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MCQs

THE HINDU

India's next investment cycle will shape its carbon future

Prelims: General Studies Paper - 1

Current events of national and international importance

Mains: General Studies - 3

Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.

Why in Focus?

- The **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** has warned that the world could cross the **1.5°C global warming threshold** within the next few years, increasing pressure to reduce emissions.
- India's advantage is that **much of its future infrastructure is yet to be built, allowing it to adopt cleaner technologies** from the outset rather than retrofit them later.

Key Highlights:

- India can develop future buildings, industries and infrastructure to **reduce emissions while supporting economic growth**.
- According to **NITI Aayog**, **86% of India's building stock in 2070 is yet to be built**, creating scope to incorporate **energy efficiency into new construction**.

- India's total building **floor space is expected to increase from 18 billion square metres in 2020 to 42 billion by 2070**.
- **Steel production capacity and cement output** are also expected to increase significantly.
- **Unlike developed countries, where most buildings already exist**, India can incorporate energy-efficient technologies into new infrastructure from the beginning.
- India already has building energy-efficiency standards namely: **Energy Conservation Building Code 2017, Energy Conservation and Sustainable Building Code 2024, for commercial buildings and Eco-Niwas Samhita (ENS) 2024, for residential buildings**.
- However, **implementation remains weak. Only 21 States have legally incorporated ECBC 2017**.
- **Green steel and large-scale carbon capture in cement** are not yet economically viable in India.

Green Steel: Steel produced with lower carbon emissions, for example, by using **green hydrogen** instead of coal in iron production.

- India is rapidly **expanding renewable energy, but inadequate transmission networks have delayed** around 60 GW of capacity.

Implications:

- **Transmission delays may prevent** renewable electricity from reaching areas where it is needed.
- **Rising steel and cement production** could



increase **carbon emissions**.

- **Premature adoption of expensive technologies** could raise industrial production costs.
- **High borrowing costs** may discourage investment.
- **Poor infrastructure planning** could result in higher future costs

Way Forward:

- **Make energy-efficiency standards mandatory** and enforce building codes effectively.
- Expand **power transmission networks and energy storage** alongside renewable generation.
- Introduce emission limits in public tenders and align them with the **Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS)**.

Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS): Notified by the Ministry of Power in 2023 under the Energy Conservation (Amendment) Act, 2022 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through carbon credit trading.

- Use established **clean technologies** while developing newer ones.

Mains Question:

India's future infrastructure expansion offers an opportunity to achieve economic growth while reducing carbon emissions. Discuss the challenges and measures needed to promote low-carbon development. (150 words, 10 marks)

New Delhi's 'balancing act' risks eroding Russia's trust

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.

Why in Focus?

- The **SCO Summit in Bishkek (August 31–September 1, 2026)** and the **BRICS Summit in New Delhi (September 12–13, 2026)**

highlighted increased support for Iran among member countries.

- Both summits highlighted **India's evolving diplomatic approach to the US-Israel conflict with Iran and Russia's war in Ukraine**, reflecting the growing challenges to maintaining strategic autonomy.
- This represented a shift from **India's earlier cautious approach towards criticising the US and Israel**.

Key Highlights:

- India endorsed the **2026 Bishkek Declaration**, condemning attacks on Iran and reaffirming its sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- India supported **criticism of Israel** and reaffirmed **Palestinian rights and the two-state solution**.

Two-State Solution: A proposed resolution to the Israel–Palestine conflict involving the establishment of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel, with both states living in peace and security.

- PM Narendra Modi **publicly urged Vladimir Putin to end the Ukraine war**.
- India's support for **the Bishkek and New Delhi Declarations may have aimed to secure the participation of Russian and Chinese leaders** at the New Delhi BRICS Summit

Bishkek Declaration (2026): The declaration adopted at the SCO Summit in Bishkek, which condemned attacks on Iran and reaffirmed its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

New Delhi Declaration (2026): Adopted at the BRICS Summit in New Delhi, it called for restraint in West Asia, respect for sovereignty, civilian protection, and the safety of peaceful nuclear facilities.

- Russia uses these **organisations to counter its international isolation**, while **China seeks to expand its global influence**.
- India uses them to **maintain ties with both Western and non-Western countries**.
- Russia remains a **key supplier of oil and military equipment to India**, although India is diversifying defence imports from France, Israel and the US.
- Russia is **moving closer to China**, adding complexity to India's strategic calculations.



Implications:

- Changing **diplomatic positions** could affect **India–Russia trust**, particularly in defence cooperation.
- Balancing relations with the **US, Russia, China and Iran** could become increasingly difficult.
- **Russia's growing closeness to China** could constrain India's regional influence.
- Strained India–Russia relations could create risks for **energy security and defence supplies**.

Way Forward:

- Base foreign policy decisions on **national interests** while **preserving strategic autonomy**.
- Apply the principles of **international law and sovereignty** consistently across conflicts.
- **Sustain India–Russia cooperation** in defence, energy and other strategic sectors.
- **Diversify partnerships** to reduce **excessive dependence** on any single country.
- Maintain **constructive relations with Western and non-Western countries** without compromising **strategic autonomy**.

Mains Question:

India's policy of strategic autonomy and multi-alignment faces growing challenges amid changing global conflicts. Discuss with reference to India's relations with Russia, the United States and China. (250 words, 15 marks)

What was leaked in the Censor Board data breach?

Prelims: General Studies Paper - 1

Current events of national and international importance

Mains: General Studies - 3

Challenges to internal security through communication networks, basics of cyber security.

Why in Focus?

- A data breach at the **Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC)** exposed documents related to over **500 film titles** through its

e-Cinepramaan portal.

- The leaked records raised concerns about the **security of government portals and the protection of sensitive information**.

e-Cinepramaan Portal: The CBFC's online film certification system, launched in 2017, to enable online applications, fee payments and tracking of film certification.

Key Highlights:

- The leaked documents included **film scripts, dialogue notes and agreements** between Indian and foreign filmmakers.
- At least **three agreements of leaked data** revealed film licensing fees, potentially **affecting filmmakers' commercial interests**.
- Details of cuts ordered by the **CBFC** were also leaked; these are intended to be public under **Section 5A(2) of the Cinematograph Act, 1952**.
- The documents were uploaded to the **Internet Archive** and remained available for days before being removed on **October 12, 2026**.
- The CBFC began investigation and stated that **no individual filmmaker's account appeared to have been compromised**.
- The CBFC filed a complaint with **Cybercrime cell**, informed **CERT-In (Indian Computer Emergency Response Team)** and announced a security audit.

Implications:

- **Exposure of confidential agreements** could weaken filmmakers' **bargaining power** in future business negotiations.
- Unauthorised disclosure of scripts could threaten **intellectual property**.
- Raises concerns about the **confidentiality and security of information** stored on government portals.
- Such incidents could undermine **public trust in digital governance**.

Way Forward:

- Conduct a **forensic investigation** to determine how the breach occurred,
- Strengthen portal security through **regular**



security audits

- **Improve security monitoring to detect suspicious activity** and unauthorised access.
- Establish clear **data-breach response protocols** to enable timely reporting, investigation and containment.

Mains Question:

The CBFC data breach highlights cybersecurity challenges facing government digital platforms. Discuss its implications and suggest measures to strengthen cybersecurity in India.(150 words, 10marks).

KEYWORDS

Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC)

- The **Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC)** is a statutory body under the **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting**.
- It functions under the **Cinematograph Act, 1952**, the **Cinematograph (Certification) Rules, 1983**, and Central Government guidelines.
- It regulates the **public exhibition of films** in India by granting certification before public release.
- CBFC is headed by a **Chairperson**, with **12–25 members appointed by the Central Government** and supported by **Advisory Panels** appointed for two-year terms to assist in film examination.
- CBFC operates through **nine regional offices: Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Thiruvananthapuram, Hyderabad, New Delhi, Cuttack, and Guwahati**.

Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs)

- **Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs)** are **collective investment vehicles similar to mutual funds** that pool investments for infrastructure projects.
- InvITs are established as **trusts and registered with SEBI**, providing investors with access to infrastructure investment opportunities.

- Their objective is to enable **retail investors to invest in infrastructure projects previously accessible** mainly to large institutional investors.
- An InvIT has four key parties: **Trustee, Sponsor, Investment Manager and Project Manager**.
- InvITs are regulated under the **SEBI (Infrastructure Investment Trusts) Regulations, 2014**.

Genetically Modified (GM) Crops

- GM crops are plants whose DNA is altered using **genetic engineering** to **introduce desirable traits such as pest resistance**, disease resistance and improved yield.
- Genetic modification can **introduce genes from unrelated species, including plants, animals or bacteria**.
- In India, GM crops are regulated under the **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986**.
- **Bt cotton**, approved for commercial cultivation in **2002**, is the **only GM crop currently approved for commercial cultivation** in India.
- **Bt cotton** contains genes from the soil bacterium **Bacillus thuringiensis**, enabling the plant to resist certain insect pests.
- The **Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC)**, under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, evaluates proposals for environmental release of GM organisms.
- **Dhara Mustard Hybrid-11 (DMH-11)** received **GEAC approval for environmental release in 2022**, but it has not received final clearance for commercial cultivation.
- **Bt brinjal** was approved by GEAC in 2009, but its commercial release was **halted** by a moratorium.

Energy Conservation and Sustainable Building Code (ECSBC), 2024

- The **Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)** issued the **Energy Conservation and**

Sustainable Building Code (ECSBC), 2024 for commercial buildings.

- The **Eco-Niwas Samhita (ENS), 2024** also issued by **the Bureau of Energy Efficiency** focuses on improving energy efficiency in **residential buildings**.
- Both codes aim to reduce **energy consumption** in buildings through improved design and construction standards.
- **ECSBC, 2024** promotes **energy-efficient commercial buildings through standards for building design, energy use** and sustainable construction practices.
- **ENS, 2024** promotes **energy-efficient residential design by improving building envelopes**, to reduce heat gain and cooling requirements.

Places in News

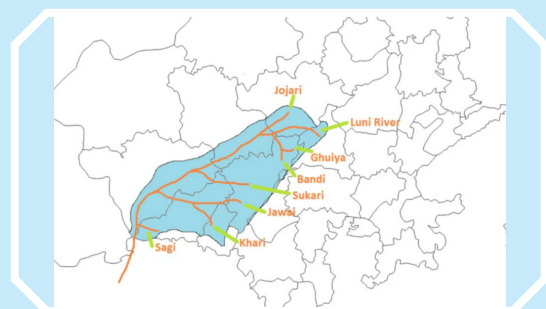
Ras Tanura

- **Yemen's Houthis claimed they targeted Saudi Arabia's biggest oil refinery** in Ras Tanura with a ballistic missile.
- Ras Tanura is located in the **Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, on the coast of the Persian Gulf**
- It is home to the **largest oil refinery in Saudi Arabia**, operated by Saudi Aramco.
- The refinery has a **processing capacity of approximately 550,000 barrels per day**, making it one of the largest in the world.
- **Ras Tanura's strategic importance lies in its role in the global oil supply chain**, as disruptions can significantly impact global oil prices and supply.



Jojari River

- In October 2026, the **Supreme Court warned of a possible CBI probe** into alleged illegal mining and pollution affecting the Jojari–Bandi–Luni river system in Rajasthan.
- The **Jojari (also spelled Jojri) river** is a seasonal river originating near **Pandalu village in Nagaur district, Rajasthan**.
- It flows through **Jodhpur** and joins the **Luni River** near Balotra.
- The river faces severe pollution from **industrial effluents and untreated sewage**, particularly from textile and steel industries.
- Pollution in the Jojari River has affected **agricultural land, groundwater quality and public health** in nearby areas.



Kuno National Park

- **The death of cheetah at Kuno National Park** has raised concerns about cheetah reintroduction, survival and conservation management in India.
- Kuno National Park is located in **Sheopur district, Madhya Pradesh**, and is part of **Project Cheetah**, launched in 2022 to reintroduce cheetahs to India.
- Cheetahs were reintroduced into India in a phased manner from **Namibia, South Africa and Botswana**.



- The park was **selected because of its suitable habitat, prey availability** and potential to support a viable cheetah population.
- The **Southeast African cheetah (Acinonyx jubatus jubatus)** is classified as **Vulnerable** on the IUCN Red List.
- The park is named after the **Kuno River**, a tributary of the **Chambal River**, and supports dry deciduous forests and grassland ecosystems.

