

FWD

FORTUNE WEEKLY DIGEST



> US-IRAN DEAL

> INDIA'S R&D EXPENDITURE

> VIKSIT BHARAT @ 2047

08th JUNE, 2026 - 14th JUNE, 2026

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EDITOR'S NOTE

As UPSC aspirants, it is essential to stay updated on current affairs to excel in the examination. This **Fortune Weekly Digest (ForWarD)** brings you the latest news and developments from around the world, carefully curated and analyzed to help you prepare for the Civil Services (Main) Examination.

We understand that time is precious, and we have made sure to present the information in a concise and easy-to-understand manner.

The magazine is divided into different sections. Mains relevant topics have been covered in detail with a UPSC previous year question perspective. The jot downs are examples and interesting facts to enrich your answer writing. Cherry picks has some key words from the week, helpful again in answer writing and essay. We have also included essay topics and sample questions to help you gauge your preparation.

We have designed this magazine to best supplement the daily current affairs notes we have launched by the name of **FIND (Fortune IAS News Daily)** and **FINDER (Fortune IAS News Daily Explainer)** and the **Fortune Prelims Precise** monthly compilation. This magazine will be explained in detail and your queries addressed in a live class we conduct.

At a time when there is no dearth of current affairs materials, our hope is help you get a one-stop solution for all your current affairs needs.

This magazine is a work in progress and your feedback will be appreciated.

We hope that this magazine will serve as a valuable resource for your exam preparation and contribute to your success in the UPSC examination.

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**FIRST ATTEMPT TOPPERS FROM
OUR PRELIMS CUM MAINS BATCH**

KASTURI SHA
AIR 68

MANJIMA P
AIR 235

FABI RASHEED
AIR 71

SWATHI S BABU
AIR 522

OORMILA J S
AIR 561

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US–IRAN DEAL: A POTENTIAL TURNING POINT IN WEST ASIAN GEOPOLITICS

Syllabus: GS II - International Relations

PYQ MAPPING

Q) *Energy security constitutes the dominant kingpin of India's foreign policy, and is linked with India's overarching influence in Middle Eastern countries." Discuss. (2025)*

WHY IN NEWS

The United States and Iran have reportedly reached a preliminary agreement to end hostilities, reopen the Strait of Hormuz, and begin negotiations on Iran's nuclear programme, sanctions relief, release of frozen assets, and post-war arrangements.

INTRODUCTION

The proposed US–Iran deal marks a significant diplomatic breakthrough in a relationship characterized by decades of hostility, sanctions, proxy conflicts, and nuclear disputes. If successfully implemented, it could reshape the strategic, economic, and security architecture of West Asia.

KEY FEATURES OF THE DEAL

➔ End of Military Hostilities:

- o Both countries have agreed to halt direct military confrontation, reducing the risk of escalation into a wider regional war.
- o This is particularly important as previous tensions threatened to involve Gulf countries and disrupt global energy supplies.

➔ Reopening of the Strait of Hormuz:

- o Iran has agreed to facilitate maritime movement through the Strait of Hormuz, a chokepoint through which nearly one-fifth of global oil trade passes.
- o The reopening is expected to restore confidence among global shipping companies and energy markets.

➔ Nuclear Negotiations:

- o The agreement provides a framework for renewed discussions on Iran's nuclear programme.
- o Successful negotiations could revive transparency measures and reduce concerns regarding nuclear proliferation in West Asia.

➔ Economic and Financial Provisions:

- o The deal reportedly includes discussions on releasing frozen Iranian assets and easing sanctions.
- o Such measures can help Iran reintegrate into the global economy and improve domestic economic conditions.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DEAL

🔍 Strengthening Global Energy Security:

- o The Strait of Hormuz serves as a vital artery for global oil and gas transportation.
- o Reduced tensions ensure uninterrupted energy supplies and help stabilize international oil prices.
- o Energy-importing nations, including India, China, Japan, and European countries, stand to benefit significantly.

🔍 Promoting Regional Stability:

- o The agreement lowers the possibility of military conflict between two major adversaries in West Asia.
- o It can reduce proxy confrontations involving groups and states aligned with either side.
- o A stable West Asia is essential for international

peace and economic prosperity.

🔍 Revival of Diplomacy:

- o The deal demonstrates that sustained negotiations can produce outcomes even in deeply entrenched conflicts.
- o It reinforces the role of diplomacy, dialogue, and multilateral engagement in conflict resolution.

🔍 Positive Impact on Global Economy:

- o Reduced geopolitical uncertainty lowers shipping costs, insurance premiums, and market volatility.
- o Stable energy prices can contribute to controlling inflation worldwide.
- o Investors generally respond positively to a predictable geopolitical environment.

IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA

Enhanced Energy Security:

- o India imports more than 80% of its crude oil requirements, much of it from the Gulf region.
- o Stability in the Strait of Hormuz ensures uninterrupted energy supplies and protects India's energy interests.

Lower Import Bill:

- o Reduced geopolitical tensions can moderate crude oil prices.
- o Lower oil prices help reduce India's trade deficit and inflationary pressures.

Maritime and Trade Benefits:

- o A significant share of India's trade with Europe and West Asia passes through the Arabian Sea and

adjoining waters.

- o Safe sea lanes improve trade efficiency and reduce transportation costs.

Strategic Opportunities:

- o Improved US–Iran relations may provide greater space for India to strengthen engagement with both countries.
- o Projects such as Chabahar Port could gain renewed momentum under a more stable regional environment.

Protection of Indian Diaspora:

- o Millions of Indians live and work in Gulf countries.
- o Reduced regional tensions decrease risks to Indian citizens and help sustain remittance flows.

CHALLENGES AHEAD

Historical Mistrust:

- o Decades of confrontation have created deep suspicion between Washington and Tehran. Implementation of commitments may face political and strategic obstacles.

Nuclear Disagreements:

- o Differences regarding uranium enrichment, inspections, and verification mechanisms could derail negotiations. Achieving a mutually acceptable framework remains challenging.

Regional Opposition:

- o Certain regional actors may perceive rapprochement between the US and Iran as affecting their strategic interests. Such concerns could complicate implementation.

Domestic Political Constraints:

- o Leadership changes or domestic political pressures in either country could affect the sustainability of the agreement.

WAY FORWARD

Institutionalizing Dialogue

- o Regular diplomatic engagement should replace crisis-driven interactions.
- o Confidence-building measures can reduce the likelihood of future misunderstandings.

Strengthening Nuclear Oversight

- o Robust verification by international agencies such as the IAEA can enhance transparency and trust.

Building a Regional Security Framework

- o Inclusive security mechanisms involving Gulf countries can address broader regional concerns.

Expanding Economic Cooperation

- o Trade, investment, and infrastructure partnerships can create incentives for maintaining peace and stability.

CONCLUSION

The US–Iran deal has the potential to become one of the most consequential diplomatic developments in recent years. By reducing tensions in a strategically vital region, ensuring the security of global energy routes, and reviving diplomatic engagement, the agreement could contribute significantly to regional stability and global economic resilience. For India, it offers important opportunities in energy security, trade, connectivity, and strategic diplomacy.

SAMPLE QUESTION

Q) Discuss the significance of the Strait of Hormuz in global trade and assess how the US–Iran agreement may impact maritime security.
(10 marks) (150 words)

INSOLVENCY AND BANKRUPTCY CODE (IBC)

Syllabus: GS III - Indian Economy

PYQ MAPPING

Q) Do you agree that the Indian economy has recently experienced V-shaped recovery? Give reasons in support of your answer. (2021)

WHY IN NEWS

The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) has witnessed significant reforms in recent years, including the introduction of the **Pre-Packaged Insolvency Resolution Process (PPIRP)**, strengthening of creditor rights, digitalization of insolvency processes, and the proposed **Creditor-Initiated Insolvency Resolution Process (CIIRP)** under the IBC (Amendment), 2026.

INTRODUCTION

The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), 2016 is India's comprehensive insolvency framework that seeks to ensure time-bound resolution of distressed assets, maximize value for stakeholders, improve credit discipline, and promote ease of doing business.

SHORT TAKES

- **Insolvency:** Insolvency is a financial condition where a person or organization is unable to repay debts when they become due.
- **Bankruptcy:** Bankruptcy is a legal process through which an insolvent person or organization seeks relief, debt restructuring, or liquidation under the law.
- **Haircut:** It means the loss accepted by creditors when they recover less than the amount owed or it is the part of the loan amount that a creditor agrees to give up when a bankrupt company cannot repay the full debt.
 - For example, if a company owes a bank ₹100 crore, but under IBC the bank gets back only ₹40 crore, then the bank loses ₹60 crore. So, the haircut is ₹60 crore or 60%.
- **Chakravayuh issue**
 - It refers to a situation where firms can easily enter the market but find it difficult to exit when they become financially weak or unviable.
 - Before the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, sick companies remained stuck due to delayed legal procedures, weak recovery systems, and fragmented insolvency laws. This locked capital, labour, and bank credit in unproductive firms, leading to rising Non-Performing Assets and poor economic efficiency.

ABOUT INSOLVENCY AND BANKRUPTCY CODE (IBC)

- ♣ **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC)** provides a unified legal framework for resolving insolvency and bankruptcy in India. Its main aim is to address financial distress and revive or resolve companies in a **time-bound manner**.
- ♣ It consolidates insolvency and bankruptcy proceedings under one law.
- ♣ It applies to **individuals, companies, partnerships, Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs), and personal guarantors** to corporate debtors.
- ♣ **National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT)** is the adjudicating authority for companies and Limited Liability Partnerships.
- ♣ **Debt Recovery Tribunals (DRTs)** deal with insolvency cases of individuals and partnership firms.
- ♣ It provides a time-bound process called the **Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP)** for resolving insolvency of corporate debtors.

NEED FOR INSOLVENCY AND BANKRUPTCY CODE (IBC)

- ☀ **To break the Chakravayuh issue:** Before IBC, firms could easily enter the market but found it difficult to exit when they became financially unviable.
- ☀ **To replace fragmented laws:** Earlier, insolvency was governed by multiple laws, creating confusion, delay, and inefficiency.
- ☀ **To resolve rising Non-Performing Assets:** Banks were burdened with large stressed loans due to poor recovery mechanisms.
- ☀ **To ensure time-bound resolution:** Delayed insolvency proceedings reduced the value of distressed companies and harmed creditors.

- ☀️ **To revive viable businesses:** IBC focuses on restructuring and revival of companies rather than direct liquidation.
- ☀️ **To improve credit discipline:** Fear of losing control over the company encourages promoters and borrowers to repay loans on time.
- ☀️ **To protect creditors' interests:** IBC gives creditors a structured role in deciding the resolution plan.
- ☀️ **To improve ease of doing business:** A predictable insolvency framework increases investor confidence and supports economic growth.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN IBC

- ➔ **IBC Amendment Act, 2026 is a major reform:** It received Presidential assent on **6 April 2026** and further amends the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016. It focuses on reducing delays, improving implementation, and strengthening insolvency governance.
- ➔ **Creditor-Initiated Insolvency Resolution Process is introduced:** CIIRP allows notified financial creditors to initiate insolvency resolution for specified corporate debtors. This is important because it reduces delay at the admission stage and helps preserve enterprise value.
 - **Existing management may continue under supervision** CIIRP follows a hybrid approach where business continuity is maintained, but the resolution professional and creditors supervise the process. This avoids sudden disruption of the company's operations.
- ➔ **Admission under Section 7 becomes more certain:** After the *Vidarbha Industries* judgment created uncertainty, the amendment clarifies that once **debt, default, and a complete application** are established, the Adjudicating Authority has to admit the case. This improves speed, certainty, and predictability.
- ➔ **Greater reliance on Information Utilities is encouraged:** The amendment strengthens the use of digitally authenticated financial records maintained by Information Utilities. This helps reduce factual disputes about debt and default.
- ➔ **Operational creditors must provide stronger information:** Operational creditors are required to submit more financial information before filing under Section 9. This helps prevent frivolous insolvency applications and supports timely adjudication.
- ➔ **Group insolvency framework is being enabled:** The reform recognizes that corporate groups may have interconnected companies, subsidiaries, and holding companies. A group insolvency framework helps avoid fragmented proceedings and preserves group-level value.
- ➔ **A cross-border insolvency framework is being developed:** The amendment enables rules for dealing with companies having assets, creditors, or operations in multiple countries. This improves cooperation with foreign jurisdictions and supports investor confidence.
- ➔ **Resolution plan implementation is strengthened:** The amendment introduces safeguards such as continuity of licences, permits, and regulatory approvals in specified cases. This ensures that approved resolution plans are not defeated by post-approval obstacles.
- ➔ **MSME and pre-pack insolvency remain important:** PPIRP continues to provide a faster and less disruptive insolvency route for MSMEs. As of **31 March 2026**, 18 PPIRP applications had been admitted and resolution plans were approved in 10 cases, showing gradual use of this mechanism.

BENEFITS AND LIMITATIONS

Pros	Cons
Unified legal framework: IBC brings insolvency and bankruptcy resolution under one consolidated law, reducing confusion caused by multiple earlier laws.	Delay in resolution: Many cases exceed the statutory timeline due to litigation, procedural delays, and slow approval of resolution plans.
Time-bound resolution: It aims to resolve corporate insolvency through the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process within a fixed time frame.	Capacity constraints in National Company Law Tribunal: Vacancies, limited benches, and inadequate infrastructure increase pendency.
Improves credit discipline: Fear of losing control over the company encourages borrowers and promoters to repay dues on time.	Large haircuts for creditors: Banks and creditors sometimes accept very low recovery, raising concerns over value maximisation.
Helps reduce Non-Performing Assets: IBC enables banks to recover stressed assets and clean up their balance sheets.	Limited protection for operational creditors: Financial creditors dominate decision-making, while operational creditors and small suppliers often get lower recovery.

Revives viable businesses: Instead of immediate liquidation, IBC focuses on resolution and revival of distressed companies.	Frequent judicial intervention: Appeals before higher courts often delay the insolvency process and weaken time-bound resolution.
Boosts investor confidence: A predictable insolvency system improves ease of doing business and encourages investment.	Incomplete cross-border insolvency framework: India still lacks a comprehensive mechanism to handle insolvency cases involving foreign assets and creditors.
Supports MSMEs through pre-pack insolvency: Pre-Packaged Insolvency Resolution Process provides a faster and less disruptive route for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.	Low use of pre-pack mechanism: PPIRP has seen limited adoption, showing the need for greater awareness and wider applicability.
Promotes business continuity: New mechanisms like Creditor-Initiated Insolvency Resolution Process allow existing management to continue under supervision.	Fairness concerns in CIIRP: If only selected financial creditors are allowed to initiate CIIRP, other creditors may raise equality concerns.
Strengthens creditor rights: Creditors get greater control in deciding the resolution plan through the Committee of Creditors.	Risk of creditor dominance: Excessive focus on financial creditors may ignore interests of workers, suppliers, and smaller stakeholders.
Encourages digitalisation: Digital filing and insolvency processes can improve transparency and reduce paperwork.	Implementation gaps remain: Despite reforms, practical issues such as delays, weak coordination, and lack of expertise continue.

WAY FORWARD

- ✱ **NCLT capacity should be strengthened by filling vacancies and improving infrastructure.**
 - This will help reduce pendency and ensure faster disposal of insolvency cases.
- ✱ **Strict timelines should be enforced through better procedural monitoring.**
 - Time-bound resolution is essential to preserve enterprise value and protect creditors' interests.
- ✱ **India should adopt the UNCITRAL Model Law on Cross-Border Insolvency.**
 - This will help Indian authorities cooperate with foreign courts in multinational insolvency cases.
- ✱ **Pre-pack insolvency should be expanded to suitable larger corporate entities.**
 - This can reduce litigation, save time, and allow quicker restructuring of viable businesses.
- ✱ **Protection for operational creditors and MSMEs should be improved.**
 - A more balanced framework will ensure fairness and prevent smaller stakeholders from being ignored.
- ✱ **Digital insolvency processes should be promoted from filing to resolution.**
 - End-to-end digital systems can improve transparency, reduce paperwork, and speed up decision-making.
- ✱ **CIIRP should be made more inclusive with proper safeguards.**
 - Allowing more financial creditors to use CIIRP can improve fairness while preventing misuse through regulatory checks.

CONCLUSION

The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code has fundamentally transformed India's approach to corporate distress by shifting from a debtor-friendly regime to a market-oriented resolution framework. Recent reforms such as CIIRP, strengthened Information Utilities, expansion of pre-packs, and efforts towards cross-border insolvency demonstrate the evolution of the Code.

SAMPLE QUESTION

Q) Examine the role of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) in addressing the problem of Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) in India.
(15 marks) (250 words)

INDIA'S R&D EXPENDITURE

Syllabus: GS III - Science & Technology

PYQ MAPPING

Q) *Scientific research in Indian universities is declining, because a career in science is not as attractive as our business operations, engineering or administration, and the universities are becoming consumer oriented. Critically comment. (2014)*

WHY IN NEWS

India's expenditure on Research and Development (R&D) remains around **0.6-0.7% of GDP**, significantly lower than innovation leaders such as Israel (5%+), South Korea (5%+), the USA (3%+) and China (2.5%+). Recent discussions have highlighted that India's R&D deficit is driven by a combination of structural, historical, institutional and behavioral factors.

INTRODUCTION

Research and Development (R&D) is a key driver of innovation, productivity growth, industrial competitiveness and technological self-reliance. However, despite being the world's fastest-growing major economy, India continues to underinvest in R&D, particularly in the private sector. The causes are multidimensional and require a comprehensive policy response.

CAUSES OF R&D EXPENDITURE IN INDIA

- ➔ **The large domestic market reduces innovation pressure:** Indian firms can earn profits from domestic demand, so they face less pressure to invest heavily in R&D like export-oriented economies.
- ➔ **Colonial legacy weakened industrial innovation:** Colonial policies damaged India's manufacturing base and shifted business focus towards trade rather than technology development.
- ➔ **Premature financialization affects long-term investment:** Many companies prefer dividends, stock market gains, and short-term returns instead of risky and long-term R&D spending.
- ➔ **Short-term corporate incentives discourage R&D:** Since R&D reduces immediate profits, companies focused on quarterly results often avoid innovation projects.
- ➔ **Economic and policy uncertainty reduces R&D investment:** R&D takes many years to give results, so firms avoid it when markets, regulations, and technology are uncertain.
- ➔ **Weak industry-academia linkage limits innovation:** Universities and industries do not collaborate enough, so research often fails to become commercial products.
- ➔ **Low private sector participation weakens R&D:** Unlike countries such as South Korea, Japan, and the USA, Indian businesses contribute less to total R&D expenditure.

IMPLICATIONS OF R&D INVESTMENT

- 👁 **Low R&D reduces industrial competitiveness:** It limits technological advancement and prevents Indian firms from moving into high-value manufacturing sectors.
- 👁 **It weakens technological self-reliance:** India remains dependent on foreign technology in critical areas like defence, semiconductors, and advanced electronics.
- 👁 **It slows productivity growth:** Since innovation improves efficiency, low R&D spending reduces long-term productivity gains across sectors.
- 👁 **It limits India's role in frontier technologies:** Emerging fields like Artificial Intelligence, Quantum Computing, Biotechnology, and Advanced Materials require sustained research investment.
- 👁 **It becomes an obstacle to Viksit Bharat 2047:** India cannot become a developed economy without shifting from factor-driven growth to innovation-driven growth.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

National Research Foundation (NRF):

- o Aims to strengthen research ecosystems and foster collaboration among institutions.

Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF):

- o Seeks to increase private sector participation in research funding.

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM):

- o Promotes innovation, incubation and entrepreneurship.

Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme:

- o Encourages technology-intensive manufacturing and industrial upgrading.

Startup India:

- o Supports innovation-led startups and emerging technology enterprises.

Deep-Tech Promotion Initiatives:

- o Focus on AI, quantum technologies, semiconductors, biotechnology and clean energy solutions.

WAY FORWARD

- * **Private sector participation should be increased:** The government should provide tax incentives, research grants, and innovation-linked financing to encourage companies to invest in R&D.
- * **Industry-academia collaboration should be strengthened:** Innovation clusters and technology transfer offices can help convert research into commercial products.
- * **Public investment should focus on strategic technologies:** India should prioritise AI, semiconductors, defence technology, biotechnology, clean energy, and advanced manufacturing.
- * **Corporate governance incentives should be reformed:** Managerial rewards should be linked to long-term innovation and value creation rather than only short-term profits.
- * **Export-led manufacturing should be promoted:** Global competition will push Indian firms to improve quality, upgrade technology, and invest continuously in innovation.
- * **Ease of doing research should be improved:** Funding, procurement, approvals, and regulatory processes should be simplified for researchers and innovators.
- * **An innovation culture should be promoted:** Education and policy support should encourage risk-taking, experimentation, entrepreneurship, and scientific thinking.

CONCLUSION

India's R&D deficit is the result of an interaction between historical legacies, market structures, corporate incentives, institutional weaknesses and economic uncertainty. Addressing these challenges requires a whole-of-economy approach involving government, industry, academia and financial institutions. Enhanced investment in research and innovation will be crucial for achieving technological self-reliance, global competitiveness and the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

SAMPLE QUESTION

Q) Despite being one of the world's fastest-growing economies, India continues to spend relatively less on Research and Development (R&D). Examine the reasons.

(15 marks) (250 words)

EMPOWERED YOUTH, STRONGER NATION: INDIA'S VISION FOR VIKSIT BHARAT @ 2047

Syllabus: GS II - Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections

PYQ MAPPING

Q) Demographic Dividend in India will remain only theoretical unless our manpower becomes more educated, aware, skilled and creative." What measures have been taken by the government to enhance the capacity of our population to be more productive and employable? (2016)

Q) While we found India's demographic dividend, we ignore the dropping rates of employability. What are we missing while doing so? Where will the jobs that India desperately needs come from? Explain. (2014)

WHY IN NEWS

A recent PIB backgrounder titled **"Empowered Youth, Stronger Nation"** focuses on government efforts to empower youth as the **Amrit Peedhi** driving India's future growth.

INTRODUCTION

India, with nearly **65 percent of its population under 35**, stands at a pivotal juncture where its youth constitute a powerful **demographic dividend** driving national transformation. Over the past decade, the government has reoriented its approach to empower youth as **active stakeholders**, who are now recognised as the **Amrit Peedhi** and positioned as key architects of **Viksit Bharat by 2047**.

IMPORTANCE OF YOUTH IN INDIA

- ➔ **Human Capital Formation:** Youth strengthen **education, skills, and productivity**, building a strong knowledge base.
- ➔ **Demographic Dividend:** Large youth population drives **economic growth, savings, and investment**.
- ➔ **Workforce & Livelihoods:** Youth form the backbone of the **labour force and job creation**.
- ➔ **Innovation & Entrepreneurship:** Lead **startups**,

innovation, and digital transformation.

- ➔ **Nation Building & Leadership:** Participate in **governance, civic engagement, and policy shaping**.
- ➔ **Social Development & Health:** Promote **sports culture, fitness, and social awareness**.
- ➔ **Global Competitiveness:** Enhance India's **innovation capacity and global workforce presence**.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

Education

- 👁 **NEP 2020:** Launched in 2020, it introduced learner-centric, multidisciplinary, and flexible education reforms to create a future-ready education system.
- 👁 **Academic Bank of Credits (ABC):** Launched in 2021, it has onboarded 2,469 institutions and issued over 32 crore student IDs, enabling seamless credit transfer and academic mobility.
- 👁 **SWAYAM:** Launched in 2017, it offers over 18,580 courses, with 6.1 crore enrolments and 53.7 lakh certifications.
- 👁 **DIKSHA:** Launched in 2017, it hosts over 3.66 lakh digital learning resources in 135 languages, expanding access to quality education.
- 👁 **One Nation One Subscription (ONOS):** Launched in 2025, ONOS provides access to academic and research resources across 7,414 institutions, benefiting nearly 99 lakh users.

created a nationwide skilling ecosystem through various programmes to promote employability and entrepreneurship.

- 👁 **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY):** Launched in 2015, PMKVY has trained/oriented over 1.56 crore candidates, with PMKVY 4.0 focusing on AI, drones, green energy, and other future-ready skills.
- 👁 **Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS):** Revamped in 2018, JSS has trained 36.48 lakh beneficiaries, providing livelihood-oriented skills tailored to local needs.
- 👁 **National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS):** Launched in 2016, NAPS has engaged over 54.41 lakh apprentices, promoting industry-based "earn while you learn" training.
- 👁 **PM-SETU:** Launched in 2025, PM-SETU aims to upgrade 1,000 Government ITIs with modern infrastructure and industry partnerships at an estimated cost of ₹60,000 crore.
- 👁 **SOAR (Skilling for AI Readiness):** Launched in 2025, SOAR introduces AI education to students of Classes 6–12 through specialised modules developed with

Skill Development

- 👁 **Skill India Mission (SIM):** Launched in 2015, it

partners such as IBM, Microsoft, and Cisco.

Employment

- 🔗 **Prime Minister Internship Scheme (PMIS):** Launched in 2024, PMIS provides structured paid internships with monthly assistance of ₹9,000, offering over 63,000 internship opportunities across 25+ sectors.
- 🔗 **National Career Service (NCS) Portal:** Launched in 2015, NCS serves as India's digital employment marketplace, mobilising over 3.43 crore vacancies and registering 78.86 lakh jobseekers in FY 2025-26.
- 🔗 **Rozgar Melas:** Launched in 2022, Rozgar Melas have issued over 12 lakh appointment letters, connecting youth with government employment opportunities.
- 🔗 **Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PMVBRY):** Launched in 2025 with an outlay of ₹1 lakh crore, the scheme aims to support the creation of 3.5 crore jobs through employment-linked incentives.

Entrepreneurship

- 🔗 **Startup India:** Launched in 2016, Startup India has helped expand India's startup ecosystem to over 2.3 lakh DPIIT-recognised startups, creating more than 23 lakh jobs.
- 🔗 **Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY):** Launched in 2015, PMMY provides collateral-free loans of up to ₹20 lakh to support micro-enterprises and young entrepreneurs.
- 🔗 **Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS):** Launched in 2021, SISFS has approved a corpus of ₹945 crore through 215+ incubators to support early-stage startups.
- 🔗 **Credit Guarantee Scheme for Startups (CGSS):** Launched in 2022, CGSS has guaranteed 330+ loans worth over ₹800 crore, facilitating collateral-free credit for startups.
- 🔗 **Stand-Up India:** Launched in 2016, Stand-Up India has sanctioned over ₹61,020 crore in loans to promote entrepreneurship among women and SC/ST communities.

CHALLENGES

- ▼ **Skill-Employment Mismatch:** Gap between **skills and industry needs**
 - Eg: Engineering graduates working in **call centres instead of core technical roles**
- ▼ **Quality of Education Issues:** Weak **learning outcomes**
 - Eg: College students struggling with **basic reading and analytical skills**
- ▼ **Unemployment & Underemployment:** Lack of **quality jobs**

Youth Engagement

- 🔗 **MY Bharat (Mera Yuva Bharat):** Launched in 2023, MY Bharat serves as a unified phygital platform for youth engagement, with over 2.19 crore registered youth participating in volunteering, mentorship, career development, and nation-building activities.
- 🔗 **Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue (VBLYD):** Reimagined from the National Youth Festival in 2025, VBLYD promotes youth leadership and policymaking, with over 50 lakh youth participating in the Viksit Bharat Challenge Quiz 2026.

Sports

- 🔗 **Khelo India:** Launched in 2016-17, Khelo India has established 1,067 Khelo India Centres and supports 23,080 athletes through various talent development programmes.
- 🔗 **Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS):** Launched in 2014, TOPS provides elite training, sports science, and international exposure support to 98 Core Group and 165 Development Group athletes.
- 🔗 **Fit India Movement:** Launched in 2019, Fit India has promoted mass fitness participation, engaging over 23.68 crore people and recognising more than 4.5 lakh schools with Fit India School Flags.

Health

- 🔗 **Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK):** Launched in 2014, RKSK provides holistic adolescent health services, with beneficiaries of Adolescent Friendly Health Clinics increasing from 39 lakh to 1.7 crore between 2014-15 and 2024-25.
- 🔗 **Tele-MANAS:** Launched in 2022, Tele-MANAS offers 24x7 mental health counselling and has handled over 39.52 lakh calls.
- 🔗 **Ayushman Bharat:** Launched in 2018, Ayushman Bharat has established over 1.84 lakh Ayushman Arogya Mandirs, expanding access to comprehensive primary healthcare.

- Eg: **ILO India Employment Report 2024** states that youth account for a staggering **83% of India's total unemployed workforce**.

▼ Digital Divide: Unequal access to technology

- Eg: Rural students travelling long distances to access **internet for online classes**

▼ Mental Health Concerns: Rising stress and pressure

- Eg: Students in **Kota coaching hubs facing burnout**.

▼ Regional & Social Inequalities: Unequal access to

opportunities

- o Eg: Youth from **tribal or remote areas** migrating to **cities for low-paying jobs**

▼ **Low Female Workforce Participation:** Social and safety barriers

- o Eg: Women dropping out of jobs after **marriage or due to lack of safe transport/workplaces**

▼ **Substance Abuse & Lifestyle Risks:** Growing health risks

- o Eg: "Chitta" (synthetic heroin) epidemic in Punjab's border villages.

WAY FORWARD

- * **Future-Ready Skills:** Scale training in **AI, robotics, drones, green tech, cybersecurity**, focus on **Industry 4.0** readiness.
- * **Strengthen Entrepreneurship Ecosystem:** Improve access to **finance, incubation hubs, mentorship, startup linkages**.
- * **Enhance Female Participation:** Promote **safe workplaces, flexible employment, gender-inclusive skilling, women entrepreneurship**.
- * **Mental Health & Well-being:** Expand **counselling services, awareness campaigns, institutional mental**

health frameworks.

- * **Deepen Digital Inclusion:** Strengthen **digital infrastructure, last-mile connectivity, digital literacy**, reduce **digital divide**.
- * **Promote Civic Leadership:** Leverage **MY Bharat**, boost **youth volunteerism, participatory governance, nation-building roles**.
- * **Global Employability:** Develop **international skill partnerships, global certifications**, enhance **overseas mobility pathways**.

CONCLUSION

India's journey towards Viksit Bharat @ 2047 will be shaped by the aspirations, skills, innovation, and leadership of its Amrit Peedhi. By continuing to invest in education, employment, entrepreneurship, health, and youth empowerment, India can transform its demographic dividend into a powerful engine of inclusive and sustainable development.

SAMPLE QUESTION

Q) India's demographic dividend can become its greatest strength only through sustained investment in education, skills, employment and youth empowerment." Discuss in the context of India's vision of Viksit Bharat @ 2047.
(10 marks) (150 words)

WEEKLY DOSSIERS

BRICS HEADS OF SPACE AGENCIES (HOSA) MEET 2026

Introduction

- ◆ India, as the BRICS Chair for 2026, hosted the **BRICS Heads of Space Agencies (HOSA) Meeting** in Bengaluru, bringing together heads and senior representatives of space agencies from all 11 BRICS member countries under the theme **"Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability."**

Key Highlights

- ◆ Representatives from Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and the UAE participated in the meeting.
- ◆ Discussions focused on **space sustainability**, including debris-free missions, responsible space operations, and governance frameworks.
- ◆ Member countries deliberated on expanding the **BRICS Remote Sensing Satellite Constellation Agreement** to include new members.
- ◆ Talks were also held on establishing a **BRICS Space Council** to institutionalize cooperation in the space sector.

- ◆ Indian space-tech startups showcased capabilities in launch services, satellite technologies, geospatial intelligence, and downstream applications.

Significance

- ◆ Strengthens South-South cooperation in advanced technologies.
- ◆ Promotes collective action on space sustainability and space debris management.
- ◆ Enhances sharing of satellite data for disaster management, agriculture, and climate monitoring.
- ◆ Supports India's emergence as a leading space power and hub for space innovation.
- ◆ Reinforces BRICS' role in shaping an inclusive and multipolar global space governance architecture.

Conclusion

The BRICS HOSA Meeting 2026 highlights the increasing role of space cooperation in global governance. By promoting innovation, sustainability, and collaborative space exploration, the initiative can contribute to scientific advancement, technological self-reliance, and peaceful utilization of outer space among emerging economies.

BIOCHAR: TURNING AGRICULTURAL WASTE INTO 'BLACK GOLD'

India burns millions of tonnes of agricultural residues annually, particularly paddy straw in Punjab and Haryana, causing severe air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Simultaneously, Indian soils suffer from low organic carbon, poor water retention, and declining fertility. Biochar offers a circular economy solution by converting agricultural waste into a valuable soil amendment.

What is Biochar?

- ◆ Biochar is a carbon-rich material produced by heating biomass such as crop residues, rice husk, sugarcane bagasse, coconut waste, or sewage sludge under low-oxygen conditions (pyrolysis).
- ◆ It remains stable in soil for long periods, thereby acting as a carbon sink.

Significance of Biochar

- ◆ **Soil Health Improvement**
 - Enhances soil organic carbon content and fertility.

- Improves soil structure and microbial activity.
- Field studies show **10–30% increase in crop productivity**.

◆ Water Conservation

- Increases soil water-holding capacity by **10–25%**.
- Helps crops withstand drought and moisture stress.

◆ Climate Change Mitigation

- Prevents open-field burning of crop residues.
- Sequesters carbon for long durations, making it a carbon-negative technology.
- Reduces greenhouse gas emissions and particulate pollution.

◆ Waste-to-Wealth Approach

- Converts agricultural and urban organic waste into a valuable resource.
- Supports circular economy principles.

◆ **Additional Income for Farmers**

- Biochar can generate carbon credits through verified carbon markets.
- Each tonne of certified biochar can generate approximately **2–2.8 tonnes of CO₂-equivalent carbon credits**.

Government Initiatives and Potential

- ◆ Can be integrated with
 - Soil Health Management Scheme
 - Natural Farming Mission
 - National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)
 - Carbon Farming initiatives
- ◆ Technologies such as IIT-Kharagpur's **KISAN kiln** demonstrate scalable decentralized models.

Challenges	Way Forward
Limited awareness among farmers	Strengthen farmer awareness and extension services
High initial investment in pyrolysis units	Promote decentralized biochar production units
Lack of standardization and certification mechanisms	Develop standards for certification and quality control
Weak market linkages and carbon-credit access	Integrate biochar projects with carbon credit markets
Biochar remains confined largely to pilot projects	Encourage public-private partnerships and startup participation

Conclusion

Biochar presents a unique opportunity to transform agricultural and organic waste into "black gold." By simultaneously improving soil health, enhancing climate resilience, reducing pollution, and generating additional farmer income, biochar can become an important pillar of sustainable agriculture and India's net-zero transition.

DOWNBLENDING OF URANIUM: THE KEY TO NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

Why in the News?

The recent U.S.–Iran Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to end hostilities and revive nuclear negotiations includes a commitment to **downblend Iran's stockpile of highly enriched uranium** under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Introduction

Downblending is a nuclear non-proliferation technique used to reduce the concentration of fissile uranium-235 in enriched uranium. It converts weapons-usable nuclear material into reactor-grade fuel, thereby increasing the time required to produce a nuclear weapon (breakout time).

What is Downblending?

- ◆ Downblending is the process of mixing highly enriched uranium (HEU) with natural or depleted uranium to reduce its uranium-235 concentration.
- ◆ It is the reverse of uranium enrichment.

- ◆ The objective is to transform weapons-grade uranium into low-enriched uranium (LEU) suitable for civilian purposes.

Uranium Enrichment Levels

- ◆ Natural Uranium: **0.72% U-235**
- ◆ Low Enriched Uranium (LEU): **Below 5% U-235**
- ◆ Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU): **Above 20% U-235**
- ◆ Weapons-Grade Uranium: **Around 90% U-235**

Process of Downblending

- ◆ **Conversion to Gas:** Uranium hexafluoride (UF₆) is heated and converted into gaseous form.
- ◆ **Mixing with Blendstock:** HEU is mixed with natural or depleted uranium in precise proportions.
- ◆ **Monitoring:** Online Enrichment Monitoring systems measure uranium concentration continuously.
- ◆ **Reconversion:** The material is converted into uranium dioxide (UO₂), which cannot be directly enriched.

- ♦ **Verification:** IAEA inspectors conduct sampling, monitoring, surveillance and sealing procedures.

Significance

- ♦ **Nuclear Non-Proliferation**
 - o Reduces the risk of nuclear weapon development.
 - o Extends breakout time for weapon production.
- ♦ **Confidence Building**
 - o Enhances international trust in a country's peaceful nuclear intentions.
- ♦ **Strengthens Global Nuclear Governance**
 - o Reinforces the role of the IAEA and Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) framework.
- ♦ **Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy**
 - o Allows uranium to be used for electricity generation rather than weapons production.

Challenges

- ♦ Verification and monitoring complexities.
- ♦ Possibility of re-enrichment if facilities remain operational.
- ♦ Political mistrust between negotiating parties.
- ♦ Need for continuous IAEA oversight.

Way Forward

- ♦ **Strengthen IAEA oversight** through continuous monitoring and inspections.
- ♦ **Implement time-bound downblending** of highly enriched uranium stockpiles.
- ♦ **Enhance transparency** by sharing enrichment and stockpile data.
- ♦ **Sustain diplomatic engagement** among all stakeholders.
- ♦ **Promote peaceful nuclear cooperation** in exchange for non-proliferation commitments.

Relevance for India

- ♦ India supports nuclear non-proliferation while maintaining its strategic nuclear deterrent.
- ♦ The issue highlights the importance of international nuclear safeguards, export controls, and peaceful uses of atomic energy.

Conclusion

Downblending is a crucial technical and diplomatic tool for reducing nuclear proliferation risks. The success of the U.S.–Iran nuclear understanding will depend not only on political commitments but also on transparent implementation and rigorous IAEA verification of the downblending process.

BEYOND VERDICTS: KEY JUDICIAL INTERVENTIONS

Kerala High Court on Validity of Oaths by Elected Representatives

- ♦ The Kerala High Court ruled that elected representatives can take their oath **only in the name of God or through a solemn affirmation**, as prescribed under the Kerala Municipality Act and Panchayat Raj Act.
- ♦ The Court invalidated the oaths of several Thiruvananthapuram Corporation councillors who swore in the name of specific deities, martyrs, political movements, and leaders, holding that such deviations violate the statutory format. It directed the councillors to retake the oath within four weeks.
- ♦ The Court also invalidated the oath of a Vadakkenchery Grama Panchayat member taken in the name of former Chief Minister Oommen Chandy, emphasizing that adherence to the prescribed oath is essential to uphold constitutional and legal norms.

India–Russia Judicial Cooperation MoU

- ♦ The **Supreme Courts of India and Russia** signed an **MoU on judicial cooperation** in Moscow to promote **judicial exchanges, training programmes, seminars, and research collaboration**. The agreement emphasizes **technology-driven justice delivery**, including sharing best practices in digital courts and AI-enabled services.
- ♦ A **Joint Working Group** will be established to deepen cooperation. Chief Justice **Surya Kant** highlighted initiatives

such as **SUVAS**, **Su Sahay**, and **One Case, One Data**, while stressing that AI should assist, not replace, human judicial decision-making.

Supreme Court on Private Practice by Government Doctors

- ◆ The **Supreme Court refused to interfere** with the Allahabad High Court's order directing a **high-level inquiry into allegations of private practice by government doctors** at Moti Lal Nehru Medical College, Prayagraj.
- ◆ The Court observed that government doctors engaging in private practice despite a prohibition is a **serious public issue** and not merely an individual grievance. The Allahabad High Court had noted allegations that doctors were running a **parallel healthcare system** by shifting patients from government hospitals to private facilities and directed the Uttar Pradesh government to conduct an inquiry and take appropriate action.
- ◆ The case highlights concerns regarding **medical ethics, public healthcare delivery, and accountability in government institutions**.

Supreme Court's Concerns Over Dowry Deaths

- ◆ The Supreme Court has repeatedly emphasized that **dowry deaths remain a grave social evil** despite legal reforms. In recent judgments, it stressed that courts should exercise **greater caution while granting bail** in dowry death cases, particularly when a woman dies under suspicious circumstances within seven years of marriage.
- ◆ The Court highlighted the importance of the statutory presumption under **Section 118 of the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023**, which shifts the burden onto the accused once dowry-related harassment is established. While acknowledging occasional misuse of anti-dowry laws, the Court held that such instances cannot undermine protections for women.
- ◆ Referring to NCRB data showing over **6,000 dowry deaths in 2023**, the Court described dowry as a manifestation of **patriarchy, gender inequality, and the commercialization of marriage**, and called for stronger enforcement, social awareness, and institutional reforms to eradicate the practice.

Supreme Court: POCSO Principles Should Guide Child Custody Proceedings

- ◆ The Supreme Court held that the **child-protection principles of the POCSO Act, 2012** should also guide decisions in **custody, visitation, and parental access disputes** involving child victims.
- ◆ The Court emphasized that repeated questioning, evaluations, and legal interactions can cause **secondary trauma** and adversely affect a child's psychological well-being. Drawing guidance from Sections **24, 33(5), 36, and 39** of the POCSO Act, it stressed the principles of **minimum exposure, minimum intrusion, and protection from re-traumatization**.
- ◆ The Court observed that the **best interests of the child** extend not only to custody outcomes but also to the manner in which judicial proceedings are conducted, ensuring the child's dignity, emotional safety, and mental well-being remain paramount.

ETHICS - CASE STUDY

Q) You are the District Magistrate of a district where communal tension has recently increased after a minor clash between two groups. A local news channel and several social media pages start circulating an unverified video claiming that one community attacked the other. The video quickly goes viral, leading to fear, anger, and protests in different parts of the district.

Later, preliminary police inquiry suggests that the video is old and from another state. However, some media houses continue to broadcast it for higher viewership. Civil society groups demand strict action against fake news, while media organizations argue that any government action may violate freedom of speech and press freedom.

As the District Magistrate, you must maintain public order, protect constitutional freedoms, and prevent the spread of misinformation.

Questions

- What are the ethical issues involved in this case?
- What are the responsibilities of the media in a democratic society?
- What options are available before you as District Magistrate?
- What course of action will you take and why?
- How can media freedom and social responsibility be balanced?

ETHICS - EXAMPLES

- Environmental Ethics:** Mahadev Koli tribe of Maharashtra's Western Ghats preserves forests through generations of nature-based practices. Continuous observation of rainfall patterns, streams, wildlife movement, and seasonal cycles enables sustainable resource use and local climate adaptation.
- Leadership:** Harkha Bai (also known as Mariam-uz-Zamani), Mughal empress of Akbar, owned Rahimi—the largest merchant ship in the Indian Ocean carrying Hajj pilgrims and trade goods. She commanded 12,000 cavalymen, issued imperial farmans, and influenced Mughal policy during the 1613 Portuguese seizure of her ship near Surat.
- Social Responsibility:** Anu Dillon Singh and Ram Pratap Singh converted Chambal (MP-UP-Rajasthan tri-junction), once known for dacoits and illegal sand mining, into an eco-tourism hub through Mela Kothi – The Chambal Safari Lodge. They promoted gharial and Gangetic dolphin conservation, involved local communities, and created alternative livelihoods linked to wildlife tourism.
- Innovation:** Areete Business Solutions (Pune) developed Ayushman Cowfit, an AI-IoT collar using sensors to track temperature, activity, and rumination in cattle. It detects diseases like mastitis early, predicts heat cycles for timely insemination, and reduces losses for small dairy farmers.
- Perseverance:** Dea Sharma, Ojasvi Sharma, and Hema built Chilzo (Mumbai) from a lockdown kitchen experiment into a startup offering global flavours adapted to Indian tastes. With no prior experience, they spent ~1 year on R&D, failed multiple product trials, and scaled through mentorship and digital-first marketing.
- Altruism:** Thana Ram Kadwasara (77), Rajasthan, has been serving free cold water for 21 years on the Barmer–Batadu highway in the Thar desert region. He operates daily in extreme heat (>45°C) without donations or institutional support.
- Collective Responsibility:** At Tsomgo (Changu) Lake, a high-altitude glacial lake (~12,300 ft) in Sikkim, tourism pressure led to coordinated conservation efforts. Actions included plastic bans, shop relocation, waste segregation systems, and creation of the Tsomgo Pokhri Sanrakshan Samiti to balance ecology with tourism livelihoods.

MODEL ESSAY

"It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver "

Introduction

- Quote by Mahatma Gandhi
- Emphasises that **true wealth lies in physical, mental, and social well-being**, not material possessions.
- Legend of **King Midas from (Greek mythology)** - his golden touch became a curse when even his food and water turned to gold, leaving him unable to survive.

Philosophical Dimensions

- **Gandhian Thought:** Emphasis on **simple living and healthy body as true richness**.
- **Capability Approach (Amartya Sen):** Health is essential for **freedom, dignity, and human capabilities**.
- **Limits of Materialism:** Wealth cannot substitute **life, vitality, or happiness**.

Importance of Health as Real Wealth

- **Human Capital & Productivity:** Healthy individuals drive **economic growth and efficiency**. Eg: Japan supports a **productive ageing population**.
- **Quality of Life:** Health ensures **longevity, happiness, and well-being**. Eg: Nordic countries prioritising **well-being indicators over GDP alone**.
- **Social Development:** Public health strengthens **social stability and equity**. Eg: Kerala's robust healthcare model.
- **Mental Well-being:** Essential for **balanced and meaningful life**. Eg: Rising stress among students and professionals

Challenges in Realising Health as Wealth

- **Privatisation Paradox:** Access to quality healthcare often requires **financial resources**, making wealth essential for survival.
- **Healthcare Inequality:** Urban-rural and socio-economic gaps in access. Eg: Rural populations

lacking access to **quality hospitals and specialists**.

- **Lifestyle Diseases:** Rise of **obesity, diabetes, stress-related disorders**. Eg: Sedentary urban lifestyles increasing non-communicable diseases.
- **Neglect of Preventive Care:** Focus on treatment over **prevention and awareness**.
- **Environmental Degradation:** Pollution affecting public health. Eg: Air pollution in Delhi causing **respiratory illnesses**.

Way Forward

- **Promote Preventive Healthcare:** Focus on **nutrition, fitness, early diagnosis**. Eg: Fit India Movement
- **Mental Health Integration:** Expand **counselling, awareness, institutional support**.
- **Regulate Healthcare Sector:** Ensure **affordability, accountability, quality standards**.
- **Address Social Determinants:** Improve **sanitation, clean water, education, environment**.

Conclusion

- Health is the **foundation of individual happiness, economic productivity, and societal progress**, making it the most valuable form of wealth
- National policy must reflect this by prioritizing public health and well-being over pure GDP growth.

Sample Quotes

- *The execution of the laws is more important than the making of them.* - Thomas Jefferson
- *In the practice of tolerance, one's enemy is the best teacher.* - Dalai Lama
- *Poverty is the parent of revolution and crime* - Aristotle

MAINS JOT DOWN



GS I: INDIAN ART & CULTURE

- **Rakhigarhi**, located in the **Hisar district of Haryana**, is one of the largest known Harappan sites of the Indus-Saraswati civilisation.
- Recently, the **Archaeological Survey of India** handed over human skeletal remains excavated from the site to the **Anthropological Survey of India** for scientific study.
- The site is important as it shows continuous human habitation from the early to mature Harappan phase and helps in understanding Harappan life, ancestry, migration, diet, and burial practices.



GS III: DEFENCE

- The first of six indigenous **Air Cushion Vehicles (ACVs)** was inducted into the **Indian Coast Guard** in Goa.
- An ACV, also known as a **hovercraft**, is an amphibious craft that can move over water, mudflats, sandbars, and shallow beaches by creating a cushion of air beneath its hull, which reduces surface resistance.
- Constructed indigenously by **Chowgule & Company Pvt. Ltd.**, these ACVs will strengthen the Coast Guard's rapid-response capability in coastal security, shallow-water surveillance, search and rescue, and maritime law enforcement.



GS III: AGRICULTURE

- **APEDA** facilitated India's first-ever commercial export shipment of **dried whole egg powder** from **Balangir, Odisha, to Austria**.
- The consignment was exported by **OVO Farm Pvt. Ltd.**, an APEDA-registered exporter.
- This marks an important step in promoting India's **value-added processed food exports**, expanding the global market for Indian poultry products, and strengthening Odisha's agro-processing sector.



GS III: RENEWABLE ENERGY

- The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy launched the **Green Hydrogen Certification Portal of India (GHCI)** to ensure transparent certification of green hydrogen production under the **National Green Hydrogen Mission**.
- The Green Hydrogen Certification Scheme provides a framework to measure, monitor, and certify green hydrogen. Hydrogen will be considered "green" only if its emission intensity is **2.0 kgCO₂eq/kg H₂ or less**. It applies to hydrogen produced through **electrolysis** and **biomass conversion** methods. Certification is mandatory for producers receiving government incentives, while small producers and fully export-oriented units without subsidies are exempted.



GS III: ENERGY

- India's first commercial-scale **Coal-to-Ammonium Nitrate Project** was launched at **Lakhanpur, Jharsuguda district, Odisha**.
- The project will convert domestic coal into **ammonium nitrate**, an important chemical used mainly in mining and explosives. It is being developed by **Bharat Coal Gasification & Chemicals Limited (BCGCL)** as a model for surface coal gasification. It aims to reduce import dependence, promote coal value addition, and support **Aatmanirbhar Bharat**.



GS III: INDIAN ECONOMY

- India emerged as the world's top **ship recycling nation in 2025**, securing a **35.4% global market share** as per UNCTAD. This achievement reflects India's growing maritime capacity, policy reforms, and focus on sustainable ship recycling. It also strengthens India's position as a global hub for responsible ship breaking, recycling, employment generation, and circular economy development.

**GS II: GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND INTERVENTION**

- The **SHe-Box 2.0** portal was launched to strengthen the implementation of the **Mission Shakti** initiative by providing a centralized online platform for women to register and track complaints of workplace sexual harassment. Mission Shakti aims to enhance women's safety, security, and empowerment through its two sub-schemes, **Sambal** (safety and protection) and **Samarthya** (women's empowerment).
- The Union Home Minister launched the **Abhigyan App** to help police identify suspects through fingerprint matching.
- The app is developed by the **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)**. It allows field police officers to search the **National Fingerprint Database** from any location using a certified fingerprint scanner. It is linked with **NAFIS**, which stores fingerprints of accused, convicts, and prisoners on a centralised platform.
- The Government has approved over **2.13 lakh additional houses** for eligible urban poor families under **PM Awas Yojana-Urban 2.0**.
- PMAY-U 2.0 is the updated version of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban, first launched in **2015**. It aims to provide affordable housing support to **1 crore urban families**, especially the poor and middle-class sections. The scheme is implemented by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**.
- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj conducted a three-day **Training of Trainers programme on Nirbhay Chetna** in New Delhi under the **Nirbhaya Fund**.
- **Nirbhay Chetna** is a nationwide gender-sensitization initiative aimed at promoting women's safety, dignity, and gender equality through Panchayati Raj Institutions. It is part of the broader **Nirbhay Raho Initiative**, launched in March 2026 to strengthen gender-responsive governance at the grassroots level.

CHERRY PICKS OF THE WEEK

NON-METHANE HYDROCARBONS (NMHCS)

- They are trace air pollutants such as ethane, propane, and isoprene. They adversely affect human health and the environment and act as key precursors for the formation of tropospheric ozone and secondary organic aerosols. NMHCS are emitted mainly from terrestrial sources, with limited contributions from marine ecosystems.

QUASI-MOON

- It is not a true moon of Earth. It orbits the Sun but stays in orbital resonance with Earth, making it appear to move around our planet. Its study helps in understanding celestial motion, planetary defence, and future asteroid missions.

FAST X-RAY TRANSIENTS (FXTS)

- They are sudden, energetic, and non-repeating flashes of low-energy X-rays in space. They last from a few minutes to several hours and are linked to violent cosmic events, but their exact origin is still unclear.

FIBRE-OPTIC DRONES

- They are electronic warfare-resistant FPV drones that use a thin fibre-optic cable instead of radio signals to transmit commands and live video. Since signals travel as light through the cable, they are difficult to detect or jam and offer accurate navigation. However, they have limits such as restricted range and reaction time.

LOOP ENGINEERING

- It is the design of repeated AI-agent workflows that allow AI systems to plan, act, review, and improve tasks with minimal human input. It follows the **ReAct pattern**, reason, act, observe, and repeat, and is useful in software development, automation, and continuous monitoring.