

The Iran conundrum and the decline of the West

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

Mains: General Studies - 2
Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora.

1. How is U.S. dominance being challenged?

- After 1945, the **U.S. and Western Europe** dominated due to **military power, technology, and money**.
- Now, countries like **China** and some **middle powers** are rising → world is becoming **multipolar**.
- China is strong because of **technology** and control over **important resources**.
- The U.S. is facing **internal weaknesses** and reduced global influence.
- The **Iran conflict** showed that the U.S. cannot always impose its will.
- Iran showed strong **resilience** (like in the Iran-Iraq War), unlike U.S.'s limited **staying power**.
- Overall, even a **weaker country challenged a superpower**, hurting U.S. image.

2. What are the main points of the 2026 U.S.- Iran deal?

- A deal in **June 2026** stopped the conflict and reopened the **Strait of Hormuz**.
- A **14-point agreement** was signed in **Versailles**.
- It included **lifting the U.S. blockade** on Iran.
- A **\$300 billion development plan** was promised (but no direct U.S. funding).
- Likely **release of Iran's frozen money**.
- Iran informally agreed on **not developing nuclear weapons**, but this is **unclear**.
- The U.S. said **International Atomic Energy Agency**

(IAEA) inspections will resume, but Iran denied new promises.

- Oil sanctions were relaxed**, allowing Iran to export oil again.
- Many see this as a **compromise by the U.S.**, with **more benefit to Iran**.
- Iran may also get a role in controlling the **Strait of Hormuz**.
- Important issues like **shipping safety and security** are still unclear.

3. What are the effects on West Asia and U.S.- Israel relations?

- There is a **tension between the U.S. and Israel** after the deal.
- Israel failed in its plan to **weaken Iran using U.S. support**.
- This may change the **power balance in West Asia**.
- Iran's **military group (IRGC - Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps)** is becoming more powerful.
- Iran may become more **aggressive in the region**.
- Israel may react strongly like a **"wounded tiger"**, causing more conflict.
- Peace efforts like the **Abraham Accords** may weaken.

The **Abraham Accords (2020)** are a series of **U.S.-brokered normalization agreements** under President **Donald Trump**, through which **Israel established diplomatic relations** with countries like the **UAE, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco**.

- Gulf countries may stop depending fully on the U.S. for security**.
- There may be calls to **reduce U.S. troops** in the region.

4. What are the wider global security risks?

- Hardliners in Iran** may become stronger and more aggressive.

- The **IRGC** may act more freely without fear.
- The risk of **Shia-Sunni tensions is increasing** in many regions, even affecting **India**.
- More chances of **conflicts spreading in West Asia**.
- **Russia and China** did not gain much from the situation.
- There is a danger of **terrorist groups like al-Qaeda returning**.
- New **extremist groups** may emerge globally.
- The U.S.'s **global influence and deterrence** is weakening.
- The world may become more **unstable and uncertain**.
- **Way Forward:** Promote **inclusive diplomacy, strengthen multilateral institutions, ensure regional dialogue (U.S.-Iran-Israel-Gulf), and maintain energy security cooperation** to reduce tensions and build long-term stability.

Building water security in a rapidly drying India

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

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 issue?

- **India** is facing increasing **water stress**, with many cities experiencing **water shortages**.
- **11 of India's 15 major river basins** are water-stressed, with several, including the **Krishna River, Cauvery River, Mahi River and Tapi River**, facing severe water scarcity.
- Factors such as **deficient monsoon, uneven water distribution, groundwater depletion, and water pollution** have worsened the crisis.

2. What are the major challenges in India's water sector?

- India has only **4% of the world's freshwater resources** but supports **18% of the global population**.

- Despite schemes such as the **Jal Jeevan Mission** and **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)**, challenges remain:

- ➔ **Poor maintenance** of water infrastructure.
- ➔ **Inadequate wastewater treatment**.
- ➔ **Water pollution and distribution losses**.
- ➔ **Low cost recovery** from water services.

3. What measures can improve water security?

- **Strengthen water infrastructure by assessing climate-related risks**.
- Promote **reuse of treated wastewater** for **non-potable purposes** such as construction, landscaping, and industrial use.
- Expand **micro-irrigation (drip and sprinkler irrigation)** to improve **water-use efficiency**.
- Encourage cultivation of **low-water-intensive crops** and strengthen **crop insurance** for farmers.
- Improve **river basin-level water data** for better planning and allocation of water resources.
- Use **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** and **smart water meters** to monitor water distribution and reduce losses.
- Treat **water as a valuable economic resource** essential for **livelihoods, agriculture, industry, and sustainable development**.

Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) is a **flagship irrigation scheme** that aims to provide **assured irrigation, improve water-use efficiency, and promote sustainable water management** in agriculture.

Counting cancer: On making cancer a notifiable disease in India

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

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

1. Why is there a need to make cancer a nationally notifiable disease?

- Cancer is **not a nationally notifiable disease**; the Health Ministry limits notification mainly to communicable diseases.

A **notifiable disease** is a disease that is legally required to be reported by healthcare providers to designated government authorities for surveillance and public health action.

In India, the **Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897** provides the legal framework for notifying diseases, based on factors such as **disease incidence, severity, communicability, outbreak potential, and risk of international spread**.

- Current cancer data comes only from **Population-Based Cancer Registries (PBCRs) and Hospital-Based Cancer Registries (HBCRs)**.
- These **registries cover only 10–16% of India's population**.
- Existing registries **are urban-centric and largely based in government healthcare facilities**.
- National notification would ensure comprehensive reporting of all cancer cases across India.

2. What is the current status and future burden of cancer in India?

- 17 States, including Telangana**, have made cancer a notifiable disease.
- According to **the Global Cancer Observatory (WHO-affiliated)**, India had **1.41 million cancer cases in 2022**.

Global Cancer Observatory (GCO): An online cancer database developed and maintained by the International Agency for Research on Cancer, the cancer research arm of the World Health Organization. It provides global estimates and projections on cancer incidence, mortality and prevalence.

- Cases are projected to increase to 2.46 million by 2045.
- This represents an increase of over 74% (1.05 million additional cases).
- The rise is driven by **ageing demographics, increasing life expectancy, and lifestyle and dietary changes**.

3. What are the limitations of the existing cancer surveillance system?

- Current registries fail to capture the majority of cancer cases** nationwide.
- A **significant number of patients receive treatment in the private healthcare sector**, whose data is not uniformly reported.
- Lack of comprehensive data** weakens national cancer control planning.
- Inadequate surveillance hampers evidence-based policymaking** and resource allocation.

4. What measures are recommended?

- Learn from States** that have already made cancer a notifiable disease.
- Implement nationwide mandatory reporting** of every cancer case.
- Act on the recommendation of the Indian Council of Medical Research and ICMR-NINE**, which have long supported national notification.

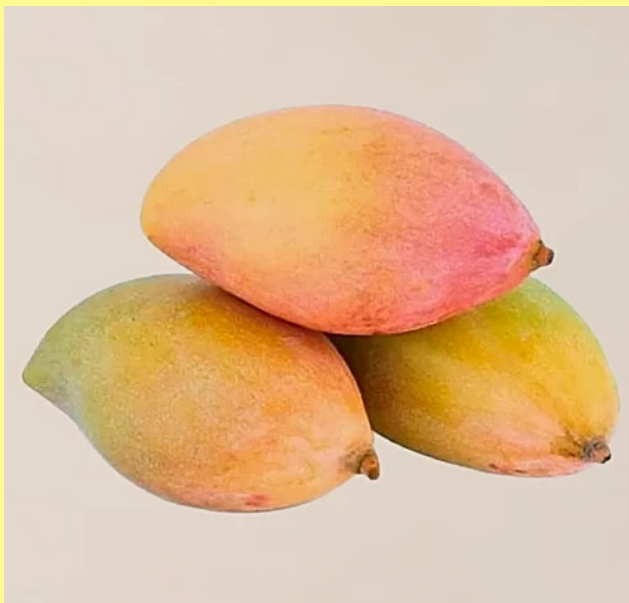
ICMR- National Institute of NCD Epidemiology (ICMR-NINE), formerly known as the National Centre for Disease Informatics and Research (NCDIR). It is an institute under the Indian Council of Medical Research that develops and manages disease surveillance systems and health data, including the National Cancer Registry Programme (NCRP).

- Treat the initial rise in reported cases as improved detection** and reporting, not as a liability.
- Use comprehensive data to strengthen cancer control programmes**, healthcare planning, research, and Information, Education and Communication (IEC) initiatives.

KEYWORDS

Radio telemetry

- Radio telemetry refers to the remote measurement and tracking of data using radio waves.
- The **two core applications: wildlife conservation (tracking animal corridors and behavior) and remote sensing** (monitoring inaccessible environments like glaciers or spacecraft).
- A standard radio telemetry system operates in three parts: **a transmitter (which collects and sends data), a transmission channel/medium (radio waves), and a receiver (which captures and records the data).**
- It is **used extensively to study animal movement patterns, map wildlife corridors, and mitigate human-wildlife conflicts.**
- **Anti-poaching squads utilize telemetry data to provide 24/7 security to high-risk animals, significantly reducing illegal poaching in dense tiger reserves.**

Totapuri mango

- Totapuri mango is an **indigenous South Indian mango variety, primarily cultivated in the Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh and adjoining areas of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.**

- It is **characterized by its elongated shape and distinctive parrot beak-like tip, which gives it the name "Totapuri."**
- Totapuri mango is **mainly used for juice and pulp processing rather than as a premium table fruit**, supplying processing industries in India and abroad.
- The variety is also **known by names such as Ginimoothi, Sandersha, and Banglora.**
- Totapuri mango **grows best in well-drained loamy soils under tropical climatic conditions with moderate to high temperatures.**

Specialised Investment Funds

- **Recently Specialised Investment Funds (SIFs)** have seen rapid growth in India, crossing **₹13,500 crore** with over **56,000 investor folios** within months of launch.
- Introduced by **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** to fill the gap between small investment mutual funds and high-investment **Portfolio Management Services (PMS).**
- Meant for **sophisticated retail investors** (financially knowledgeable, high-risk taking, high investment capacity) with a **minimum investment of ₹10 lakh.**
- Unlike mutual funds, SIFs can **make profit even when markets fall**, not just when they rise.
- Among **21 SEBI-approved strategies**, the **Hybrid Long-Short strategy** (buying stocks expected to rise and selling stocks expected to fall to earn in any market condition) has attracted the **highest investment.**

Indus Waters Treaty (IWT)

- The Ministry of External Affairs announced that India has officially held the **Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) of 1960** in strict **abeyance**, stating that the suspension will remain in effect until Pakistan credibly and irrevocably ceases its support for **cross-border terrorism.**
- **Historical Context:** Signed on **September 19, 1960**, by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Pakistani President Ayub Khan, the historic

transboundary river treaty was structurally brokered by the **World Bank** to allocate the water resources of the Indus River system.

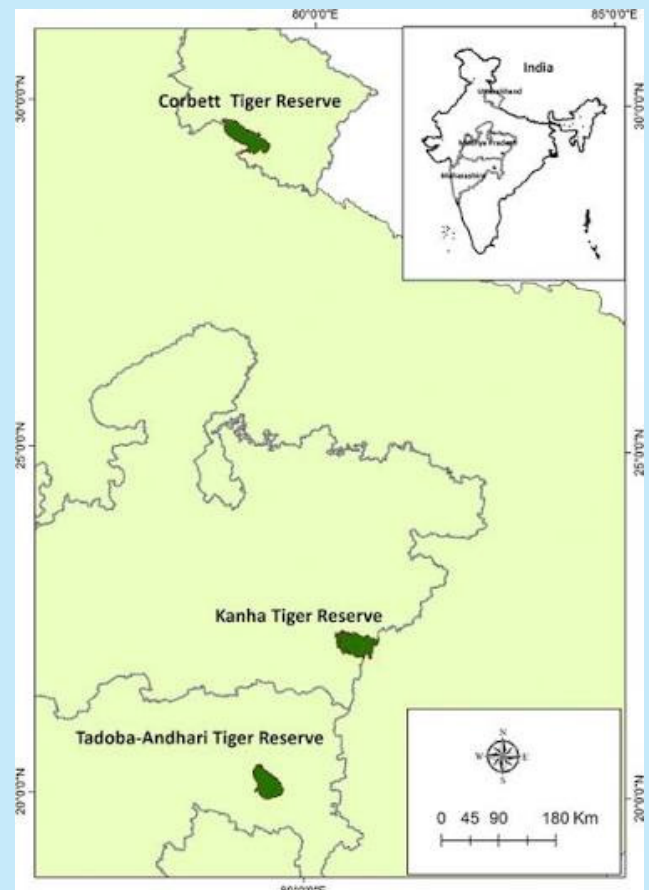
- The water-sharing framework divides the **six major rivers** of the basin: India receives unrestricted usage rights over the **three Eastern Rivers (Sutlej, Beas, and Ravi)**, while Pakistan is allocated the **three Western Rivers (Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab)**.
- Although the Western Rivers belong to Pakistan, India is permitted limited, **non-consumptive agricultural use and retains the right to construct run-of-the-river hydroelectric projects** on them, without structurally altering the water storage parameters.
- The bilateral treaty established the **Permanent Indus Commission (PIC)**, a legally mandated body composed of high-level commissioners from both countries who must meet **at least once a year** to handle data exchange and dispute resolution.

Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)

- **Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)** was **launched in 2019** and is implemented by the **Ministry of Jal Shakti**.
- The mission aims to provide **safe and adequate drinking water** through **Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs)** to all rural households.
- It promotes **source sustainability** through **water conservation, rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge, and greywater reuse**.
- The mission adopts a **community-based approach** to ensure **local participation** in water management.
- It emphasises **Information, Education and Communication (IEC)** to promote **water conservation, community awareness, and sustainable use of water resources**.
- The Union Cabinet has approved the **extension of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) till December 2028** with an **enhanced outlay and restructured implementation under JJM 2.0**.

Places in News

Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve



- Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve is the **largest and oldest tiger reserve in Maharashtra**, located in the **Chandrapur district** and spread over about 1,727 sq. km.
- Established in 1955, the **reserve comprises Tadoba National Park and Andhari Wildlife Sanctuary**.
- The **reserve has corridor connectivity with Nagzira Tiger Reserve, Navegaon Tiger Reserve, and Pench Tiger Reserve**, facilitating wildlife movement.
- The name '**Tadoba**' is derived from the local tribal deity **Tadoba (Taru)**, while '**Andhari**' comes from the **Andhari River** flowing through the reserve.
- The **reserve lies on the Deccan Plateau and is characterized by tropical dry deciduous forests**, hilly terrain (200–350 m elevation), and water bodies such as **Tadoba Lake and Kolsa Lake**.

Kalaburagi Zoological Park

- Kalaburagi Zoological Park is located in the **Kalaburagi district of Karnataka** and is being developed as a modern zoological park.
- The **park is being established under the guidelines of the Central Zoo Authority** to promote wildlife conservation, education, and research.
- It aims to conserve native and endangered wildlife through scientific management, captive breeding, and public awareness programmes.
- The **park has been identified as a key centre for vulture conservation**, including the rescue, rehabilitation, and conservation breeding of threatened vulture species.

