) Launched on NH-48

- MLFFT system launched on Delhi-Jaipur NH-48 corridor.
- Uses ANPR cameras, FASTag and AI enabled enforcement.
- Enables barrier-free toll collection.
- Reduces congestion, saves fuel and time.
- Enhances logistics efficiency and lowers emissions.
- A major step towards Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) in India.



ANPR + FASTag → Automatic Deduction
→ Barrier-free Movement → Efficiency

Value Addition: Improves ease of doing business and supports green & sustainable mobility.

Keywords: MLFFT, ANPR, FASTag, ITS, Logistics, Smart Highways

3 India–Rwanda Joint Trade Committee Meeting

- First Joint Trade Committee Meeting held between India and Rwanda.
- Focus on deepening bilateral trade and investment cooperation.
- Key sectors: Pharmaceuticals, Agriculture, Digital, Minerals, Education.
- Strengthens India's engagement with Africa and Global South.
- Rwanda is part of AfCFTA and EAC.
- Supports Act East Policy and SAGAR vision.



Value Addition: India's trade with Africa crossed \$100 billion in FY 2024–25.

Keywords: AfCFTA, EAC, Global South, Trade, Strategic Partnership

4 Tax Devolution to States

- Union Government released ₹1,09,019 crore as advance tax devolution to States.
- Supports States in capital expenditure and development projects.
- Strengthens fiscal federalism and cooperative governance.
- Constitutional basis: Articles 270 & 280.
- Determined by Finance Commission recommendations.
- Ensures States have liquidity for welfare and infrastructure.



Tax Collection → Devolution to States → Development
→ Inclusive Growth

Value Addition: Improves balanced regional development and economic stability.

Keywords: Tax Devolution, Finance Commission, Article 270, Federal Finance

5 Catch the Rain Campaign (Odisha)

- Campaign promotes rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge.
- Strengthens water security and climate resilience.
- Encourages community participation and local water conservation.
- Linked with Jal Shakti Abhiyan and Jal Jeevan Mission.
- Helps in drought mitigation and sustainable agriculture.
- A model for replicable water governance.



Rainwater Harvesting → Groundwater Recharge → Water Security → Climate Resilience

Value Addition: Enhances aquifer levels and improves rural water availability.

Keywords: Rainwater Harvesting, Groundwater Recharge, Jal Shakti Abhiyan, Water Security

6 Legacy Waste Remediation – Bhalswa Dumpsite

- Review of legacy waste remediation at Bhalswa, Delhi.
- Focus on biomining, bioremediation and scientific waste management.
- Reduces methane emissions and pollution.
- Supports circular economy and urban sustainability.
- Linked with Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban).
- Improves public health and environmental quality.



Biomining → Material Recovery → Pollution Reduction → Circular Economy

Value Addition: Biomining can recover materials and reduce landfill burden.

Keywords: Legacy Waste, Biomining, Bioremediation, Circular Economy, Solid Waste Management

7 NEET-PG 2026 Reforms Reviewed

- Government reviewed preparedness for NEET-PG 2026.
- Focus on transparency, fairness and student-centric reforms.
- Strengthening digital infrastructure and secure examination process.
- Real-time monitoring and grievance redressal mechanisms.
- Aims to restore credibility in medical entrance exams.
- Enhances governance in higher education.



Reforms & Transparency → Secure Exams → Equal Opportunity → Better Governance

Value Addition: Reforms build trust and ensure equal opportunity for aspiring doctors.

Keywords: NEET-PG, Exam Governance, Transparency, Digital Monitoring

8 PIB Backgrounder – Naxal-Free India

- PIB released backgrounder on Naxal-Free India.
- LWE incidents reduced by over 70% in the last decade.
- SAMADHAN Doctrine driving strategy: Security + Development.
- Road connectivity, education and livelihoods key pillars.
- Special Central Assistance for LWE districts.
- Aspirational Districts Programme supporting inclusive development.



SAMADHAN Doctrine → Security + Development → Inclusion → Naxal-Free India

Value Addition: Integrated approach ensures lasting peace and development.

Keywords: LWE, SAMADHAN, Security, Development, SCA, Aspirational Districts

9 PM-VBRY – Employment Generation Initiative

- PIB backgrounder on Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rojgar Yojana (PM-VBRY).
- Aims to boost employment and formal job creation.
- Focus on manufacturing, MSMEs and services.
- Supports youth employment and skill development.
- Promotes labour formalisation and social security.
- Contributes to Viksit Bharat @2047 goals.



Skill + Enterprise + Formalisation → Employment → Inclusive Growth → Viksit Bharat

Value Addition: Job creation is key to demographic dividend and inclusive growth.

Keywords: Employment, Formalisation, MSME, Skill Development, Viksit Bharat

Other Important One-Liners



Coal India strengthens post-retirement care through comprehensive welfare and pension reforms.



Indian Army bids farewell to Gen V.N. Sharma (Former COAS) with full military honours.



India and Rwanda commit to expand trade, investment and people-to-people contacts.



Indian Railways approves new express services and infrastructure projects to boost connectivity.



136th ETF reviews enforcement actions and environmental compliance across NCR.

India likely to receive below-normal rainfall this month, says IMD

It is predicted to be less than 94% of long period average; the maximum temperatures are expected to stay above normal across most of country

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

India is likely to receive below-normal rainfall during August, with precipitation expected to be less than 94% of the long period average, the India Meteorological Department said on Friday.

The forecast also projects below-normal rainfall during the second half of the southwest monsoon season (August-September), although some parts of peninsular India, central, eastern, and northeastern India, and the northern parts of the northwest could receive normal to above-normal rainfall.

Below-normal rainfall in August is likely in many parts of the country, except over much of eastern peninsular India, some parts of northwest and central India, and isolated areas of eastern and northeastern India, where normal to above-normal rainfall is possible.

Maximum temperatures during the month are expected to remain above normal across most of the



Some parts of peninsular India, central, eastern, and northeastern India may receive normal to above-normal rainfall. H. VIBHU

country, while minimum temperatures are likely to be normal to above normal.

July rain near normal

The IMD also said moderate El Niño conditions over the equatorial Pacific are expected to strengthen through the remainder of the monsoon season, while neutral Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) conditions are likely to persist before a positive IOD develops during September. The latter can help monsoon rain.

For the August-September period as well, the IMD forecast rainfall at below 94% of the long period average, indicating a weaker-

than-normal monsoon.

The outlook follows a near-normal July at the all-India level, despite forecasts issued earlier in the season that had anticipated subdued rainfall because of the developing El Niño. On June 30, the IMD had forecast a minimum 6% deficit in July rainfall but India has so far got 101% of the usual amount of rainfall. July is the rainiest of the four monsoon months and critical to agriculture. According to the IMD, while July's rainfall helped erase much of the deficit that had built up during June, the distribution of rainfall remained uneven across regions.

- **August Rainfall Outlook:** India likely to receive below-normal rainfall in August, with precipitation less than 94% of the long period average.



- **Regional Variation:** Some parts of peninsular, central, eastern & northeastern India may get normal to above-normal rainfall.



- **Temperature Outlook:** Maximum temperatures expected to remain above normal across most parts; minimum temperatures normal to above normal.



- **July Rainfall:** Near normal at all-India level (101% of LPA), the highest among the four monsoon months.



- **Climate Drivers:** Moderate El Niño conditions likely to strengthen; neutral IOD likely to persist before turning positive in September.



- **Aug-Sep Forecast:** Rainfall expected to be below 94% of LPA, indicating a weaker-than-normal monsoon.



- **Agriculture Impact:** July's rain erased June deficit, but uneven distribution continues—crucial for crops and water resources.



- **Key Takeaway:** Uneven rainfall & higher temperatures pose challenges for agriculture, water management, and overall economy.



A healthy tax

The government must act to tax foods high in fat, sugar, and salt

India, which has a long history of addressing the challenges of undernutrition, has to pivot to attack the curious phenomenon of over-nutrition that evolving lifestyles have now laid at its door. The recent National Family Health Survey data showed that in India, while stunting and undernutrition continue to be cause for concern, despite some gains, the sharp rise in adult overweight and obesity, besides diet-related metabolic conditions, cannot be ignored any more. Two unrelated developments have advanced the question of unhealthy diets in very pointed suggestions that would nudge consumers to make the right choices. First, a Parliamentary Standing Committee has recommended mandatory front-of-pack nutrition labelling indicating whether packaged food products are high in sugar, and second, a national consortium has advised the government to levy a health tax on high fat, salt and sugar foods, and enforce stricter regulations on their advertisements. The Standing Committee on Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution also made a recommendation to include the sugar content in baby foods, attacking the excess sugar consumption issue right where it begins. The consortium on adolescent nutrition, which goes by the practical name Let's Fix Our Food, is led by the Indian Council of Medical Research-National Institute of Nutrition (ICMR-NIN), and comprising several other prominent institutions in India and abroad, has recommended that the government ensure a healthier school food environment, stricter regulation of marketing of unhealthy food, and front-of-pack nutrition labelling. These efforts will be among the steps to tackle the rising burden of obesity and diet-related non communicable diseases that require a comprehensive strategy helmed by the government.

According to the World Health Organization, since 2017, at least 133 countries have increased or introduced a new health tax. A "junk food law" came into force in Colombia in 2023, to tackle the high consumption of packaged foods. An additional tax on such foods began at 10%, rose to 15% the next year and touched 20% the subsequent year. Norway, Hungary, Denmark, Bermuda, Dominica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and the Navajo Nation (U.S.), have also specifically implemented taxes on unprocessed sugar and sugar-added foods. With the ICMR-NIN report indicating that over 17 million children and adolescents are affected by obesity, and that this number can cross 27 million by 2030, there cannot be a better time to act on these suggestions that will go a long way in educating the consumer to make healthy food choices.

- **India faces a paradox:** Undernutrition persists, but a sharp rise in overweight, obesity, and diet-related diseases demands urgent action.



- **Parliamentary Standing Committee** recommends **mandatory front-of-pack nutrition labelling** to indicate high sugar content in packaged foods.



- **Expert consortium (Let's Fix Our Food)** led by **ICMR-NIN** recommends a **health tax** on high fat, salt, and sugar foods and stricter ad regulations.



- Also recommends healthier school food environments and strict regulation of marketing of unhealthy foods.



- Include **sugar content** in baby foods to address excess sugar consumption from the beginning.



- **WHO:** Since 2017, at least 133 countries have increased or introduced a new health tax.



- **Colombia's junk food law (2023):** Tax on packaged foods—10%, increased to 15%, then 20%.



- Countries including **Norway, Hungary, Denmark, Bermuda, Dominica, St. Vincent & Grenadines, and Navajo Nation (U.S.)** tax unprocessed sugar and sugar-added foods.



- **ICMR-NIN report:** Over 17 million children & adolescents are obese; this may cross 27 million by 2030.

Urgent action is key to building awareness and enabling healthy food choices.



Western Ghats conservation with science and dialogue

The Western Ghats, spanning six coastal States of India, are internationally recognised for their rich biodiversity.

They contain 39 biodiversity hotspot areas, including national parks, reserved forests, and wildlife sanctuaries declared World Heritage Sites (WHS) by UNESCO in 2012. To protect this natural heritage, the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel (WGEEP) was constituted in 2010 under the chairmanship of ecologist, academic, and writer Madhav Gadgil. Its report recommended declaring 142 talukas covering 44 districts in the entire Western Ghats into Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA), while sub-dividing it into three Ecologically Sensitive Zones (ESZ). Such a declaration would regulate human activities to protect fragile ecosystems and, once notified under the Environment Protection Act, 1986, would provide legal protection.

The ESA journey

Following strong local and political opposition in the States concerned to the WGEEP recommendations, the central government constituted a high-level working group headed by Krishnaswamy Kasturirangan in 2012 to review them. The group limited restrictions on economic activities and livelihoods to ecologically sensitive natural landscapes, reducing the area covered to only 37% of the Western Ghats.

Based on this recalibrated report, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) issued the first draft notification in 2014. Since the matter remained unresolved, the Ministry constituted an expert panel headed by former Director General of Forests Sanjay Kumar in 2022 to examine the concerns raised by the stakeholder States. Following the expert panel's deliberations, Gujarat and Goa appear to have agreed to the finalisation of the ESA notification, while Maharashtra has sought a fresh review.

Discussions between the Centre and other States, including Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil



Madhusudan Bandi

Faculty member at the Gujarat Institute of Development Research, Ahmedabad, Gujarat

The Ecologically Sensitive Area debate highlights the need for balanced, inclusive conservation approaches

Nadu, are ongoing. A "phased rollout" or "State-wise finalisation" is possible after the inclusion of this clause in the 2024 draft notification.

Between 2015 and 2026, five draft notifications were issued as the Centre and States did not reach a consensus. Following the expiry of the last notification, in July 2026, the Ministry has extended the expert panel's tenure by another year.

The case of Karnataka

Karnataka has 10 districts in the Western Ghats, with 23.4% of the State's population residing there. Around 20,668 square kilometres have been identified for ESA declaration. Regardless of the government's political affiliation, the State has consistently opposed the proposal, citing its potential impact on agriculture, plantations, mining, and infrastructure development.

A study by this writer covered villages located in the proximity of 10 WHS across four districts – Chikkamagaluru, Kodagu, Shivamogga, and Udupi – and three other important sites in Uttara Kannada and Udupi, including the Kali Tiger Reserve, Mundigekere Bird Sanctuary (five acres and a breeding ground for cattle egrets in Sirsi), and Mookambika Wildlife Sanctuary. The study highlighted local perspectives on livelihoods and conservation efforts.

In villages adjoining the Kali Tiger Reserve and Kudremukh National Park, some residents reported accepting or considering rehabilitation packages. Those opposing relocation felt that they might eventually have to follow due to declining village populations and the resulting threat to village life. Even villages with granted forest rights have faced challenges due to restrictions on minor forest produce collection and agricultural practices. Concerns were also raised over the rejection of forest rights claims by non-tribals with long-standing residence, including in a village (at least 150 years) near the

Balahalli Reserved Forest. Meanwhile, local officials and some communities supported regulating environmentally harmful activities such as stone quarrying and unplanned tourism projects, including proposals for forest ropeways.

With specific reference to the notifications, it must be noted that local communities faced similar restrictions whenever these areas were declared protected zones, even before the WGEEP was constituted. Many residents believe that buffer zones extend 10 kilometres from core areas and fear possible eviction from their lands.

Stakeholders across the study districts unanimously expressed concerns that reliance on satellite imagery for identifying ESA areas was unfair, as they were convinced that it could not distinguish plantation crops such as arecanut, shade-grown coffee, rubber, and coconut from forest cover. They also raised concerns that no committees had physically visited their villages.

In this context, Karnataka's case requires an empathetic approach that addresses genuine stakeholder concerns before a final decision is taken.

Protecting indigenous communities

In the broader context, the Union government's decision to proceed with the ESA notification for the Western Ghats reflects political will to protect ecology and biodiversity. Conservation efforts cannot be indefinitely delayed as it will result in States losing their control in such areas; ecological systems transcend administrative boundaries.

More importantly, ESA should include indigenous communities living deep within forests, as they naturally follow conservation principles and maintain a sacred, sustainable relationship with the environment despite challenging conditions. Their presence serves as a bridge between forests and mainstream society, while their absence risks the loss of biocultural diversity.

Western Ghats = biodiversity hotspot with 39 key areas; UNESCO World Heritage Site (2012).



WGEEP (2010) recommended 142 talukas across 44 districts as Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA) under EPA, 1986.



Strong opposition led to review by Kasturirangan Committee (2012); ESA area reduced to 37% of the Western Ghats.



First draft notification in 2014; expert panel under Sanjay Kumar (2022); Gujarat & Goa agreed, Maharashtra seeks review.



Centre & States yet to reach consensus; last notification expired in July 2026; panel's tenure extended by 1 year.



Karnataka: 10 districts, 23.4% of population; 20,668 sq km proposed for ESA; State opposes citing impact on agriculture, mining, infra.



Local concerns: restrictions on livelihoods, forest rights rejections, satellite mapping flaws, lack of field verification.



Need empathetic, inclusive approach addressing genuine stakeholder concerns before final decision.



ESA must protect indigenous communities & biocultural diversity; conservation is essential beyond politics & boundaries.



1st August 2026

Gen Z's voice must lead to a humane education system

With the successful demonstration by the Cockroach Janta Party, a point has been made. A light has been shown in our national darkness. We can use that light, or we can continue to curse the darkness. The choice is always there. Gen Z has pronounced a fiat. It will be wise on our part to take heed. The education system needs not just an overhaul but also a complete change. A change in policy itself. We must now sit down and work out a system in which professionally, and taken happily and voluntarily. Competitive examinations should no longer be associated with student suicides.



John Varghese

Former Principal of St. Stephen's College

India's education system has produced extraordinary professional talent, yet its admission culture has also created a dangerous emotional environment in which marks, ranks, and single-shot competitive examinations are true measures of intelligence, worth, and future possibility. This must change.

Examinations need to become more inclusive, projecting students' worth and abilities even as they assess a candidate's competence for the chosen field of higher education. Gen Z is very aware of the competitive world it has inherited and is quite capable of making prudent choices for its future. It is up to us – parents, teachers, and policymakers – to consult with them and evolve a system that is fair, robust, and respected.

Assessing competence

A fair system of admission must adopt a multi-dimensional assessment of competence. Admissions should combine moderated school performance, discipline-specific aptitude, analytical writing, structured interviews where appropriate, practical or scenario-based tasks, and verifiable portfolios, projects, internships, community work and co-curricular achievement.

Such an approach would test not only memory and speed but also reasoning, persistence, communication, judgment, ethical orientation and suitability for a chosen field. Entry-level institutions themselves, with the involvement of competent schoolteachers, should design and administer these assessments with transparent criteria and proper safeguards. Examinations should be redesigned to assess application, interpretation and higher-order thinking rather than predictable patterns that feed the coaching industry. This will preserve standards while aligning examinations more closely with real ability, educational purpose and student potential.

Industry, parents, and students must together broaden the meaning of educational success beyond a few high-pressure professional Regular industry interaction through career fairs, internships, mentorship programmes, workplace visits, and alumni engagement can make students aware, even at the school level, of emerging opportunities in newer sectors and reduce blind dependence on competitive examinations for

The time has come to rethink merit, reform admissions, and restore dignity to every student's academic journey

traditional career paths. Parents, especially those with limited access to reliable information and who often resort to unaffordable loans, need structured counselling in local languages on courses, careers, costs, scholarships, aptitude, mental-health risks, and the difference between a child's interests and parental ambitions.

must be helped to assess their abilities, dispositions, and aspirations realistically through guidance and aptitude-based conversations rather than prestige-driven choices. When informed industry exposure, responsible parental support, and self-aware student decision-making come together, educational choices become more rational, humane, and less fear-driven. This is the groundwork on which a fair and effective entry-level assessment system can be built.

Role of elected representatives

The Constitution treats education as a public good, not a commercial race, and places a clear duty on the state to protect equality, dignity, and the right to education, especially for children and weaker sections. When the coaching ecosystem becomes exploitative – creating inequality, displacing formal schooling, and harming student well-being – Parliament and State legislatures must respond through law, regulation, oversight. Members of Parliament and the of the Legislative Assemblies may not be individually liable for a persistent social problem, but they remain institutionally responsible for creating and enforcing safeguards on fees, advertising, mental-health support, hostel standards, and fraudulent practices. In the face of evidence of student suicides and commercialisation, persistent inaction invites democratic and legal scrutiny, making urgent action a constitutional responsibility.

Does one size fit all? No. A centralised agency such as the National Testing Agency rests on the assumption that one examination model can fairly judge all students across disciplines, regions and social contexts; this assumption is flawed – especially in a country such as India, varied in entry-point, Institutions and professional bodies are what they seek in candidates because they understand academic demands, skills, aptitude and ethical orientation required for specific courses leading to careers. A single national test also creates logistical single allocation unfairness: language, and demographic unfairness: language, gender, geography, school background, digital access, and local educational disadvantages all affect performance, making a 'one-test-fits-all' model neither educationally sound nor socially just.

A decentralised system, with universities or clusters of institutions designing and conducting their own assessments within broad University Grant Commission norms, would allow for more relevant and balanced evaluation. Students, too, may be encouraged designing and institutions within broad UGC norms, would allow for more relevant and balanced evaluation. Students, too, may be consulted through structured representation in identifying appropriate modes

Students, too, may be consulted through structured representation in identifying appropriate modes

of assessment, though access to live question papers or confidential content should be strictly avoided. To preserve sanctity and prevent paper leaks, these safeguards are essential: encrypted digital paper transmission; multi-layered question banks with algorithmic randomisation; strict vetting and rotation of paper setters; secure printing and sealed distribution protocols; independent audit and surveillance of examination centres. And severe penal consequences for any breach. Additional safeguards may include biometric candidate verification, time-staggered papers, and post-examination forensic review of anomalies.

Properly scheduled, decentralised examinations spread across the academic calendar would reduce stress, avoid nationwide disruption from a single failure, and permit institutions to test genuine competence and readiness rather than rote alone.

Entrance exams should help our students assess themselves for their abilities and competency in a chosen field. Students should undertake the exams willingly, with the clear understanding that it is indeed a competitive world, and that they have a self-worth even beyond the particular exam that they are sitting for. When alternate career choices are there, the pressure on the students is much less; and if they are passionate about a profession, then they will learn to work hard for it.

A humane direction for reform

India requires a shift from rank-based filtration to capacity-based recognition.

A just admissions system should ask not only who scored highest under exam pressure, but who has the aptitude, motivation, ethical seriousness, resilience, and capacity to grow in a chosen field. Such a system would still value excellence, but it would define excellence more intelligently and more humanely.

Over the past few days, Gen Z has brought us face-to-face with a dark secret we have long (with the overemphasis on certain professions.

This generation has choices, and we must allow them to choose responsibly while understanding the consequences.

The constitutional promise of education cannot be fulfilled by a structure that rewards fear, debt, and psychological distress while online result merit. The alternative: regulation of

assessment, regulation of coaching industry commercialisation, institutionalised mental-health healing counselling for parents and students, hence of education coming to universities. This will create harmony with universities, professional faculty, a 'one difference, and preparation: attention to individual aptitudes students, keeping interests, abilities, and dignity at the centre of educational choices.

This will empower and more confident young people who choose careers deliberately, not out of compulsion, paving the way for a better India and a better world.

If these changes begin now, the suicides caused by entrance examination stress can come to an end.

- Education needs a complete change, not just an overhaul.

Exams must be fair, professional, voluntary, and never linked to student suicides.



- Move beyond marks and ranks.

Adopt multi-dimensional assessments: aptitude, analytical skills, interviews, projects, internships, and ethics.



- Counselling and informed choices are key.

Provide local language guidance on courses, careers, costs, risks, and real interests, not parental ambitions.



- Parliament & Legislatures must act.

Regulate coaching industry, ensure mental health support, fee transparency, and curb commercialisation.



- One-size-fits-all exams are flawed.

Centralised tests ignore diversity in language, geography, economy, and educational backgrounds.



- Decentralised assessments work better.

Universities/institutions should design exams within broad norms for fair, relevant, and balanced evaluation.



- Ensure exam integrity with strong safeguards.

Encrypted papers, randomised question banks, biometric verification, audits, and strict punishments for leaks.



- Reduce stress through better scheduling.

Spread exams across the year to avoid overload and allow true assessment of competence, not coaching skills.



- Shift from rank-based to capacity-based admissions.

Value aptitude, ethics, resilience, motivation, and potential for growth.



- Build a humane, future-ready system.

Holistic assessment, counselling support, industry connect, and student dignity at the core.



1 Gen Z की आवाज़ से मानवीय शिक्षा प्रणाली



- छात्रों का आंदोलन शिक्षा प्रणाली पर अविश्वास दर्शाता है।
- मानसिक स्वास्थ्य पर तनाव और प्रतिस्पर्धा का प्रभाव।
- रटने की बजाय आलोचनात्मक सोच व मूल्य आधारित शिक्षा।
- समावेशिता, समता और गरिमा का सम्मान आवश्यक।
- शिक्षकों की स्वायत्तता और निरंतर प्रशिक्षण जरूरी।
- शिक्षा को रोजगार नहीं, सशक्तिकरण का माध्यम बनाना।
- नीतियों में छात्रों की भागीदारी सुनिश्चित की जाए।

अनुच्छेद 21A • NEP 2020 • समानता का अधिकार
मानव विकास • जीवन पर्यंत शिक्षा

2 पश्चिमी घाट संरक्षण वैज्ञानिक दृष्टिकोण और संवाद के साथ



- पश्चिमी घाट वैश्विक जैवविविधता हॉटस्पॉट है।
- संरक्षण हेतु वैज्ञानिक प्रभाव आकलन अनिवार्य।
- स्थानीय समुदायों और हितधारकों से निरंतर संवाद।
- पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र, आजीविका और विकास में संतुलन।
- खनन, बांध और अवैध निर्माण पर सख्त नियंत्रण।
- संरक्षित क्षेत्रों और गलियारों का प्रभावी प्रबंधन।
- पारदर्शी शासन, अनुसंधान और निगरानी आवश्यक।

पर्यावरण संरक्षण अधिनियम, 1986 • UNESCO WGS
CBD • IUCN • सतत विकास

3 एक स्वस्थ कर (A healthy tax)



- स्वास्थ्य उपकर से सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य प्राथमिकताएँ सुदृढ़।
- रोकथाम, प्राथमिक देखभाल और ग्रामीण स्वास्थ्य पर निवेश।
- स्वास्थ्य पर होने वाले निजी खर्च में कमी।
- उपकर से राजस्व संग्रह बढ़ेगा और पारदर्शिता आएगी।
- स्वास्थ्य निगरानी और डाटा प्रणाली को मजबूत करेगा।
- स्वस्थ जीवनशैली और पोषण को बढ़ावा मिलेगा।
- समावेशी विकास और उत्पादक कार्यबल का निर्माण।

अनुच्छेद 47 • NITI आयोग
SDG 3 • राजकोषीय उत्तरदायित्व

4 EU का AI डीपफेक, अवैध चित्र सामग्री और हैकिंग पर कड़ा कदम



- AI के दुरुपयोग को रोकने हेतु EU के नए नियम।
- डीपफेक, अवैध सामग्री और हैकिंग टूल पर नियंत्रण।
- AI प्रणालियों के लिए अनिवार्य जोखिम आकलन।
- गोपनीयता, सुरक्षा और मौलिक अधिकारों की रक्षा।
- गंभीर उल्लंघनों पर भारी जुर्माना और दंड।
- पहले-प्रकार का व्यापक AI विनियमन ढांचा।
- नैतिक AI शासन के लिए वैश्विक मानक स्थापित।

EU AI अधिनियम • डेटा संरक्षण • साइबर सुरक्षा
मौलिक अधिकार • वैश्विक डिजिटल शासन

5 कैबिनेट ने ₹84,084 करोड़ की 'समुद्र मंथन' योजना को मंजूरी दी (ऑफशोर अन्वेषण हेतु)



- योजना का आउटलेट: ₹84,084 करोड़।
- गहन समुद्री तेल व गैस अन्वेषण को प्रोत्साहन।
- आयात निर्भरता कम होगी; ऊर्जा सुरक्षा को बढ़ावा।
- राजस्व साझा मॉडल से राज्यों को लाभ।
- निजी निवेश और वैश्विक तकनीक आकर्षित होगी।
- भारत के E&P पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र को सुदृढ़ करेगी।
- नेट ऊर्जा सुरक्षा लक्ष्य की दिशा में बड़ा कदम।

हाइड्रोकार्बन अन्वेषण एवं लाइसेंसिंग नीति (HELP)
ऊर्जा सुरक्षा • आत्मनिर्भर भारत • E&P क्षेत्र

6 छल से प्रेरित जीवन (Driven by deception)



- ऑनलाइन धोखाधड़ी और डिजिटल छल का बढ़ता जोखिम।
- फर्जी पहचान और डेटा के दुरुपयोग से शोषण।
- तकनीक का दुरुपयोग कर लोगों को गुमराह करना।
- आर्थिक व भावनात्मक शोषण से गहरा नुकसान।
- सशक्त साइबर कानून और प्रवर्तन की आवश्यकता।
- डिजिटल साक्षरता और सत्यापन की संस्कृति विकसित करें।
- टेक प्लेटफॉर्म की जावाबदेही और पारदर्शिता जरूरी।

IT अधिनियम, 2000 • साइबर अपराध
डिजिटल भारत • डेटा संरक्षण

7 समाज के मन से बाहर (Out of society's mind)



- मानसिक स्वास्थ्य कलंक आज भी गहरा है।
- मनोचिकित्सा सेवाओं की उपेक्षा और कमी।
- उत्पादकता और मानव कल्याण पर नकारात्मक प्रभाव।
- शीघ्र पहचान और सामुदायिक सहायता की जरूरत।
- प्राथमिक स्वास्थ्य देखभाल में मानसिक स्वास्थ्य एकीकृत करें।
- जागरूकता, सहानुभूति और समावेशन को बढ़ावा दें।
- मानसिक स्वास्थ्य को सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य प्राथमिकता बनाएं।

मानसिक स्वास्थ्य अधिनियम, 2017
SDG 3 • कल्याण • मानव अधिकार

8 प्रतीक्षा में एक पीढ़ी (A generation in waiting)



- युवा जनसंख्या अवसरों की कमी से जूझ रही है।
- शिक्षा-रोजगार असंगति और कौशल अंतराल।
- आकांक्षाएँ ऊँची, लेकिन अवसर सीमित।
- कौशल, नवाचार और उद्यमिता को बढ़ावा दें।
- गुणवत्तापूर्ण रोजगार और सामाजिक गतिशीलता जरूरी।
- मानसिक तनाव और अनिश्चितता बढ़ रही है।
- जनसांख्यिकीय लाभांश को निवेश में बदलना होगा।

राष्ट्रीय युवा नीति • स्किल इंडिया
जनसांख्यिकीय लाभांश • SDG 8

9 कैबिनेट ने 'फ्लोटिंग सोलर' परियोजनाओं को बढ़ावा देने की योजना मंजूर की



- तैरते सौर संयंत्र स्थापित करने को बढ़ावा मिलेगा।
- जलाशयों, नहरों और जल निकायों का उपयोग।
- भूमि बचत; शीतलन दक्षता और ऊर्जा उत्पादन में वृद्धि।
- स्वच्छ ऊर्जा और जल वाष्पन में कमी।
- नवीकरणीय क्षमता और ऊर्जा सुरक्षा को बल।
- निजी निवेश, नवाचार और हरित रोजगार को प्रोत्साहन।
- भारत के हरित ऊर्जा संक्रमण में महत्वपूर्ण कदम।

राष्ट्रीय सौर मिशन • PM-KUSUM
नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा • जलवायु कार्रवाई

तरित समाचार (Quick News)

- 1 ट्रंप ने गाजा समझौते का किया दावा, हमारा ने इजरायली निकासी की मांग की। अमेरिका ने गाजा में निस्त्रीकरण समझौते की घोषणा की। हमारा ने शर्त रखी—इजरायल की पूर्ण वापसी।
- 2 लोकसभा ने जन्म एवं मृत्यु विधेयक पारित किया; छात्र आंदोलन पर हंगामा विधेयक बिना बहुसंख्यक पारित; विपक्ष ने पुलिस कार्रवाई और छात्र आंदोलन पर कड़ा विरोध किया।
- 3 इस महीने भारत में सामान्य से कम वर्षा की संभावना: IMD अगस्त में सामान्य से कम वर्षा का अनुमान। कृषि और जलाशयों पर प्रभाव संभव।
- 4 'IOC सितंबर के अधिकांश समय तक आरामदेह स्थिति में' भारतीय तेल विपणन कंपनियों को ईंधन आपूर्ति पर भरोसा। भंडार स्तर पर्याप्त।
- 5 केंद्र ने पीएम-किसान योजना 4 वर्ष के लिए बढ़ाई, ₹3.15 लाख करोड़ का आवंटन आय समर्थन जारी रहेगा; 2030-31 तक विस्तार।
- 6 बेंगलुरु को U.K.FTA के तहत टैरिफ-फ्री स्कॉटिश सैन्मन की पहली खेप मिली भारत-UK FTA के तहत पहला आयात बेंगलुरु पहुंचा।
- 7 स्पेन के PM का आरोप: तस्कर गिरोहों के कारण एक दिन में 60,000 लोग सेउता में दाखिल प्रवासी आवक रिकॉर्ड स्तर पर। सेउता में तस्करी नेटवर्क सक्रिय।
- 8 'इजरायल के गाजा युद्ध अपराधों में भारत की संलिप्तता का जोखिम' अंतरराष्ट्रीय कानून और मानवीय मूल्यों पर प्रश्न। मानवाधिकार संगठनों की धिंथंत।
- 9 मोदी और बर्नहुम के बीच फोन पर बातचीत व्यापार, प्रौद्योगिकी और होमजुज पर चर्चा। भारत-UK संबंध और ऊर्जा सुरक्षा पर जोर।

मुख्य तथ्य (Prelim Facts)

- 1 पश्चिमी घाट — UNESCO विश्व धरोहर स्थल
- 2 NEP 2020 — समग्र एवं बहुविध शिक्षा
- 3 स्वास्थ्य — राज्य सूची (प्रविष्टि 6); समवर्ती (30)
- 4 EU AI अधिनियम — AI विनियमन का पहला पूर्ण ढांचा
- 5 समुद्र मंथन योजना — ₹84,084 करोड़; गहन समुद्री अन्वेषण
- 6 IT अधिनियम, 2000 — साइबर अपराध और दंड
- 7 मानसिक स्वास्थ्य अधिनियम, 2017 — अधिकार आधारित
- 8 PM-KUSUM — सौर पम्प व विकेंद्रीकृत सौर
- 9 IMD — स्थापना 1875; मुख्यालय: नई दिल्ली

शब्दावली (Vocabulary)

- 1 मानवीय — करुणापूर्ण, सहानुभूतिपूर्ण
- 2 छल — धोखे से भ्रामक कार्य करना
- 3 समता — निष्पक्षता और समान अवसर
- 4 लचीलापन — आघात से उबरने की क्षमता
- 5 उत्तरदायित्व — अपने कार्यों की जिम्मेदारी लेना

1 Gen Z's voice must lead to a humane education system



- Students' stir reflects deep mistrust in system
- Mental health impact of stress & competition
- Shift from rote learning to critical thinking
- Listening to youth key to meaningful reform
- Equity, inclusion & dignity in classrooms
- Teacher autonomy and continuous training
- Education as empowerment, not just employability

Right to Education • NEP 2020
Fundamental Right • Human Development

2 Western Ghats conservation with science and dialogue



- Western Ghats: global biodiversity hotspot
- Need science-based impact assessments
- Engage local communities & stakeholders
- Balance ecology with livelihoods & growth
- Prevent linear projects in ecologically fragile zones
- Strengthen protected areas & corridors
- Transparent governance and compliance

Environment Protection Act, 1986
UNESCO WGS • CBD • IUCN

3 A healthy tax



- Health cess can fund public health priorities
- Invest in prevention, primary & rural care
- Reduce out-of-pocket health expenditure
- Ensure transparency & ring-fenced utilisation
- Strengthen health infra and disease surveillance
- Promote healthy lifestyles & nutrition
- Inclusive growth through healthier population

Article 47 • NITI Aayog
SDG 3 • Fiscal Responsibility

4 EU to crack down on AI deepfakes, illicit imagery, hacking



- EU adopts rules to curb harmful AI misuse
- Targets deepfakes, illicit content, hacking tools
- Mandatory risk assessment for AI systems
- Protects privacy, security & fundamental rights
- Heavy penalties for non-compliance
- First-of-its-kind comprehensive AI regulation
- Sets global benchmark for ethical AI governance

EU AI Act • Data Protection
Digital Governance • Cyber Security

5 Cabinet okays ₹84,084-cr. Samudra Manthan for offshore exploration



- Scheme outlay: ₹84,084 crore
- Incentivises offshore oil & gas exploration
- Reduces import dependence, boosts energy security
- Revenue share model with states
- Attract private & global investments
- Strengthens India's E&P ecosystem
- Supports net energy security goal

Hydrocarbon Exploration Licensing Policy (HELP)
Energy Security • Aatmanirbhar Bharat

6 Driven by deception



- Rise in online frauds & digital deception
- Exploitation through fake identities and data
- Use of tech to manipulate and mislead
- Victims: financially & emotionally devastated
- Need strong cyber laws & enforcement
- Build digital literacy & verification habits
- Tech platforms must ensure accountability

IT Act, 2000 • Cyber Crime
Digital India • Data Protection

7 Out of society's mind



- Mental health still stigmatised in society
- Neglect of psychiatric & counselling services
- Affects productivity and human well-being
- Need early detection & community support
- Integrate mental health into primary care
- Awareness, empathy & inclusion essential
- Mental health is public health priority

Mental Healthcare Act, 2017
SDG 3 • Well-being • Human Rights

8 A generation in waiting



- Youth face uncertainty & limited opportunities
- Education-employment gap persists
- Aspirations high, avenues restricted
- Need skilling, innovation & entrepreneurship
- Quality jobs and social mobility essential
- Mental stress & anxiety on the rise
- Invest in youth for demographic dividend

National Youth Policy • Skill India
Demographic Dividend • SDG 8

9 Cabinet approves scheme to promote 'floating' solar plants



- Scheme to promote floating solar projects
- Utilises reservoirs, canals & water bodies
- Saves land; higher efficiency via cooling
- Supports clean energy & climate goals
- Boosts renewable capacity & energy security
- Encourages private investment & innovation
- Part of India's green energy transition

National Solar Mission • PM-KUSUM
Renewable Energy • Climate Action

QUICK NEWS

- Trump touts Gaza deal, Hamas seeks Israeli exit**
U.S. announces Gaza disarmament pact. Hamas conditional on Israeli withdrawal.
- LS passes Births and Deaths Bill; furore over students' stir**
Bill passed amid Opposition protest. Row over crackdown on students.
- India likely to receive below-normal rainfall this month, says IMD**
August rainfall to be below normal. Impact on agriculture & reservoirs.
- 'IOC comfortably placed till most of Sept.'**
Indian Oil confident on fuel supplies. Inventory levels remain adequate.
- Centre extends PM-Kisan for four more years, allocates ₹3.15 lakh cr.**
Extension ensures income support to farmers till 2030-31.
- Bengaluru gets first tariff-free Scottish salmon via U.K.FTA**
First consignment under India-U.K. FTA reaches Bengaluru.
- Spain's PM blames trafficking gangs as 60,000 cross into Ceuta in a day**
Record migrant influx into Ceuta. Spain cites trafficking networks.
- 'India risks complicity in Israel's war crimes in Gaza'**
Rights groups warn of legal & moral responsibility.
- Modi, Burnham discuss trade, technology, Hormuz over phone**
Talk on UK-India ties, tech & energy security.

PRELIM FACTS

- Western Ghats – UNESCO World Heritage Site
- NEP 2020 – Holistic & multidisciplinary education
- Health – State List (Entry 6); Concurrent (30)
- EU AI Act – First comprehensive AI regulation
- Samudra Manthan – ₹84,084 crore outlay
- IT Act, 2000 – Cyber offences & penalties
- Mental Healthcare Act, 2017 – Rights based
- PM-KUSUM – Solar pumps & decentralised solar
- IMD – Established in 1875, HQ: New Delhi

VOCABULARY

- Humane** — Compassionate; showing empathy
- Deception** — Act of misleading by concealment
- Equity** — Fairness and justice in opportunity
- Resilience** — Capacity to recover and adapt
- Accountability** — Responsibility for actions

Q1

“Human development is the most sustainable pathway for poverty reduction.”
Critically analyse.

1 MEANING & LINKAGE

- Human development expands capabilities and choices.
- HDI (health, education, income) improves productivity and earnings.



2 BREAKS POVERTY CYCLE

- Education → better jobs → higher income.
- Health → higher productivity → stable livelihoods.
- Empowers people to escape intergenerational poverty.



3 BUILDS CAPABILITIES & OPPORTUNITIES

- Enhances skills, creativity and decision-making.
- Expands access to information and technology.
- Increases social mobility and empowerment.



4 INCLUSIVE & EQUITABLE GROWTH

- Reduces inequality in opportunities.
- Focus on women, children, SCs, STs and minorities.
- Promotes balanced regional development.



5 SUSTAINABLE & RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT

- Better health and education build resilient communities.
- Reduces vulnerability to shocks and climate risks.
- Supports long-term sustainable growth.



6 EVIDENCE & EXAMPLES

- Kerala, Himachal Pradesh: high HDI, low poverty.
- Countries like Norway, Finland: high human development, low poverty.
- India: MPI reduced (0.283 in 2015–16 to 0.111 in 2019–21).



7 LIMITATIONS / CHALLENGES

- HD outcomes take time to reflect.
- Inequality within groups may persist.
- Requires quality services, not just access.



8 WAY FORWARD

- Invest in quality health, education and nutrition.
- Strengthen social protection and skill development.
- Ensure gender equality and inclusive governance.
- Focus on early childhood development.



CONCLUSION:

Human development creates empowered, healthy and skilled individuals who can break the poverty cycle themselves. It is not just a means, but the most sustainable and ethical pathway to poverty reduction.

Q2

Why has urban infrastructure failed to keep pace with rapid urbanization?

1 RAPID & UNPLANNED URBAN GROWTH

- Urban population grew from 17.3% (1951) to 31.2% (2011).
- Many cities grew without proportionate planning and infrastructure.



2 INADEQUATE PLANNING & LAND USE

- Weak master plans and poor enforcement.
- Unregulated peri-urban expansion and sprawl.
- Conversion of ecological zones and wetlands.



3 FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS

- Limited municipal revenue and tax base.
- High dependence on state/central grants.
- Low user charges and poor cost recovery.



4 GOVERNANCE & INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES

- Overlapping roles among multiple agencies.
- Weak capacity of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).
- Delayed clearances and bureaucratic hurdles.



5 HIGH COST & LONG GESTATION PROJECTS

- Infrastructure projects are capital intensive.
- Long approval and execution timelines.
- Land acquisition and resettlement issues.



6 MIGRATION & INFORMAL URBANIZATION

- Large-scale rural–urban migration.
- Growth of slums and informal settlements.
- Demand for services outpaces supply.



7 TECHNICAL & OPERATIONAL GAPS

- Outdated infrastructure and poor maintenance.
- Leakage in water supply, loss in power distribution.
- Inadequate data and project prioritization.



8 ENVIRONMENTAL & CLIMATE PRESSURES

- Floods, heatwaves and sea level rise increase infrastructure stress.
- Poor drainage and loss of green cover.
- Climate-unsecured urban design.



CONCLUSION:

Urban infrastructure has lagged due to unplanned growth, financial and governance constraints, and rising demand. Integrated planning, empowered ULBs, sustainable financing and climate-resilient design are the way forward.