

FINDER

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Lebanon yearns for peace and deliverance

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. Historical Background of the Conflict

- **Lebanon-Israel tensions** date back to **1948** after Israel's creation.
- **Palestinian refugees** (1 lakh initially) settled in Lebanon, leading to the rise of the PLO (**Palestine Liberation Organisation**).
- **PLO operated from Lebanon**, attacking Israel → triggered Israeli retaliation.
- A **civil war broke out in Lebanon in 1975**, pushing **ethnic identities over nationalism**.
- **Syria intervened**, maintaining influence over Lebanon.

2. Rise and Role of Hezbollah

- **Iran created Hezbollah** to mobilise the Shia population in southern Lebanon.
- Became:
 - ➔ **Powerful militia**
 - ➔ **Welfare organisation**
 - ➔ Part of Iran's "**Axis of Resistance**"
- Hezbollah fighters inflicted steady losses on the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), evicting it from the buffer zone in southern Lebanon in 2000.
- Resisted Israel in the 2006 **war**.
- Developed into a **proto-army** with **missiles and drones**.

- Post-2024:
 - ➔ Leadership weakened (e.g., **Hassan Nasrallah killed**)
 - ➔ The **fall of the al-Assad regime in Syria**, which acted as a land bridge with Iran, was a serious setback.
 - ➔ Declining **domestic legitimacy** in Lebanon

3. Recent Conflict (2023-2026)

- After the Hamas **attack on Israel (Oct 2023)**, Hezbollah joined the conflict against Israel.
- **Israel weakened Hezbollah** using:
 - ➔ **Intelligence operations**
 - ➔ **Targeted killings**
 - ➔ **Technological attacks** (exploding devices)
- **Feb 28, 2026:** U.S.-Israel attack on Iran triggered renewed Hezbollah-Israel war.
- **Hezbollah strategy:**
 - ➔ **Guerrilla warfare**
 - ➔ **Decentralised command**
- **Israel strategy:**
 - ➔ **Heavy airstrikes**
 - ➔ Creation of **buffer zone (south of Litani River)**
- **Ceasefire declared (April 17, 2026)** after intense fighting.

4. Challenges and Future Prospects

- **Conflicting objectives:**
 - ➔ Lebanon: **Ceasefire & stability**
 - ➔ Israel: **Disarm Hezbollah**
- Risk of **civil war** if Hezbollah is forcibly disarmed.
- However, **Israel and Lebanon shared an interest in reducing Iran's influence on Hezbollah**.

- Lebanon, still recovering from the civil war (1975-1990), faced two conflicts with Israel in the past two years, causing 5,282 deaths, 1.2 million displaced, and \$8.5 billion losses.
- By early 2026, 35% of Lebanese were living below the poverty line.
- Lebanon remains:
 - ➔ Politically fragmented
 - ➔ Vulnerable to foreign interventions
- Peace talks are ongoing, but long-term resolution is uncertain.

Scaling climate adaptation from policy to grassroots

Prelims: General Studies Paper - 1
General issues on Environmental ecology, Biodiversity and Climate Change.

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

1. Climate Vulnerability & Policy Framework

- India is the 9th most climate-vulnerable country globally.
- Faced 430 extreme weather events (1995-2024) affecting 1.3 billion people.
- Losses estimated at \$170 billion.
- India's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) (2031-35) recognise these risks and emphasise mainstreaming climate resilience and adaptation into development.

2. Adaptation Efforts & Models

Focus areas include:

- Coastal resilience
- Disaster preparedness
- Heat mitigation
- Sustainable livelihoods

Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) - National Innovations in Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) programme:

- Covers 448 villages and 651 districts

- Promotes climate-smart agriculture and farmer capacity-building.

Tamil Nadu Climate Resilient Villages (CRV):

- Works in 11 districts
- Includes water management, renewable energy, biodiversity

3. Financing Challenges

- Developing countries face an annual financing gap of \$284-\$339 billion through 2035, as per the United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) Adaptation Gap Report, 2025.
- India's Economic Survey 2025 - 26 estimates adaptation and resilience spending at 5.6% of GDP (FY22), but the Union Budget 2026-27 remains focused on mitigation.
- Lack of clear adaptation finance framework.
- Adaptation investment gives high returns (10x benefits).

4. Way Forward & Local Action

- Need for climate budgeting and state-level planning.
- Strengthen State Action Plans on Climate Change (SAPCCs).
- Promote locally led adaptation (LLA) via:
 - ➔ Panchayats & urban bodies
 - ➔ Community participation
- Focus on:
 - ➔ Capacity building
 - ➔ Livelihood diversification
 - ➔ Grassroots implementation

What are safer fireworks alternatives?

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.Context

- At the Thrissur Pooram, fireworks led to an elephant running amok, injuring 42 people.
- **Experts highlight elephants' sensitivity to noise intensity, frequency, and structure.**
- **Noise levels reached 122.4 dB**, close to the Central Pollution Control Board limit of 125 dB (decibel).

2.Risks of Noise Pollution to Hospitals

- **Hospitals fall under "silence zones" (40–50 dB)**, but fireworks can reach up to 125 dB far exceeding safe limits.
- **Loud noise can disrupt patient recovery, sleep, and critical care** monitoring.
- **Neonatal ICUs are especially vulnerable**, with potential risks to infant brain development.
- Noise pollution is a major health risk, per World Health Organization.

3.Noiseless Alternatives to Fireworks

- **Cold spark technology** produces bright spark effects without loud explosions.
- **Uses fine metal powders** (titanium, zirconium) that **react with oxygen to emit light.**
- Devices like "**cold sparkulars**" create sparkler-like visuals using heat and airflow.
- **Much safer:** operates at 60-100°C vs 1200°C in traditional fireworks, reducing burn risks.
- Can be **arranged in coordinated patterns** (waves, bursts, fountains) for enhanced visual shows.
- Currently **costly and mostly imported**, but has strong potential for indigenous production in India.

4.Way Forward

- **Gradual shift to noiseless fireworks** like cold spark technology, not abrupt bans.
- **Replicate such models in cities like Delhi** to curb noise and air pollution.
- Local authorities (e.g., Thrissur Corporation) **should lead implementation and substitution.**

What Telangana's survey shows about caste inequality

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

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

1. Context

- Indian policymakers have traditionally relied on **income as the primary measure of disadvantage**, often overlooking caste-based structural inequality.
- The Telangana SEEEPC(Socio-Economic, Educational, Employment, Political and Caste) Survey 2024 provides a major correction by directly measuring caste-based disparities.
- It is a **census-scale survey covering 97% of Telangana's population (around 3.5 crore people)**, making it one of the largest such exercises in India.
- The survey introduces a **Composite Backwardness Index (CBI)** to capture multidimensional disadvantage.
- Findings show that **SCs and STs are structurally disadvantaged**, not just relatively poorer.

2. Scale and Nature of Caste Inequality

- The survey used **57 main questions with multiple sub-questions**, covering education, occupation, assets, living conditions, and social integration.
- On the CBI scale (0–100), **SCs scored 96 while General Castes scored 31**, indicating **three times higher backwardness.**
- This reflects a **deep structural chasm, not marginal inequality.**
- The survey covered **242 castes**, of which **135 castes (67% of the population)** scored above the State average.
- It reveals **significant heterogeneity within Backward Classes**, disproving the idea of uniform caste categories and highlighting the need for nuanced policy.

3. Spatial and Sectoral Dimensions of Inequality

- Urbanisation improves outcomes, but **caste disparities persist across rural and urban areas**.
- A Dalit family in Hyderabad may perform better than in villages but still faces structural exclusion.
- **Upper castes benefit disproportionately from urban growth**, while SC/STs remain concentrated in **informal settlements with poor amenities**.
- **Urban-rural gaps continue in education, income, and housing quality**.
- ST communities exhibit **greater educational backwardness than SCs** due to isolation, language, and cultural barriers.
- These patterns demand **targeted, group-specific interventions**

4. Policy Implications, Limitations and Way Forward

- The report identifies **education as the most critical lever**, stressing **quality over enrolment**.
- It calls for **strengthening government schools in SC/ST-majority areas** to break intergenerational disadvantage.
- Current policies focusing only on enrolment fail due to **poor learning outcomes**.
- Limitations include:
 - ➔ **Self-reported data bias**, including under-reporting of discrimination.
 - ➔ **Incomplete capture of untouchability practices**, possibly underestimating exclusion.
- Despite strong economic growth, **caste inequality persists independently of income gains**.
- **Way forward:** Policymaking must shift towards **caste-sensitive, data-driven and multidimensional interventions**, including sub-categorisation within backward classes, targeted educational investments, improved urban inclusion policies, and continuous large-scale social surveys to monitor and reduce structural inequalities.

KEYWORDS

National Ambient Noise Monitoring Network (NANMN)

- The National Ambient Noise Monitoring Network (NANMN) is a **nationwide initiative launched by the Central Government to monitor noise pollution levels in urban areas**.
- It was **initially set up in seven major cities (Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Lucknow)** with multiple monitoring stations for continuous (24x7) real-time data collection.
- The programme is **currently in Phase III**, where it is being further extended to more cities across the country
- It is implemented by **the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) to generate reliable data**, identify noise pollution hotspots, and support regulatory actions.

National Innovations in Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA)

- The **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)**, under the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**, launched the flagship project **NICRA in 2011**.
- The project focuses on **strategic research on adaptation and mitigation, demonstration of climate-resilient technologies on farmers' fields**, and **creating awareness** to reduce the **impact of climate change on agriculture**.
- Its key research areas include:
 - ➔ **Identifying vulnerable districts/regions**
 - ➔ Developing **climate-resilient crop varieties and management practices**
 - ➔ Assessing **climate change impacts on livestock, fisheries, and poultry** and designing **adaptation strategies**