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India's post-LWE future, from red sun to new dawn

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. Background & Decline of LWE

- In 2009, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh identified **Left Wing Extremism (LWE)** as the most serious **internal security threat** facing the nation.
- Peak violence included the **2010 Dantewada attack** killing **76 CRPF personnel**.
- LWE weakened **state legitimacy**, disrupted **governance**, and created **fear among citizens**.
- By **2026**, the government declared India **free from Maoist insurgency** due to:
 - ➔ **Political commitment**
 - ➔ **Centre-State coordination**
 - ➔ **Strategic security operations**

2. Shift from Security to Governance

- **Security success is not enough**; it only creates an **opportunity for development**.
- Focus must shift to **governance credibility** and **long-term transformation**.
- Successful models (e.g., **Jungle Mahal, Bastar, Malkangiri**) show:
 - ➔ Need for **community-centred development**
 - ➔ Shift from **short-term interventions** → **sustained reconstruction**
- Emphasis on building **local economies** instead of extractive development

3. Development Priorities in Post-LWE Areas

Promote livelihood-based development:

- **Forest produce systems**
- **Agroforestry**
- **Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)** and **eco-tourism**

Strengthen basic governance infrastructure:

- **Roads, schools, healthcare, banking**
- **Women's collectives & nutrition systems**

Ensure citizen-centric governance:

- Treat people as **rights-bearing stakeholders**, not beneficiaries

Address tribal marginalisation:

- Adivasis faced **violence, neglect, and invisibility**
- Peace must mean **dignity and inclusion**, not just absence of conflict

4. Framework for Post-LWE Transformation

Adopt a humane, rights-based approach:

- Focus on **justice, dignity, and trust-building**

Implement AIEEEE framework:

- **Accountability, Innovation, Evidence, Equity, Empathy, Efficiency**

Ensure policy convergence:

- Use schemes like **Aspirational Districts Programme, Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyaan (PM-JANMAN), Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJUGA)**
- Strengthen **tribal-focused funding & governance**

Improve justice delivery:

- **Humane policing**
- **Legal aid & faster trials**
- Review of **undertrial cases**

Invest in youth development:

- **Sports, education, skilling, women-led enterprises**

Final goal: **From counter-insurgency → inclusive development & trust-based governance**

Beyond trade deals to building a new architecture

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

Mains: General Studies - 2
Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

1. Context

- In early 2026, **India signed major trade deals with the European Union and the United States**, marking significant economic progress.
- Global trade is becoming more political than economic.
- Earlier, **trade followed efficiency and global rules**.
- This system helped India and South Korea grow.

2. Politics Dictates Access

- **Access to key goods is now shaped by geopolitics**, with the United States and China using trade as leverage.
- **Global trade bodies are weakening, reducing rule-based** dispute resolution.
- India **remains dependent on China for Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) and other critical sectors**
- Events like the **Galwan Valley clashes and U.S. tariffs in 2025** show how trade can be weaponised.
- With Russia weakened post-Ukraine war, India's strategic flexibility has reduced, requiring a long-term strategy.

3. Sectoral Plurilateralism: India's Strategy for Targeted Global Partnerships

- India **should prefer small, sector-based partnerships** over broad balancing.
- Such groups **help set standards and build mutual dependence**.
- **European Coal and Steel Community shows sectoral cooperation** can build long-term trust
- Unified Payments Interface, Aadhaar, and DigiLocker can **anchor global digital partnerships**
- **Countries combining strengths can build open AI systems** and shape global standards.

4. From Reactive Diplomacy to Strategic Sectoral Leadership

- Focus on space, digital infrastructure, and AI where India has strengths and partners have demand.
- These partnerships must have authority to set binding standards.
- **Standards will convert capability** into influence.
- This will shift India from reactive to shaping outcomes.

Tamil Nadu and the climate question

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

1. Context

- Tamil Nadu is **highly climate-exposed despite being a dynamic economy**, facing increasing environmental and economic risks.
- **Cyclone Michaung (2023)** caused losses of over ₹11,000 crore in one week.
- **Floods and droughts in 2024** added around ₹10,000 crore in losses.
- **Cyclone Dityah damaged 2.11 lakh hectares of crops**, severely affecting agriculture.
- **Heatwaves in Madurai and Tiruchirappalli** are reducing productivity and increasing health risks.
- Climate change has become a **key electoral issue**, with manifestos assessed across sectors like heat action, floods, water, coasts, and agriculture.

2. Climate Commitments of Major Parties (DMK, AIADMK, TVK)

- **DMK (Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam)** presents one of the most **climate-aware manifestos**, focusing on adaptation and system-wide integration.
- It proposes **District Heat Officers**, AI-based **local weather stations**, and **30% EV target by 2030**.
- Measures like **electric buses**, **Complete Streets**, **sponge city infrastructure (3% urban land)**, and a **coastal green belt** strengthen climate resilience.
- Backed by **EV Policy 2023** and **25 GW renewable capacity**, but lacks clarity on **climate finance and coastal management**.
- **AIADMK(All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam)** emphasizes **renewable energy and electrification**, including **full conversion of city buses to EVs** and metro expansion.
- It proposes **100% subsidy for solar pumps**, rooftop solar for households/MSMEs, and climate education.
- However, **distribution of 2.22 crore free refrigerators without efficiency norms** may increase emissions.
- **TVK(Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam)** offers the **most ambitious vision**, including a **Climate-Resilient Master Plan 2045** with ₹3,000 crore allocation.
- Plans include **20,000 EV charging stations**, **100% renewable energy (Vettri Solar Mission)**, and large-scale water projects.
- However, **credibility and fiscal feasibility remain concerns** due to lack of governance experience and high-cost promises (₹1.1 lakh crore).

3. NTK's Ideological Green Approach

- **NTK** presents the **most environmentally committed manifesto**.
- It targets **forest cover increase to 33%**, aligning with global norms.
- Recognizes **Paris Agreement and UN guidelines** as binding.
- Opposes **Parandur Airport**, coal expansion at **NLC Neyveli**, and hydrocarbon projects in **Cauvery Delta**.
- Also resists **EIA 2020**, making it a strong ideological green document.

4. Overall Assessment and Way Forward

- There is a **clear shift in political language**, with increased climate references across parties.
- **DMK (1→6 mentions)**, **AIADMK (new inclusion)**, **NTK and TVK (strong focus)** reflect rising priority.
- However, **implementation matters more than promises**.
- Success depends on:
 - ➔ **Institutional capacity**,
 - ➔ **Policy integration across sectors**,
 - ➔ **Equity for vulnerable groups**.
- Climate change is now an **economic challenge**, and effective governance will determine Tamil Nadu's future resilience.

Forty years since the disaster, Chernobyl is a story that keeps finding new retellings

Prelims: General Studies Paper - 1
General issues on Environmental Ecology, Bio-diversity and Climate Change

Mains: General Studies - 3
Disaster and disaster management.

1. Context

- The **Chernobyl disaster** occurred at 1:23 a.m. on **April 26, 1986**, during a flawed safety test that pushed the reactor into instability, causing explosions near the **city of Pripyat in what is now Ukraine**.
- Firefighters arrived within minutes expecting a routine fire, unaware the **reactor core had exploded**, and were exposed to lethal radiation.
- Many first responders **developed severe radiation sickness (vomiting within hours) and died within weeks**, despite preventing the fire from spreading.
- The disaster's enduring impact lies not just in scale but in its **human, political, and symbolic dimensions**.

2. Causes and Political Context

- Prior **scientific warnings about reactor instability were ignored** due to political and institutional priorities.

- The disaster was driven by the pursuit of “**atomic prestige**”, where nuclear power symbolized global status and scientific superiority.
- Soviet bureaucratic culture **discouraged dissent**, leading to suppression of safety concerns and delayed corrective action.
- Under **Mikhail Gorbachev (Former President of the Soviet Union)**, pressure to increase industrial output forced plant staff to operate under unsafe conditions.

3. Immediate Aftermath and Political Response

- Evacuation of Pripyat was **delayed by about 36 hours**, exposing residents to dangerous radiation levels.
- The Soviet Union **initially concealed the disaster** and acknowledged it only after radiation alarms were triggered in Sweden on April 28.
- Around **70% of radioactive fallout fell on Belarus**, highlighting the transboundary nature of nuclear disasters.
- Approximately **600,000 “liquidators”** were deployed for firefighting, cleanup, and containment operations.
- A **concrete “sarcophagus” was built to contain the reactor**, later replaced by the New Safe Confinement in 2016.
- **Thousands of thyroid cancer cases emerged**, especially among children, due to radioactive iodine exposure.

4 Narratives and Enduring Legacy

- **Serhii Plokhly in Chernobyl: History of a Tragedy** used Soviet archives and KGB (intelligence and internal security agency of the Soviet Union) documents to provide a detailed analysis of the disaster.
- **Adam Higginbotham in Midnight in Chernobyl** reconstructed the sequence of events through interviews, highlighting human decisions and systemic flaws.
- **Svetlana Alexievich in Voices from Chernobyl** presented oral testimonies of survivors, focusing on lived experiences and suffering.
- The disaster has evolved into a **cultural and symbolic narrative**, shaped by sci-fi, video games, photography, and **dark tourism**.
- Unlike the Fukushima Disaster, which remained a technical event, Chernobyl became **mythologized and repeatedly retold**.

KEYWORDS

Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJGUA)

- It aims to **address persistent developmental gaps** faced by **tribal communities**, especially in **remote and under-served regions**, through a **holistic and need-based approach**.
- The **DAJGUA** aims to **bridge critical gaps** in **social infrastructure, health, education, and livelihoods**.
- It does so through **25 targeted interventions** implemented by **17 line ministries** of the **Government of India**.
- The scheme received **Cabinet approval on 18 September 2024**.
- Both **DAJGUA** and **PM-JANMAN (Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan)** are **flagship initiatives** focused on **comprehensive development** and **complete coverage of welfare benefits** in **tribal regions**.

Dark Tourism

- **Dark tourism** refers to travel to sites associated with **death, disaster, violence, or human suffering**, a term popularised by **John Lennon** and **Malcolm Foley (1996)**.
- It includes visiting places like **Auschwitz-Birkenau, Chernobyl Exclusion Zone, Hiroshima Peace Memorial, and Ground Zero**.
- Dark tourism sites are often categorized into **war tourism, disaster tourism, prison tourism, genocide tourism, and ghost tourism**, depending on the nature of tragedy.
- It is closely linked to the concept of **“thanatourism”** (tourism related to death), which focuses specifically on sites of mass death and suffering.
- Tourists are motivated by **curiosity about death, desire for historical knowledge, empathy with victims, identity formation, and fascination with the unusual or macabre**.
- It has strong **educational value**, as it helps visitors understand **historical atrocities, human rights violations, and consequences of disasters**.

- The “**Disneyfication**” of death which refers to the **commodification of suffering**, where sites add **gift shops, encourage selfies, and simplify narratives**, reduces their **educational and ethical value**.

