FINDER
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FORTUNE IAS NEWS DAILY EXPLAINER
FORTUNE IAS ACADEMY
More than just an academy

Mandating student presence, erasing learning

Prelims: General Studies Paper - 1
Economic and Social Development-Sustainable Development, Poverty, Inclusion, Demographics, Social Sector Initiatives, etc.

Mains: General Studies - 2
Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

1. Delhi High Court Ruling & Its Significance

- The **Delhi High Court** affirmed that **law students can appear for exams without rigid attendance requirements**.
- The ruling challenges an **outdated, bureaucratic view of education** that equates learning with surveillance.
- It reinforces the idea that **learning cannot be enforced through compulsion**, but must be fostered through meaningful engagement

2. Critique of Mandatory Attendance

- **Attendance is not a measure of learning**, but at best a measure of **obedience**.
- **Coercion does not produce scholarship or seriousness**; it discourages curiosity.
- If students avoid classes, the responsibility lies with **ineffective teaching practices and lack of intellectual engagement**, not student indiscipline.
- Enforced presence often masks **uninspiring teaching** and rote knowledge transfer.

3. Vision of True Education & Teaching

- Education should be **dialogic, critical, and inquiry-based**, not mechanical.
- Influential teachers attracted students through **intellectual depth, preparation, and imagination**, not threats.
- **Engaging classrooms are born of desire, not obligation**, where absence becomes unthinkable.
- Learning thrives through **debate, reflection, lived experience, and critical imagination**.

4. Implications for Indian Universities

- Indian universities suffer from **bureaucratic rigidity, centralised control, and erosion of autonomy**.
- Mandatory attendance becomes a tool of **educational control and enforced compliance**, not education.
- The ruling creates space for **pedagogical innovation**, shifting motivation from **external compulsion to intrinsic curiosity**.
- **True learning cannot be legislated**; it must be cultivated through **freedom, trust, and intellectual autonomy**.

Paying Musk, irrational exuberance and inequality

Prelims: General Studies Paper - 1
Current events of national and international importance

Mains: General Studies - 3
Inclusive growth and issues arising from it.

1. Musk's Pay Package and Shareholder Speculation

- **Tesla CEO Elon Musk** has received shareholder approval for a **record-breaking pay package** that could be worth **nearly $1 trillion**.
- The deal was approved by **75% of shareholders** and was met with **strong applause** at Tesla's **annual general meeting**.
- Elon Musk's **trillion-dollar payout** depends on meeting **highly unrealistic targets** which includes **increasing the stock value of the company to $8.5 trillion**, **selling 20 million vehicles and one million robots.**
- Tesla's stock valuation has surged despite **declining sales and profits**.

2. Shareholder Capitalism and Inequality

- Even if the gamble succeeds, it would **intensify wealth inequality**.
- A single individual could accumulate **unprecedented economic power**.
- Shareholder capitalism has **failed to spread power or control excessive concentration of wealth.**
- Extreme wealth concentration risks **undermining democratic foundations.**

3. Limits of Voting Rights and Economic Democracy

- Shareholder voting is meant to ensure **checks on CEO power**, but often fails.
- The Tesla vote shows how **procedural legitimacy** can coexist with **substantive injustice**.
- Economic incentives can push voters to prioritise **personal gain over democratic values**.
- **Formal voting alone is insufficient** to safeguard economic democracy.

4. Wealth Concentration and Democratic Erosion

- Rising wealth blurs the line between the **economic and political spheres**.
- Concentrated wealth enables **political interference and institutional weakening**.
- Equity ownership and voting cannot by themselves curb **capitalism's excesses**.
- Capitalism must be **embedded within stronger democratic limits** to remain sustainable.

From encroachment to legal ownership

Prelims: General Studies Paper - 1
Indian Polity and Governance - Constitution, Political System, Panchayati Raj, Public Policy, Rights Issues

Mains: General Studies - 2
Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

1. Background

- Haryana (Nov 2024) amended the Haryana **Village Common Lands (Regulation) Act, 1961** to **regularise unauthorised occupation** of **Shamilat deh** (village common land) through payment;
- 2025 changes further **eased approvals and pricing norms.**
- The State cites **litigation reduction, panchayat revenue recovery,** and **settlement** of long-pending disputes.
- However, commons sustain **landless livelihoods**, especially Dalits;
- **Payment-based ownership** restructures rural **power in favour of those who can pay.**

2. Challenges

- **Elite capture risk**: Ability to pay becomes the basis of ownership, legitimising encroachment rather than correcting historical dispossession.
- **Caste exclusion evidence**: 2007 HIRD found outsiders benefitting, **Dalits denied access to cultivable parcels**, richer households capturing leases;
  - ~15% encroachments backed by sarpanches/ officials/political influence.
- **Scale of encroachment**: **14.18%** of cultivable shamlat land (**28,628 acres out of 2,01,875 acres**) was under encroachment;
- Pending cases rose to **19,476 by 2009–10** (**2.35 times** 1994–95), showing **systemic capture**
- **Policy framing flaw**: Treating dispossession as **backlog management normalises encroachment** and converts it into **legal ownership through payment.**

3. Way Forward

- **Adopt a restitution-first approach**: Treat commons as **corrective instruments,** prioritising **landless and historically excluded groups**,
- as seen in **Madhya Pradesh's charnoi land distribution** and **Tamil Nadu's Panchami lands.**
- **Embed equity safeguards:** Mandate **socio-economic and caste profiling** with transparent panchayat disclosure; align title allocation with statutory intent
- **Protect critical commons**: Exclude ecologically and socially vital common lands from conversion.

- **Ensure accountability:** Provide independent audits and grievance redress insulated from local executive discretion.
- **Enable distributive repair**: Earmark proceeds for **corrective measures** and pair **time-bound case clearance** with legal aid to prevent exclusion by ability to pay.

4. Conclusion

- The 2024 amendment reflects a **choice between social justice and administrative tidiness**
- Legalising encroachment without correcting **structural inequalit**y converts a long-standing social conflict into a **technocratic settlement in the name of efficiency**.

Why does India need climate-resilient agriculture?

Prelims: General Studies Paper - 1
Current events of national and international importance

Mains: General Studies - 3
Major crops-cropping patterns in various parts of the country, - different types of irrigation and irrigation systems storage, transport and marketing of agricultural produce and issues and related constraints; e-technology in the aid of farmers.

1.What is Climate-resilient agriculture?

- Climate-resilient agriculture refers to **farming systems that use biotechnology and digital tools to sustain or enhance agricultural productivity under climate stress** while **reducing dependence on chemical inputs.**
- The use of biofertilizers, biopesticides, soil-microbiome analysis, and genome-edited crops **enhance stress tolerance, nutrient efficiency, and pest resistance.**
- Uses AI analytics, microbiome analysis, for precise, low-input farming.

2. Why Climate-Resilient Agriculture is Critical for India?

- About **51% of India's net sown area is rainfed, producing nearly 40% of total food,** making agriculture highly vulnerable to climate variability.
- **Increasing frequency of droughts, floods, heat stress, and erratic monsoons threatens crop yields** and farmer incomes.
- **A rapidly growing population requires stable and enhanced farm productivity** despite shrinking land and water resources.
- **Traditional input-intensive methods are insufficient to cope with climate change** and often degrade soil and water resources.
- **CRA enables higher yields with lower chemical dependence, protecting environmental health** while strengthening long-term agricultural resilience.

3. India's Current Status in Climate-Resilient Agriculture

- In 2011, **Indian Council of Agricultural Research launched the National Innovations in Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA)** to strengthen farmers' resilience to climate variability.
- It has promoted **location-specific climate-resilient technologies such as System of Rice Intensification (SRI), aerobic rice, direct seeded rice (DSR), zero-till wheat, climate-resilient crop varieties**, and in-situ residue management in 448 climate-resilient villages.
- The **National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) aims to improve productivity in rainfed areas by focusing on integrated farming systems,** water-use efficiency, soil health management, and resource conservation.
- The **BioE3 Policy positions CRA as a priority area for biotechnology-driven solutions, with several climate-resilient technologies** already commercialised.
- **India's expanding agritech ecosystem offers AI-enabled farm advisories, precision irrigation**, crop health monitoring, and yield prediction tools.

4. Way Forward

- **Fast-track the development, approval, and diffusion of climate-resilient and genome-edited seeds,** ensuring equitable distribution across States.
- **Enforce robust quality standards, certification, and supply chains for biofertilizers and biopesticides** to build farmer trust and affordability.
- **Expand access to digital tools, precision agriculture, and climate advisories,** especially for small and marginal farmers.

- **Provide targeted incentives, climate insurance, and affordable credit** to reduce transition risks for farmers adopting CRA.
- **Develop a coherent national CRA strategy under the BioE3 framework, aligning biotechnology,** climate adaptation, and agricultural policies for scale and impact.

KEYWORDS

National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)

- National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) **was launched in 2014-15 under India's National Action Plan on Climate Change to transform rainfed farming.**
- This **mission especially targets areas with less than or equal to 30% irrigation, promoting integrated systems of crops, livestock, and agroforestry for resilience**.
- NMSA **emphasizes soil health cards, water conservation, and nutrient management** to boost productivity sustainably.
- It helps farmers mitigate climate risks like droughts while diversifying incomes beyond traditional crops.
- Through micro-irrigation and balanced fertilizers, NMSA has achieved higher yields and long-term environmental health.

BioE3 (Biotechnology for Economy, Environment and Employment) Policy

- The BioE3 (Biotechnology for Economy, Environment and Employment) policy **was approved by the Union Cabinet in 2024 to position biotechnology as a driver of sustainable growth.**
- It **aims to integrate biotech, engineering, and digital tech for sustainable growth and a $300 billion bioeconomy by 2030**.
- The policy **identifies climate-resilient agriculture, bio-based chemicals, smart proteins, precision biotherapeutics, carbon capture, and marine/space biotechnology** as priority thematic areas.
- It promotes biofoundries, biomanufacturing hubs, and Bio-AI platforms to accelerate translation of research from lab to market.
- It aims to accelerate green growth and circular bioeconomy, **aligning with India's Net-Zero carbon goals and Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE) initiatives.**

Biofoundry

- A biofoundry is a **facility that integrates automation, synthetic biology, artificial intelligence, and data-driven tools to accelerate the design, build, test, and learn (DBTL) cycle** for biological systems.
- It **helps move from lab-scale research to industrial-scale production,** thereby enabling rapid and cost-effective development of bio-based products.

Sangeet Natak Akademi

- **Sangeet Natak Akademi** is an **autonomous body under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India**.
- It was **created by a resolution of the then Ministry of Education**, Government of India, dated 31 May 1952, which was notified in the Gazette of India of June 1952.
- Set up in **1953**, it is the **apex national institution** for the **promotion and preservation of India's performing arts ,music, dance, and drama**.
- Sangeet Natak Akademi **India's national academy of music, dance and drama is the first national academy of the arts set** up by the Republic of India.
- The Akademi is governed by a **General Council**, and its **Chairman is appointed by the President of India** for a **five-year term**.
- The Akademi **coordinates and collaborates** with **State and Union Territory arts academies** and **major cultural institutions** across the country.

National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM)

- The National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) was **launched in 2025** to ensure **self-reliance and supply security** of critical minerals vital for **clean energy, economic growth, and national security.**
- A Ministry of Mines committee (November 2022) identified 30 critical minerals.
- 24 of these were included in Part D of Schedule I of the **Mines and Minerals Development and Regulation Act, 1957**, granting the Central Government exclusive auction powers..
- The **Geological Survey of India (GSI)** has been assigned 1,200 exploration projects from 2024-25 to 2030-31 to strengthen **domestic mineral availability.**
- The mission promotes **fast-track approvals and Exploration Licences** to encourage private sector participation.
- It supports **overseas acquisition of mineral assets** through PSUs and private firms, with initiatives such as **Khanij Bidesh India Ltd**(KABIL)'s agreements with **Argentina and Australia.**

Technical textiles

- Technical textiles are textile materials manufactured primarily for their **functional and performance characteristics** rather than aesthetics.
- They are produced using advanced techniques such as **weaving, knitting, and non-woven processes**, and may use **natural fibres, synthetic fibres, or metals.**
- The concept gained importance from the 1980s with the growing demand for **high-performance and value-added textile products.**
- Technical textiles are widely used in **medical, agriculture, construction, automotive, aerospace,** sports, and industrial sectors.
- They focus on properties such as **strength, durability, protection, and efficiency**.

Species In News

Osedax worms/ Zombie worms

- **Osedax worms**, commonly called **"zombie worms,"** are **deep-sea organisms** that feed on the **bones of dead whales**, playing a vital role in **nutrient recycling** within marine ecosystems.
- These worms are **around one centimetre long** and lack a **mouth and digestive system**.
- Instead, they use **root-like structures** to penetrate whale bones.
- **Symbiotic bacteria** living in these roots extract nutrients from the bone tissue, enabling the worms to survive.
- Osedax depend almost entirely on **whale falls** for survival and have historically been recorded in both the **Pacific and Atlantic Oceans**.
- Their **decline or absence** is considered a **serious warning sign** for **ocean biodiversity** and the **marine food cycle**.
- Scientists attribute this disappearance mainly to the **expansion of oxygen-minimum zones**, linked to **rising ocean temperatures**.
- **Low oxygen levels** harm both the worms and their **symbiotic microbes**, threatening these **highly specialised deep-sea ecosystems**.