

Assembly poll results that recast the political landscape

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

Mains: General Studies - 2
Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure, devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein.

1. What explains the electoral outcomes in Assam and West Bengal?

- **Assam** produced an expected **BJP(Bharatiya Janata Party) victory under Himanta Biswa Sarma**, aided by **communal politics** and **constituency delimitation** that reduced Muslim-majority seats and weakened opposition parties like **Congress and AIUDF(All India United Democratic Front)**.
- Despite a **34% Muslim population**, **no Muslim MLA** was elected from the BJP, while **18 of 19 Congress MLAs were Muslims**, raising concerns about **representation**.
- In **West Bengal**, the **BJP came to power for the first time**, with elections conducted under **heavy deployment of over 2,500 Central Armed Police Forces companies** and **large-scale voter deletions under SIR**.
- Despite a **27% Muslim population**, **no Muslim was elected in the ruling alliance**, while the **Opposition had 35+ Muslim MLAs**.

2. How did Tamil Nadu witness a disruption of Dravidian dominance?

- **Tamil Nadu** saw the end of the **60-year DMK(Dravidia Munnetra Kazhagam)-AIADMK(All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam) duopoly** with the victory of **Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK)** led by **C. Joseph Vijay**.

- The electorate favored **change**, with traditional Dravidian themes like **rationalism, caste, and anti-North politics** losing prominence.
- Even **M.K. Stalin(Former CM) lost**, despite relatively stable governance, indicating **strong anti-incumbency and youth influence**.
- Unlike the **1967 DMK shift**, this change lacked strong ideology and reflected **Gen Z aspirations**, especially for **employment**.
- The result signals a possible **decline of "Dravidianisation"** and entry of **new political ideas**.

3. What are the key features of the Kerala election outcome?

- **Kerala** returned to its pattern of **power alternation**, with the **Congress-led UDF winning 102/140 seats**.
- **Anti-incumbency against Pinarayi Vijayan(Former CM)** led to the defeat of the **Left Front**.
- **V.D. Satheesan's(CM) rise** without reliance on caste groups indicates **weakening caste-based politics**.
- The results offer scope for a shift toward **development-oriented politics**.

4. What are the broader implications for Indian democracy and federalism?

- The elections reflect the Centre's push for **"double engine sarkar"** (same party at **Centre + States**).
- **West Bengal** was a key target, with **intensive campaigning, heavy central force deployment, and SIR-based voter deletions**, raising concerns about **electoral fairness**.
- **Large-scale voter deletions**, especially among **minorities**, question **democratic inclusiveness**.
- The trend suggests **increasing centralisation** and **strategic control over elections**.
- It may **weaken federalism** by influencing **State-level electoral choices**.

- **Declining minority representation** and the rise of **Gen Z voters** point to a shift toward **jobs and governance-focused politics**.

After Maoism, the next battle is for Adivasi trust

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

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

1. What is the significance of declaring India “Maoist-free” and the 2031 roadmap?

- On **May 19, 2026**, the **Union Home Minister in Jagdalpur (Chhattisgarh)** declared that India became **“Maoist-free” on March 31, 2026**.
- He emphasised that the **fight remains incomplete until Bastar’s residents are integrated into the mainstream**.
- The next milestone is **2031**, aimed at ensuring the **overall welfare of Bastar’s Adivasis**.
- The strategy includes **democratic values, cooperation, development, and doorstep delivery of welfare schemes through security force-operated centres**.
- The approach recognises that **insurgencies do not end automatically** and require **long-term governance interventions**.

2. What governance framework has been proposed for Bastar’s development?

- The Home Minister highlighted a **tiered governance system** from **tehsil to Centre**, based on **two parallel channels**:
 - ➔ **Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)** with the **Gram Sabha as the core (elected)**.
 - ➔ **Government-appointed officials** like **tehsildars and District Collectors**.
- Ideally, both channels should function **independently without domination by bureaucracy**, though in practice the latter often overshadows the former.

- The government’s blueprint includes **infrastructure (roads, telecom towers)** and **welfare expansion**, improving **ease of living**.
- However, **core issues of “jal, jungle, zameen” (water, forest, land)** remain central to building **trust** among Adivasis.

3. Why is effective implementation of the PESA Act, 1996 crucial?

- The **Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA)** is key to **grassroots Adivasi empowerment**, but its implementation across **Fifth Schedule States has been poor**.
- Since implementation is left to States, many have **diluted its spirit through varied interpretations**.
- **Gram Sabha is the cornerstone**, with powers to:
 - ➔ **Protect Adivasi identity**
 - ➔ **Manage community resources**
 - ➔ **Resolve disputes using customary laws**
- **Mandatory consent of Gram Sabha** for development projects ensures **real decentralisation and “positive peace”**.
- Attempts to dilute PESA, such as **Chhattisgarh’s 2022 proposal to replace “consent” with “consultation”**, undermine its essence.
- Instances of **forged Gram Sabha resolutions** further weaken trust and governance legitimacy.

4. What are the key challenges and the imperative of trust-building?

- The current support of Adivasis for the government is largely due to **security forces’ tactical success against Maoists**, not necessarily **long-term trust**.
- As security threats decline, the government will be judged on **justice delivery and constitutional guarantees**.
- Adivasis are increasingly aware of their **constitutional rights** and will not lower their expectations.
- **Structural and historical issues**, especially related to **land, forest rights, and autonomy**, must be addressed.
- Strengthening **participatory governance** and **Gram Sabha authority** is essential for sustainable peace.

- True integration requires allowing Adivasis to **define their own “mainstream”**, rather than imposing external models.

Is shoot-to-disable the new normal?

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

Mains: General Studies - 2
Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance- applications, models, successes, limitations

1. What is Operation Langda (Half-Encounter)?

- Operation Langda is a **policing practice in Uttar Pradesh where accused persons are shot in the leg during encounters** and then arrested.
- The word **“Langda” means lame and refers to disabling suspects** rather than killing them.
- Between 2017 and 2025, **Uttar Pradesh Police conducted more than 16,000 encounters, with about 97% resulting in leg injuries.**
- Over time, it has become a regular crime-control method across the State.

2. How are Half-Encounters Conducted?

- A study by National Law University (NLU) Delhi’s Centre for Criminology and Victimology **found a common pattern in such encounters.**
- Police receive information, **intercept the suspect, and claim the suspect tried to flee or attack.**
- **Police then fire in response**, usually injuring the suspect in the leg.
- The accused **is arrested and a weapon is often reported as recovered.**
- Around **80% of cases are justified by police as acts of self-defence or retaliation.**

3. Why Has Operation Langda Received Support?

- It is seen as a response to low conviction rates and slow criminal justice processes.
- Since **suspects survive and are produced before courts, it is viewed as more acceptable than fatal encounters.**

- The State links the practice with a decline in crimes such as robbery and dacoity.
- **Police personnel involved in such operations have received recognition**, rewards, and promotions.

4. What Are the Concerns Regarding Operation Langda?

- Critics **argue that it weakens due process and the rule of law.**
- It **raises concerns about punishment being carried out by police** rather than courts.
- In **PUCL v. State of Maharashtra (2014)**, the **Supreme Court called for independent investigations** into encounter cases.
- In 2026, the Allahabad High Court noted that rewards and promotions may encourage such practices.
- Reform is difficult because of political support, police incentives, media acceptance, and weaknesses in the criminal justice system.

Is climate research being held back by local instrumentation?

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

Mains: General Studies - 3
Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.

1. What is the Mega Science Vision–2035 Report on Climate Research?

- Mega Science Vision–2035 is a **long-term roadmap for India’s climate research ecosystem prepared by the Indian climate research community.**
- The **exercise was coordinated by Indian Institute of Science and submitted to the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) to the Government of India.**
- It is the **first time the Mega Science Vision framework has been extended beyond nuclear and high-energy physics to climate science, ecology, and astronomy.**

2. Why does the report stress indigenous scientific instruments?

- India **relies heavily on imported climate research instruments**.
- Billions of rupees are **spent annually on procuring foreign equipment**.
- **Improper understanding and calibration can affect data quality** and research credibility.
- Indian institutions have developed prototypes, but few reach commercial production.
- The report recommends strengthening domestic manufacturing and technology transfer.

3. Why does the report call for studying renewable energy impacts?

- **Renewable energy remains essential for decarbonisation** and climate goals.
- Large-scale deployment **may have unintended environmental consequences**.
- The report seeks **research on sustainable utilisation of natural resources**.
- It recommends **estimating India's Social Cost of Carbon**.

Social Cost of Carbon refers to the estimated economic damage caused by the emission of one additional tonne of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

- ➔ It supports a Polluter Pays framework while protecting vulnerable populations.

The **Polluter Pays Principle** is an environmental law principle that requires the person, industry, or entity responsible for causing pollution to bear the costs of preventing, controlling, and remedying the environmental damage caused by their activities.

In simple terms, "the polluter should pay for the pollution they create, rather than society or the government bearing the cost."

4. What are the major recommendations of the report?

- Establish a Pan-India Climate and Health Observatory.

- **Launch eight mega projects** covering observations, sensors, satellites and climate modelling.
- **Expand Black Carbon monitoring** to improve climate assessments.

Black Carbon is a short-lived climate pollutant produced by incomplete combustion of fossil fuels and biomass, contributing to atmospheric warming and glacier melting.

- **Strengthen paleoclimate studies** to understand long-term monsoon variability.
- **Address shortages of skilled manpower in climate science** and environmental epidemiology.

KEYWORDS

GPLD1

- GPLD1 (Glycosylphosphatidylinositol-Specific Phospholipase D1) is an **enzyme produced by the liver that acts like a molecular "scissor."**
- It **cuts and releases certain proteins that are attached to the surface of cells, allowing them to move freely** in the bloodstream and perform various functions in the body.
- It has **gained attention in ageing and longevity research due to its association with improved cognitive function** and healthy ageing.
- Studies suggest that increased GPLD1 levels, particularly following physical exercise, **may contribute to enhanced brain health and neuroprotection**.
- The enzyme represents a promising target in biomedical research exploring the links between metabolism, exercise, ageing, and brain function.

E85 (Ethanol 85)

- E85 (Ethanol 85) is a **fuel blend containing 85% ethanol and 15% petrol, mainly designed for use in flex-fuel vehicles (FFVs)**.
- Ethanol is a **renewable biofuel produced from sources such as sugarcane, maize, and agricultural residues**.

- E85 can **help reduce dependence on crude oil imports and lower certain vehicle emissions** compared to conventional petrol.
- The **Government of India is considering the introduction of E85 as part of its strategy** to promote cleaner and alternative fuels.
- However, E85 requires compatible engines and supporting fuel infrastructure for widespread adoption.

Quark-Gluon Plasma (QGP)

- **Quark-Gluon Plasma (QGP)** is an **ultra-hot, dense, fluid-like subatomic state of matter** where fundamental particles called **quarks and gluons are “deconfined”**, meaning they **move freely** instead of being bound inside **protons and neutrons**.
- It holds **immense cosmological significance** as it represents the **state of the universe a few microseconds after the Big Bang**, helping scientists study the **earliest evolution of matter**.
- Contrary to early expectations of a **gas-like state**, experiments show that QGP behaves like a **nearly “perfect liquid”** with **almost zero viscosity** and **strong collective flow**.
- In laboratories, QGP is created for **fractions of a second** by colliding **heavy nuclei (lead or gold ions)** at **near light speed** in facilities such as the **Large Hadron Collider (LHC)** and the **Relativistic Heavy Ion Collider (RHIC)**.
- **Recent experiments at the LHC** using **lighter oxygen ions** aim to determine the **minimum system size required to form QGP**, showing that even **tiny droplets** can exhibit **distinct fluid-like behavior**.

Place in News

Qeshm Island

- Qeshm Island is **the largest island in the Persian Gulf and is located near the Strait of Hormuz**.
- It **belongs to Iran and lies parallel to the Iranian coast, separated by the Clarence Strait**.
- The island is situated close to the city of Bandar Abbas in Hormozgan Province.
- Recently, **Qeshm Island was in the news after the U.S. military stated that it had launched strikes on an Iranian military ground control station** located on the island.
- Covering about 1,491 sq. km, Qeshm has a predominantly rocky coastline with sandy bays and mud flats along its northwestern shore.

