

PRAYAAS TIMES

CA CAPSULE
AUGUST FIRST WEEK
UPSC/MPSC 2025-26

UPSC/MPSC

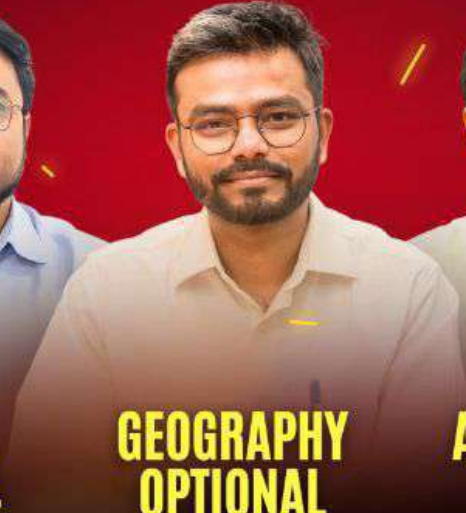
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Table of Contents

2.General Studies II 1

India-Philippines 1
News Context: - 1
What is the Strategic Partnership? 1
Historical Background of the Indo-Philippines Relations..... 1
India's Policy Towards the Philippines: - 1
Key Areas of Cooperation in India-Philippines: - 1
Key Convergences in India-Philippines Relations: - 2
Key Divergences in Relations: - 2
Conclusion: - 2
Question for Practice: - 2

3.General Studies III.....3

3.1 India's Electric Mobility: NITI Aayog's EV Report 3
Key Highlights of the Report..... 3
Key Challenges Identified in the Report..... 3
Government Initiatives Towards Electric Mobility Transition 4
Way Forward..... 4
Conclusion 4
Practice Question: 4
3.2 India's Fight Against Money Laundering 5
News Context 5
How is Money Laundered? 5
Impact of Money Laundering on the Nation .. 5
Legal and Institutional Framework to Tackle Money Laundering in India..... 5
Issues and Challenges in the Current Framework..... 6
Way Forward..... 7
Conclusion 7
Practice Question: 7
3.3 Cloudburst..... 7
News context:..... 7
What is cloudburst? 7
Mechanism of Occurrence: 7
How it is different from Rainfall? 8
Impact of climate change: 8
Consequences of cloudburst: 8

Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Cloudbursts:..... 9
Conclusion:..... 10

4.General Studies IV 11

4.1 Balancing Intelligence Quotient and Emotional Quotient.....11
News context: 11
Intelligence Quotient: 11
Emotional Quotient: 11
Components of EQ (Daniel Goleman's Model) 11
Why Balance is Needed in Public Service?... 12
Dimensions of Balance (with Examples)..... 12
Strategies to Balance IQ and EQ..... 12
Conclusion:..... 12
Mains practice question:..... 13

PRAYAAS Shorts- UPSC & MPSC..... 14

1.Grant-in-Aid to National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) Scheme..... 14
2.Puga Hot Spring 14
3. Antlion Species were Recorded for the First time in the Western Ghats of Kerala 14
4. National Waterway-57..... 15
4.1 Major National Waterways in India 15
5.ISRO launched the Himalayan Outpost for Planetary Exploration (HOPE) Analog mission at Tso Kar Valley, Ladakh..... 15
5.1 India's Previous Analog Missions 15
5.2 Tso Kar Valley 15
6. Rhisotope Project 16
7.(WHO) has Recently Classified Hepatitis D Virus (HDV) as a high-risk carcinogen 16
7.1 Carcinogen 16
8. Darwin Tree of Life (DTOL) Project 16
8.1 Earth BioGenome Project (EBP):..... 16
9. Alpine musk deer. 17
9.1 Himalayan Musk Deer (Moschus leucogaster)..... 17
9.2 Central Zoo Authority (CZA): 17
10.Sawalkote Hydropower Project..... 17
Chenab River: 17
11. Russia has expanded its influence in the Sahel region 18

12. Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.....	18	2.3 Punjab becomes 1st state to empanel sign language experts under the Juvenile Justice Act.....	21
13. Nilgiri Tahr	18	3.0 Maharashtra	21
14. Goswami Tulsidas – 500th Birth Anniversary....	18	3.1 Sustainable Agriculture Day	21
14.1 Memory of the World Asia-Pacific Register	19	3.2 Maharashtra Govt announces insurance coverage for Govindas of Dahi Handi	21
15. Election of Vice President (17th Vice-Presidential Election)	19	3.3 India's First AI Powered Anganwadi in Nagpur	22
16. International Seabed Authority (ISA) – 30th Session	19	3.4 Dr. Nitin Kareer	22
17.1 About International Seabed Authority (ISA)	19	4.0 Award	22
17. Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA).....	20	4.1 71st National Film Awards	22
18. India Electric Mobility Index (IEMI)	20	5.0 Important Day	22
PRAYAAS Shorts- MPSC Specific.....	21	5.1 National Handloom Day – 07 August 2025	22
1. National	21	6.0 Defence	22
1.1 India to host AI Impact Summit in Feb 2026	21	6.1 India-Philippines' first bilateral naval exercise in the South China Sea.....	22
2. State	21	7.0 Book.....	22
2.1 First 'Make in India' 1 MW Green Hydrogen Plant Commissioned at Kandla	21	7.1 M.S. Swaminathan: The Man Who Fed India	22
2.2 India's first-ever 'Grassland Bird Census'	21		

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2.General Studies II

India-Philippines

News Context: -

- **Declaration on the Establishment of a Strategic Partnership** between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines.

What is the Strategic Partnership?

- A **strategic partnership** signifies sustained cooperation in political, security, economic, and cultural spheres.
- **75 Years of Ties:** This upgrade marks the completion of 75 years of diplomatic engagement since 1949.
- **Action Plan (2025–29):** The roadmap defines collaboration across 14 major thematic areas.
- **Institutional Mechanism:** The Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation will oversee and guide the partnership.



Historical Background of the Indo-Philippines Relations

- **Early Relations:** Diplomatic ties began in 1949, among India's earliest Southeast Asian relations.
- **Cold War Drift:** Strategic ties stagnated due to **differing alignments during the bipolar world order**.
- **Post-1991 Revival:** **Look East Policy & ASEAN partnership** revived the diplomatic momentum.
- **Friendship Treaty:** **1952 Treaty of Friendship** formalised bilateral engagement and legal cooperation.
- **Recent Momentum:** Post-2020 surge **driven by defence pacts & high-level strategic engagements**.

India's Policy Towards the Philippines: -

- **Act East Integration:** The Philippines is included in India's Act East and Indo-Pacific strategies.
- **Defence Exports:** **BrahMos and naval systems** enhance Philippine maritime security capabilities.
- **MAHASAGAR:** Philippines **included in India's maritime cooperation** blueprint for Indo-Pacific.
- **Capacity Building:** **ITEC (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme)** programs train officials in cyber, health, disaster response, and governance.
- **Credit Support:** Concessional LoCs extended for defence and digital infrastructure initiatives.
- **Soft Power Diplomacy:** Scholarships, ICCR programs, & **Buddhist heritage** promoted strategically.

Key Areas of Cooperation in India-Philippines: -

- **Defence Cooperation:** **Export of BrahMos** missiles and naval platforms enhance strategic interoperability.
- **Maritime Synergy:** Convergence on freedom of navigation strengthens cooperation in the South China Sea.
- **Economic Agenda:** Expanding trade and **talks on Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA)** consolidate economic ties.
- **Digital Infrastructure:** Collaboration on **data sovereignty, fintech security**, and resilient digital systems.
- **Science & Technology:** Joint work in **space research and innovation drives** technological convergence.
- **Connectivity Focus:** **Direct flights** and robust digital links boost mobility and commerce.
- **Consular Streamlining:** **Liberalized visa regimes** and legal cooperation ease cross-border movement.
- **People-to-People Engagement:** **Diaspora ties and cultural diplomacy** reinforce societal linkages.
- **Health & Education:** Collaboration in **pharmaceuticals, medical training**, scholarships, and higher education.
- **Counter-Terrorism & Security:** Intelligence sharing and joint efforts against extremism and cyber threats.
- **Climate & Disaster Resilience:** Partnership on renewable energy, climate adaptation, and disaster management (esp. typhoon resilience).

Key Convergences in India-Philippines Relations: -

- **China Factor:** Both countries share concerns over **China's assertive behaviour** in the South China Sea and advocate **rules-based order**.
- **Indo-Pacific Outlook:** Mutual commitment to a **free, open, inclusive, and resilient** Indo-Pacific underlines strategic alignment.
- **Defence & Security Synergy:** **BrahMos missile deal, naval exercises**, and capacity-building initiatives deepen military cooperation.
- **Democratic Principles:** Shared **adherence to pluralism, constitutional governance**, and protection of human rights creates normative bonds.
- **Multilateral Cooperation:** Convergence on **UNCLOS, WTO reforms, ASEAN centrality**, and South-South cooperation at global platforms.
- **Counter-Terrorism & Cybersecurity:** Shared **concerns on extremism, radicalisation, and cyber threats** push for greater intelligence sharing.
- **Maritime Domain Awareness:** Joint initiatives in naval surveillance and coast guard training strengthen maritime security.
- **Sustainable Development & Climate Action:** Both countries **seek collaboration on renewable energy**, disaster resilience, and blue economy.
- **Health & Education Partnership:** Common interests in pharmaceuticals, affordable healthcare, and student exchanges.
- **Digital & Tech Convergence:** Alignment on **data sovereignty, fintech resilience**, and technology-driven inclusive growth.

Key Divergences in Relations: -

- **Trade Volume:** Bilateral trade, though rising, remains modest compared to potential and far below India's trade with other ASEAN partners.
- **China Hedging:** Manila **maintains deep economic ties with China** while cautiously engaging India, limiting the pace of strategic convergence.
- **Diaspora Limitation:** Indian community **presence in the Philippines** is relatively small, reducing people-to-people influence compared to nations like Singapore or Malaysia.
- **Institutional Deficit:** Lack of robust institutional mechanisms in the past delayed regular high-level dialogues and policy follow-through.
- **ASEAN-Centric Approach:** Philippines often **privileges ASEAN consensus**, which constrains deeper bilateral security and defence postures with India.
- **Connectivity Constraints:** Limited **direct air and shipping links** hinder mobility, tourism, and trade expansion.
- **Awareness Gap:** Mutual knowledge about each other's markets, culture, and policy priorities remains limited, restricting deeper societal connect.
- **Asymmetric Priorities:** India prioritises wider **Indo-Pacific outreach**, while the Philippines remains more narrowly focused on South China Sea issues.

Conclusion: -

- **C. Raja Mohan underlines that** India-Philippines ties reflect a **"new maritime strategic arc" in the Indo-Pacific, where middle powers seek alternatives to China's dominance**. Similarly, **Evelyn Goh's idea of "hedging"** explains **Manila's balancing act** between China and emerging partners like India.
- At the policy level, **EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar has noted that India's engagement with the Philippines strengthens the Act East Policy and ensures "a free, open, inclusive Indo-Pacific."**
- **PM Narendra Modi has emphasised** that defence and digital cooperation with the Philippines are vital to building trust-based partnerships in ASEAN. **On the Philippine side, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.** has highlighted India as a **"reliable partner"** in diversifying security and economic options.

Question for Practice: -

- "The evolving India-Philippines partnership reflects a convergence of Indo-Pacific strategic interests but is constrained by structural divergences." Examine (10 marks, 150 words)

3. General Studies III

3.1 India's Electric Mobility: NITI Aayog's EV Report

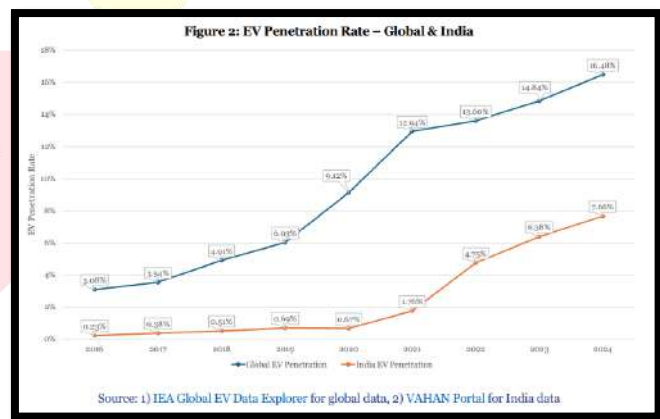
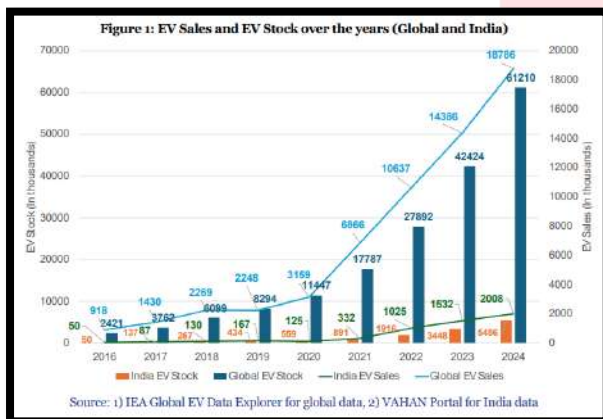
News Context

- NITI Aayog recently launched the report “Unlocking a \$200 Billion Opportunity: Electric Vehicles in India” (August 2025), which presents a comprehensive assessment of India's electric mobility transition.

Syllabus of Mains – GS 3 : Economy – Changes in Industrial Policy and their Effects on Industrial Growth. Environment - Environmental Pollution and Degradation

Key Highlights of the Report

- EV sales in India rose from 50,000 in 2016 to 2.08 million in 2024, but penetration is just 7.66% vs 16.48% global average.
- India is performing well in 2-wheelers and 3-wheelers, moderate in electric buses, slow in electric cars, and negligible in long-haul trucks.
- Long-haul trucks (only 280 units >3.5 tonne sold in 2024) emit 34% of transport CO₂ but remain the slowest to electrify.
- India must accelerate sharply — it took 10 years to reach 7.6% penetration but needs to add 22% more in just 5 years to meet its 2030 goal.



Key Challenges Identified in the Report

- Financing Barriers**
 - High upfront cost of buses/trucks (2–3 times ICE cost).
 - Small fragmented ownership, limited creditworthiness.
 - Lack of reliable performance data → risk-averse banks/financiers.
- Charging Infrastructure Gaps**
 - Inadequate availability + poor utilisation of existing facilities.
 - High charging costs (18% GST vs no GST on home charging).
 - RWAs oppose charging in colonies citing fire/safety risk.
- Land acquisition issues in cities & highways.**
 - Weak inter-agency coordination (DISCOMs, ULBs, transport dept.).
 - No unified digital app for locating, booking, and paying for charging.
- Awareness & Adoption Issues**
 - Misconceptions: fire safety, range anxiety, battery life.
 - Poor consumer understanding of Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) benefits.
 - Fragmented and confusing state-level incentives.
- Data & Regulatory Gaps**
 - VAHAN database does not capture EV categories accurately.
 - Lack of unique battery IDs hinders resale, recycling, tracking.
 - Weak standards for battery lifecycle, recycling, and residual value

Government Initiatives Towards Electric Mobility Transition

- **National-Level Missions & Policies**
 - **National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP) 2013:** First national framework to promote EV adoption and manufacturing.
 - **National Mission on Transformative Mobility & Battery Storage (2019):** For phased manufacturing of EV components and batteries.
 - **National Programme on Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery Storage (2021):** Incentivises domestic battery manufacturing with ₹18,100 crore PLI support.
- **Demand-Side Incentive Schemes**
 - **FAME-I (2015-2019):** ₹895 crore allocation; focus on subsidies for EVs and charging infra.
 - **FAME-II (2019-2024):** ₹11,500 crore allocation; aimed at demand incentives for e-buses, 2/3 wheelers, and charging stations.
 - **PM e-Drive (2024-2026):** ₹10,900 crore programme; targets faster adoption across segments including e-trucks and e-buses.
 - **PM e-Bus Sewa Scheme (2023):** Support for 10,000 e-buses through aggregated procurement under a service-based model (subsidy per km instead of vehicle cost).
- **Supply-Side Incentives**
 - **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for Automobile & Auto Components (2021):** ₹25,938 crore to promote EV and hydrogen-based vehicle manufacturing.
 - **PLI Scheme for Advanced Chemistry Cell Batteries (2021):** ₹18,100 crore to reduce import dependence and boost domestic EV battery production.
 - **Lower GST:** 5% on EVs (vs 28% for ICE vehicles); 5% on EV chargers.
- **Charging Infrastructure & Ecosystem Support**
 - **Battery Swapping Policy (2022, under draft):** For interoperability, especially for 2W and 3W.
 - **E-Mobility Promotion under Smart Cities Mission:** Integration of EV charging infra into city planning.
 - **Guidelines for Charging Infrastructure (MoP, 2022):** Mandates at least one charging station in a 3x3 km grid in cities and every 25 km on highways.
 - **Special Tariff Orders by States:** Reduced electricity tariffs for EV charging.

Way Forward

- **Move from incentives:** Mandates/disincentives (Zero Emission Vehicle policy, stricter CAFÉ norms, phased ICE restrictions).
- **Prioritise High-Impact Vehicle Segments:** Focus on buses, trucks, 2-wheelers, para-transit and urban freight vehicles, given their higher daily usage and emission contribution.
- **Adopt a Saturation Approach:** Fully electrify transport in 5 pilot cities, then scale to 20 cities in 10 years and 100 cities in the long term, ensuring visible impact and replicable models.
- **Enable Affordable Financing:** Operationalise a blended financing fund with public, multilateral and private contributions. Bring e-buses and e-trucks under Priority Sector Lending; establish pooled risk guarantees to reduce lender hesitancy.
- **Shift to Service-Based Subsidies:** Move from subsidising vehicle assets to supporting per-km operations (e.g., PM e-Bus Sewa model), ensuring efficient utilisation.
- **Scale Up Research & Development:** Invest in sodium-ion batteries, rare earth-free motors, and indigenous EV components through academia-industry-government partnerships.

Conclusion

- Speaking at the Annual General Meeting of Mahindra & Mahindra, Group Chairman **Anand Mahindra** called for a collaboration between industry and government to carve out a future roadmap for EVs, highlighting that India has the potential to emerge as a global electric vehicle hub.
- With the **national target of achieving 30% EV share in total vehicle sales by 2030**, the transition is not merely an environmental necessity but also an economic opportunity to unlock a \$200 billion market. The momentum built today, backed by innovation, policy support, and industry partnerships, can position India at the forefront of the global clean mobility revolution.

Practice Question:

- Electric Vehicles are increasingly seen as a sustainable alternative to internal combustion engine vehicles. Discuss how EVs contribute to reducing carbon emissions and highlight their key advantages over conventional vehicles (15 m, 250 Words)

3.2 India's Fight Against Money Laundering

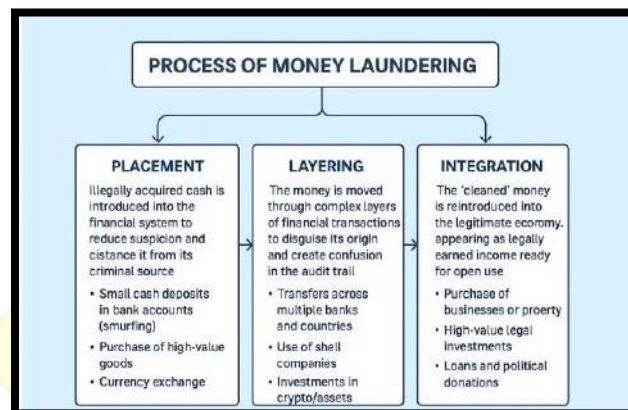
News Context

- A recent Finance Ministry submission to the Rajya Sabha **highlighted growing money laundering cases**, persistently low conviction rates under the PMLA, and concerns over possible overreach by the Enforcement Directorate (ED)

Syllabus of Mains – GS 3: Internal Security –Money-Laundering and its prevention.

How is Money Laundered?

- Under Section 3 of the PMLA, money laundering involves any process or activity through which the proceeds of crime are concealed, possessed, acquired, or used and then presented as “untainted” or legitimate property.
- Common techniques include:**
 - Placement: Introducing illegal money into the financial system.
 - Layering: Moving funds through multiple transactions to obscure their origin.
 - Integration: Reintroducing the “cleaned” money into the economy as apparently legitimate funds.



Impact of Money Laundering on the Nation

- Economic Impact**
 - Destabilises financial systems – inflates money supply, distorts interest rates and exchange rates.
 - Inflationary pressures – laundered money often channels into speculative sectors like real estate, causing asset bubbles.
 - Capital flight – illegal funds move offshore, reducing domestic investment.
 - Distortion of competition – legitimate businesses suffer as laundered money backs firms that can undercut prices.
- Political & Institutional Impact**
 - Fuels corruption and cronyism, undermining democratic institutions.
 - Erodes rule of law when enforcement is selective or politically motivated.
 - Enables state capture by vested interests using illicit wealth to influence policies.
- Social Impact**
 - Expands the informal/black economy, creating inequality and exclusion.
 - Weakens public trust in financial institutions and governance.
 - Laundered funds often used for luxury consumption, widening the socio-economic divide.
- Security Impact**
 - Strong nexus with terror financing, organised crime, and drug trafficking.
 - As per the Supreme Court (P. Chidambaram v. ED, 2019), it threatens the sovereignty and integrity of India.
 - Funds illegal arms, insurgency, and cross-border crimes.

Legal and Institutional Framework to Tackle Money Laundering in India

1. Legal Framework

- Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002**
 - Enacted in line with **UN Global Programme of Action (1990)** to combat money laundering and confiscate illicit property.
 - Primary legislation to combat money laundering and confiscate proceeds of crime.
 - Defines offences and lays down procedures for attachment, adjudication, and confiscation of property.

- Empowers ED to conduct investigations, arrest accused and provisionally attach properties.
- **Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, 1988 (amended in 2016)**
 - Prohibits benami (proxy) ownership of properties.
 - Empowers authorities to confiscate benami properties used to park black money or launder funds.
- **Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999**
 - Regulates foreign exchange transactions.
 - Helps monitor and prevent cross-border movement of illegal funds.
- **Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Act, 2015**
 - Targets concealment of foreign assets and incomes by Indian residents.
 - Includes strict penalties and prosecution provisions.
- **Companies Act, 2013**
 - Mandates disclosures of Beneficial Ownership and prohibits shell companies.
 - Enhances compliance and transparency in corporate financial practices.
- **Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (NDPS), 1985**
 - Recognizes laundering of drug proceeds as a criminal offence.

- Global Cooperation to Tackle Money Laundering**
- Financial Action Task Force (FATF), 1989**
- Inter-governmental body setting global AML/CFT (Anti-Money Laundering/Countering Financing of Terrorism) standards.
 - India is a member since 2010.
 - Issues 40 Recommendations; conducts mutual evaluations of countries' compliance.
 - Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units (1995)
 - Network of 170+ FIUs sharing intelligence on suspicious transactions.
 - India's Financial Intelligence Unit – India (FIU-IND) is a member.
- UN Conventions**
- **Vienna Convention (1988)** – drug trafficking & money laundering.
 - **Palermo Convention (2000)** – transnational organised crime.
 - **Merida Convention (2003)** – anti-corruption framework.

2. Institutional Framework

- **Enforcement Directorate (ED)**
 - Nodal agency under the Department of Revenue for investigating offences under PMLA.
 - Empowered to attach assets, arrest offenders, and file complaints before special courts.
- **Financial Intelligence Unit - India (FIU-IND)**
 - Under the Finance Ministry, it receives, analyzes, and disseminates suspicious financial transaction reports (STRs) from reporting entities (banks, NBFCs, etc.).
 - Plays a central role in tracking laundering patterns and inter-agency coordination.
- **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**
 - Enforces Know Your Customer (KYC), Anti-Money Laundering (AML), and Combating Financing of Terrorism (CFT) guidelines for banks and financial institutions.
- **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)**
 - Monitors money laundering risks in the capital markets.
 - Issues AML compliance guidelines to intermediaries like brokers and mutual funds.
- **National Investigation Agency (NIA)**
 - Investigates terror funding cases involving laundering of funds through organized crime or foreign handlers.
- **Central Economic Intelligence Bureau (CEIB)**
 - Coordinates intelligence among various economic enforcement agencies to counter money laundering and financial crimes.

Issues and Challenges in the Current Framework

- **Low Conviction Rate**
 - Out of 5,892 cases registered since 2015, only 15 convictions have been secured.
 - Reflects weak investigation, poor evidence collection, and judicial delays.
- **Overreach and Misuse of Powers**
 - Enforcement Directorate (ED) has wide powers of search, seizure, and arrest.
 - Supreme Court in Vijay Madanlal Chaudhary (2022) noted that property can be attached even without a registered criminal case, creating scope for politically motivated misuse.
- **Ambiguity in Procedures**

- Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR) treated as equivalent to an FIR, but need not be shared with the accused.
- Lack of transparency undermines due process and natural justice.
- **Burden of Proof on Accused**
 - Under PMLA, the accused must prove innocence – reversal of the general criminal law principle.
 - While designed for deterrence, it risks violating Article 21 (Right to Fair Trial).
- **Inadequate Inter-Agency Coordination**
 - Weak synergy between ED, RBI, SEBI, FIU, CDBT, and State Police.
 - Leads to delays in information flow and fragmented investigations.
- **Abuse Against Political Opponents**
 - Multiple petitions in SC allege selective targeting of opposition leaders.
 - This erodes institutional credibility and shifts focus away from genuine cases.

Way Forward

- Strengthen investigative capacity of ED and FIU with technology-driven analytics.
- Improve inter-agency coordination (ED, CDBT, RBI, SEBI).
- Ensure judicial oversight to prevent political misuse.
- Adopt FATF recommendations more rigorously, including tighter KYC norms and beneficial ownership disclosure.
- Expand DTAA network and push for automatic information exchange.
- Launch awareness and compliance programs for banks, NBFCs, and fintech firms to plug vulnerabilities.

Conclusion

- As the FATF notes, “Money laundering is a global problem that requires a global response.” Strengthening cooperation through FATF norms, DTAAs and information exchange will help India and the world safeguard financial integrity and national security against illicit flows.

Practice Question:

- “Money laundering is a global problem that requires a global response.” Examine India’s challenges and opportunities in tackling it

3.3 Cloudburst

News context:

- The recent cloudburst in Uttarkashi, which devastated the village of Dharali and surrounding areas, is a stark reminder of how climate change is intensifying natural disasters in India.

Syllabus of Mains – GS-3- Disaster and Disaster Management, Impact of climate change

What is cloudburst?

- “An extreme amount of rainfall in a short period of time, sometimes accompanied by hail and thunder, which is capable of creating flood conditions. Rainfall of 10 cm (100 mm) or more in an hour over a region of about 20–30 square km is classified as a cloudburst.” – Indian Meteorological Department.

Mechanism of Occurrence:

Orographic Influence

- Moist air masses from oceans are forced to rise abruptly when they strike mountain slopes (e.g., Himalayas, Western Ghats).
- Rapid cooling leads to condensation of water vapour into supercooled droplets.

Convective Instability

- In regions of high surface heating, strong vertical convection currents carry moisture-laden air upwards.
- At higher altitudes, the supercooled water droplets accumulate in large numbers.

Sudden Precipitation Trigger

- When the upward convection weakens or an external factor (e.g., collision of warm moist and cold dry winds) destabilizes the cloud mass, the entire accumulated moisture is released suddenly.
- This causes torrential rain in a very short span of time, leading to flash floods, landslides, and soil erosion.

How it is different from Rainfall?

Parameter	Rainfall	Cloudburst
Definition	Precipitation in the form of water droplets falling from atmospheric clouds	An extreme weather event characterized by sudden, intense rainfall over a localized area
Rainfall Intensity	Varies — classified as light, moderate, or heavy (as per IMD standards)	Extremely high — typically ≥ 100 mm/hour (Indian Meteorological Department classification)
Duration	Can persist for several hours or days	Very short — usually less than 1 hour
Spatial Extent	Widespread — can cover hundreds of kilometres	Highly localized — typically limited to a few square kilometres
Meteorological Conditions	Caused by broad synoptic systems like depressions, cyclones, or monsoons	Often associated with cumulonimbus clouds, strong convective currents, and orographic lift
Topographical Influence	Occurs over various terrains	Common in mountainous regions due to rapid uplift of moist air (e.g., Himalayas, Western Ghats)
Predictability	Easier to forecast using weather models and satellite imagery	Difficult to predict precisely due to short lead times and localized nature
Hydrological Impact	May cause surface runoff or river flooding if prolonged	Leads to flash floods, urban flooding, landslides, and sudden disaster situations
Disaster Management Concern	Often manageable through drainage planning and forecasting	High priority in disaster risk reduction (DRR) due to sudden onset and high fatality risk
Examples (India)	Monsoon rains in Kerala, Cyclonic rain in Odisha	Cloudburst in Kedarnath (2013), Leh (2010), Himachal Pradesh (frequent events)

Impact of climate change:

Increased Atmospheric Moisture:

- Warmer air holds more water vapor (**approx. 7% more per 1°C rise**).
- Leads to higher potential for heavy rainfall in short periods.

Enhanced Evaporation:

- Rising land and **sea temperatures increase evaporation rates**.
- Results in more moisture in the atmosphere.

Stronger Convection:

- Higher surface temperatures intensify vertical air currents.
- Promotes rapid cloud formation (especially **cumulonimbus clouds**).

Altered Monsoon Patterns:

- Erratic rainfall distribution with dry spells and sudden heavy showers.
- Increases likelihood of cloudbursts during compressed wet periods.

Urban Heat Islands:

- Localized warming in cities enhances convective activity.
- Leads to localized cloudbursts and urban flooding.

Consequences of cloudburst:

Hydrological Consequences

- Flash Floods:**
 - Sudden and powerful floods due to the inability of the soil and drainage systems to absorb intense rainfall.
 - Cause rapid water accumulation in rivers, streams, and urban areas.
 - Common in steep mountainous regions and low-lying urban zones.
- Surface Runoff and Waterlogging:**
 - Leads to ponding of water in fields and streets.
 - Inhibits agriculture and transport.

- **Groundwater Contamination:**

- Excessive runoff may carry pollutants, chemicals, and waste into water sources.

Geomorphological Consequences

- **Landslides and Debris Flows:**

- Saturated soils on steep slopes lose cohesion and slide downhill.
- Can bury villages, roads, and block rivers (creating temporary dams or artificial lakes).

- **Soil Erosion:**

- Removes the top fertile layer of soil, especially on deforested or sloped land.
- Reduces agricultural productivity and increases sediment load in rivers.

- **Riverbank Collapse:**

- High discharge erodes riverbanks, changing river courses and damaging nearby land.

Environmental Consequences

- **Loss of Vegetation:**

- Trees and plants uprooted by floods or landslides.
- Long-term impact on local ecosystems and biodiversity.

- **Wildlife Displacement:**

- Forest floods and landslides can displace animal populations, leading to habitat fragmentation.

- **Disturbance of Natural Ecosystems:**

- Freshwater ecosystems like streams and wetlands get affected by siltation and pollution.

Socio-Economic Consequences:

- **Loss of Human Life:**

- Sudden nature of cloudbursts gives little time for evacuation. Deaths due to drowning, landslides, house collapses.

- **Displacement and Homelessness:**

- Entire villages or settlements may be washed away or buried.
- Leads to migration, loss of shelter, and psychological trauma.

- **Livelihood Disruption:**

- Farmers lose crops, herders lose livestock.
- Small businesses and tourism (especially in hill areas) suffer huge setbacks.

- **Education and Healthcare Disruption:**

- Schools and hospitals damaged or made inaccessible due to floods and road cuts.

Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Cloudbursts:

- **Early Warning and Forecasting Systems (EWS):** Install Doppler Weather Radars in cloudburst-prone regions (especially mountainous areas). Use high-resolution satellite data and real-time rainfall monitoring. Develop short-range forecasting models for extreme weather prediction (e.g., nowcasting).

- **Land Use Planning and Regulation**

- **Enforce strict zoning laws to prevent construction in:**

1. Landslide-prone zones
2. River floodplains
3. Ecologically sensitive areas
4. Implement Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) norms in hill areas.
5. Prevent deforestation and regulate mining or quarrying activities on slopes.

- **Community-Based Adaptation**

- **Disaster Preparedness Training:**

1. Conduct regular mock drills and first-aid training.
2. Train local youth and women in emergency response.
3. Village Disaster Management Committees (VDMCs)
4. Empower local governance units to respond quickly post-disaster.
5. Maintain community shelters and emergency kits.

- **Policy and Institutional Measures**

- Integrate Cloudburst Risks into National Disaster Management Plans (NDMP).

- **Strengthen coordination between agencies like:**

1. IMD (forecasting)
2. NDMA/SDMAs (response & mitigation)
3. NDRF/SDRF (rescue & relief)
4. Develop risk assessment maps to identify vulnerable hotspots using GIS and remote sensing.
5. Allocate funds under State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) and Climate Adaptation Funds.

Conclusion:

- Cloudbursts pose a **serious threat to sustainable development by causing loss of life, property, and ecological balance**. Their increasing frequency, influenced by climate change, **highlights the urgent need to integrate disaster risk reduction with SDGs** such as SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities), SDG 13 (Climate Action), and SDG 15 (Life on Land). Building resilience is key to achieving sustainable and inclusive development.



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4. General Studies IV

4.1 Balancing Intelligence Quotient and Emotional Quotient

News context:

- The argument between **emotional quotient (EQ)** and **intelligence quotient (IQ)** has become increasingly **important in today's rapidly changing world**.
- It is argued that increased exposure to the internet, artificial intelligence, and modern infrastructure has raised the IQ of the current generation, but reports show that EQ is dropping across the world

Syllabus of Mains – GS-4- Emotional Intelligence-Concepts, and their Utilities and Application in Administration and Governance.

Intelligence Quotient:

- Intelligence Quotient (IQ) is a **standardized measure** used to assess an **individual's cognitive abilities, intellectual potential, and problem-solving skills** relative to others of the same age group. It is expressed as a numerical score obtained through specially designed intelligence tests that evaluate various mental abilities such as reasoning, memory, comprehension, and logical thinking.
- Origin of the Term:** -
 - The concept of IQ was introduced by the **German psychologist William Stern in 1912**.
 - He proposed that intelligence could be expressed as a ratio of mental age (MA) to chronological age (CA), multiplied by 100.
- Key Features:** -
 - Relative Measure** – IQ does not measure absolute intelligence but compares individuals to a population norm.
 - Multidimensional** – Tests assess verbal, mathematical, spatial, logical, and memory-related skills.
 - Predictive Utility** – Often used to predict academic performance, problem-solving ability, and certain occupational outcomes.

Emotional Quotient:

- Emotional Quotient (EQ), also known as **Emotional Intelligence (EI)**, refers to the ability of an individual to **recognize, understand, manage, and regulate emotions** in oneself and others. It involves using emotional awareness to guide thinking, behaviour, and interpersonal relationships effectively.
- Just like IQ measures cognitive abilities, EQ measures emotional and social intelligence, which plays a crucial role in personal well-being, leadership, teamwork, and decision-making.
- Origin of the Concept:**
 - The term Emotional Intelligence was popularized in the **1990s by Daniel Goleman**, a psychologist and science journalist.
 - Goleman argued that **EQ could be as important as IQ for success in life**, particularly in areas requiring communication, empathy, and leadership.

Components of EQ (Daniel Goleman's Model)

EQ is generally broken down into five main components:

- Self-Awareness** – Recognizing one's own emotions, strengths, weaknesses, and their impact.
 - Example** – **IAS officer Rajendra Bharud**, coming from a tribal background, he was deeply aware of the struggles of underprivileged communities. As DM of Nandurbar, he used this awareness to build one of the best rural COVID health infrastructures in India (oxygen plants, ICU beds) before the second wave hit.
- Self-Regulation** – Managing impulses, staying calm under pressure, and adapting to changes.
 - Example-** **IPS officer Manoj Sharma**, known for handling high-pressure law-and-order situations (farmer protests, sensitive rallies) without resorting to excessive force. Instead of confrontation, he diffused situations with dialogue and patience.
- Motivation** – Being driven to achieve goals with persistence, optimism, and commitment.
 - Example** – **IAS officer Dr. Heera Lal**. As DM of Banda (a drought-prone district), he initiated the **"Jal Sanchay Abhiyan"** for water conservation. Despite limited resources and initial scepticism, he mobilized lakhs of people for large-scale pond rejuvenation and rainwater harvesting.
- Empathy** – Understanding and sharing the feelings of others, being sensitive to their needs.

- **Example- IAS officer Rohini Bidari (Maharashtra, 2020-present).** During the COVID-19 pandemic, she personally reached out to vulnerable groups like migrant workers and women in shelter homes. She introduced *women-friendly grievance redressal* and skill development programs.
- **Social Skills** – Building healthy relationships, communicating effectively, resolving conflicts, and inspiring others.

Why Balance is Needed in Public Service?

- Civil servants deal with complex policy decisions (IQ) and human-centric governance (EQ). Over-reliance on one and neglect of the other creates imbalance:
 - **Only IQ (no EQ):** May lead to technically correct but socially insensitive policies (bureaucratic rigidity).
 - **Only EQ (no IQ):** May lead to compassionate but impractical or inefficient decisions.
 - **Balanced IQ + EQ:** Enables evidence-based, rational policies that are also empathetic, ethical, and people-oriented.

Dimensions of Balance (with Examples)

Policymaking and Planning:

- IQ Role: Analysing data, forecasting trends, designing strategies.
- EQ Role: Anticipating citizen concerns, cultural sensitivities, and inclusivity.
- **Example:** During COVID-19, Dr. Rajendra Bharud (IAS) combined IQ (scientific planning for oxygen plants) with EQ (understanding villagers' fear and building trust) in Nandurbar district

Crisis and Conflict Management

- IQ Role: Logical decision-making under stress, resource allocation.
- EQ Role: Calming people, conflict resolution, and preventing panic.
- **Example:** IPS Manoj Sharma (Maharashtra) managed protests by balancing IQ (law & order strategy) with EQ (dialogue, avoiding excessive force).

Leadership and Teamwork

- IQ Role: Assigning roles, ensuring efficiency, monitoring outcomes.
- EQ Role: Motivating teams, resolving interpersonal conflicts, inspiring trust.
- **Example:** T.N. Seshan (CEC) combined IQ (legal reforms in electoral laws) with EQ (inspiring public confidence) to institutionalize free and fair elections.

Service Delivery

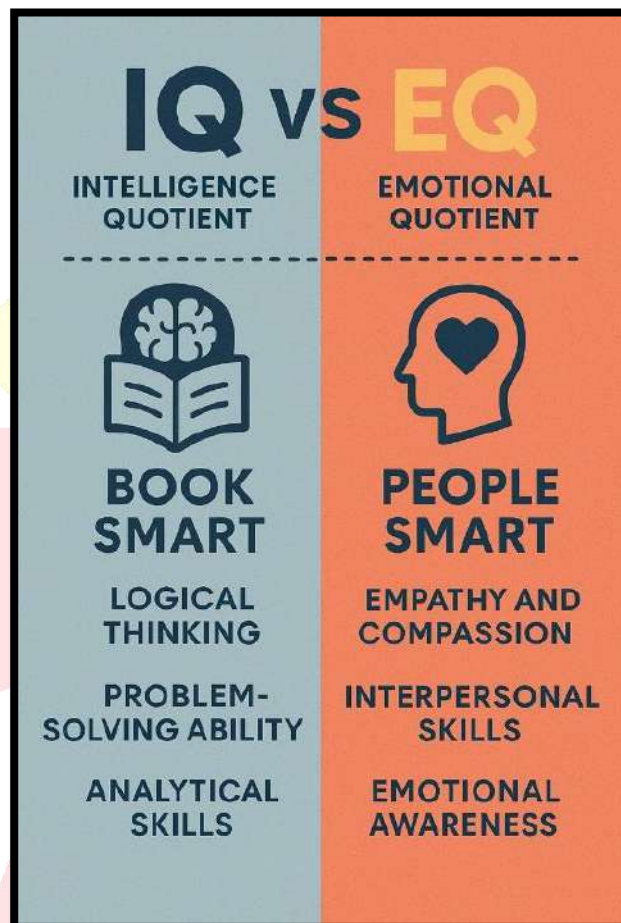
- IQ Role: Designing schemes, ensuring financial prudence, tracking performance.
- EQ Role: Addressing grievances with sensitivity, ensuring accessibility to marginalized.
- **Example:** IAS Rohini Bidari applied IQ (structured grievance redressal mechanisms) with EQ (direct engagement with women and vulnerable groups) during the pandemic.

Strategies to Balance IQ and EQ

- **Training & Capacity Building** – Incorporating emotional intelligence modules in LBSNAA and mid-career training.
- **Mindfulness & Self-Reflection** – Helps officers regulate stress and avoid burnout.
- **Data + Dialogue Approach** – Using evidence-based decisions (IQ) but validating them through citizen feedback (EQ).
- **Ethics & Values Framework** – Aligning technical efficiency (IQ) with constitutional morality and empathy (EQ).
- **Mentoring & Peer Learning** – Senior officers guiding juniors on balancing toughness with compassion.

Conclusion:

- In public service, **IQ ensures efficiency while EQ ensures humanity.** A civil servant who balances both can make decisions that are **technically sound yet socially sensitive.** As Daniel Goleman rightly said, *"IQ may get you a job, but EQ will help you keep it."*



- Balancing IQ and EQ leads to governance that is **efficient, empathetic, and ethical**. It bridges the gap between policy and people, law and justice, state and society. In the words of Stephen Covey, *"Management is efficiency in climbing the ladder of success; leadership determines whether the ladder is leaning against the right wall."*
- A wise administrator must use the **head for rationality (IQ)** and the **heart for empathy (EQ)**. True governance is achieved only when both work in harmony. As Aristotle observed, *"Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all."*

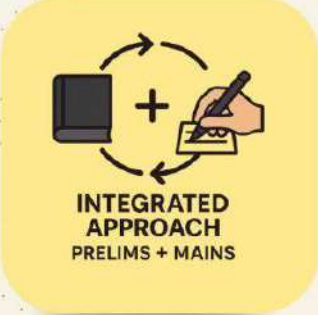
Mains practice question:

- Civil servants need to be "rational in decision-making yet compassionate in delivery." Explain how balancing IQ and EQ contributes to achieving this ideal. (15 marks, 250 words)




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1. Grant-in-Aid to National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) Scheme

Context:

National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC)

- **Establishment:** Created in 1963 under an Act of Parliament
- **Nature:** Statutory corporation under the Ministry of Cooperation
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **Mandate:** Plan, promote, and finance programmes for production, processing, marketing, storage, export & import of agricultural produce and other notified commodities
- **Functions:**
 - Provides loans and grants to cooperatives
 - Supports capacity building, infrastructure creation, and modernization
 - Promotes cooperative enterprises across agriculture, dairy, poultry, fisheries, handlooms, rural industries, etc.

- The Union Cabinet has approved the “**Grant-in-Aid to National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC)**” Scheme with an outlay of ₹2000 crore over four years (FY 2025-26 to FY 2028-29).

About:

- It is Central Sector Scheme.
- It aims to provide loans to cooperatives for setting up new projects, expanding existing plants, and meeting working capital requirements.
- **Fund Mobilisation:** The ₹2000 Cr
- Core grant will be used by NCDC to raise an
- Additional ₹20,000 crore from the open market over the four-year period.
- **Executing Agency:** NCDC will handle disbursement, monitoring, and loan recovery.
- **Loan Coverage**
 - Long-term credit for setting up, modernisation, technology upgradation, and expansion of cooperative project facilities.
 - Working capital support to ensure smooth and profitable operations of cooperatives.

2. Puga Hot Spring

Travertine: A form of sedimentary limestone deposited by mineral springs, especially hot springs. It is formed by the precipitation of calcium carbonate and is often used as a building material.

Prebiotic: A non-digestible food ingredient (like certain fibers) that promotes the growth and activity of beneficial microorganisms (especially bacteria) in the gut, thereby improving host health.

Context:

- A recent study has identified Puga Hot Spring, Ladakh as a potential site to study the origin of life on Earth and to aid Mars life-detection missions, due to its unique geothermal and organic-preserving conditions.

About

- **Location:** Situated in Puga Valley on the Changthang Plateau, southeastern Ladakh, Union Territory of Ladakh, India.
- **Geothermal Significance:** Part of the Himalayan geothermal belt; known for intense hydrothermal activity.

Puga's Role in Origin of Life Studies

- **Travertine deposits** preserve amino acids, formamide, and fatty acids, showing CaCO_3 's role in stabilising **prebiotic molecules**.
- Functions as a natural prebiotic reactor, offering insights into early life-formation processes on Earth.
- Considered a Mars analogue site, helping ISRO test and refine life-detection tools for future planetary exploration missions.

3. Antlion Species were Recorded for the First time in the Western Ghats of Kerala

Context:

- Three antlion species were recorded for the first time in the Western Ghats of Kerala, showing the ecological extension of typically dry-zone insects into humid forest habitats.

About: Antlion

- Also called **doodlebugs**, for the doodle-like trails they leave behind, antlions are insects that are widely seen around the world
- Nocturnal Insects:** Weak fliers, mostly active at night in arid ecosystems.
- Morphological Traits:** Adults have long antennae and show vertical, fluttering wing movement.
- Larval Pit Trap:** Larvae construct conical sand pits to trap ants and other prey, giving them the name antlion.
- Habitat Preference:** Prefer loose, dry sandy soils for pit-building.
- Ecological Indicator:** Their presence indicates undisturbed, well-drained arid or semi-arid ecosystems.
- Global Range:** Found in dry tropical and subtropical regions across all major continents.
- Indian Distribution:** Common in Rajasthan and peninsular semi-arid zones.



- NW-4:** Krishna River (Muktiyala to Vijayawada) located in Andhra Pradesh
- NW-10:** Amba River located in Maharashtra
- NW-68:** Mandovi River (Usgaon Bridge to Arabian Sea) located in Goa
- NW-73:** Narmada River located in Gujarat, Maharashtra
- NW-100:** Tapi River located in Gujarat, Maharashtra
- NW-97:** Sunderbans Waterways (Namkhana to AtharaBanki Khal, via Indo-Bangladesh Protocol Route) located in West Bengal

5.ISRO launched the Himalayan Outpost for Planetary Exploration (HOPE) Analog mission at Tso Kar Valley, Ladakh

Context:

- ISRO launched the Himalayan Outpost for Planetary Exploration (HOPE) analog mission at Tso Kar Valley, Ladakh.

About HOPE Mission

- A ground-based analog mission that simulates space-like conditions to test crew readiness.
- Objective:** Assess survival protocols, medical systems, and psychological responses under Mars-like conditions.
- Led by:** ISRO's Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC) in collaboration with industry partners and premier Indian research institutions.
- Site Selection:** Tso Kar Valley, Ladakh chosen for its extreme cold, saline permafrost, high UV radiation, and low-pressure atmosphere, resembling Martian conditions.
- Significance:** Strengthens India's Human Spaceflight Programme, enabling simulation-based planning for future lunar and planetary missions.

4. National Waterway-57

Context:

- National Waterway-57 (NW-57) on the Kopili River in Assam was recently operationalised with the first cargo trial run between Chandrapur (Kamrup) and Hatsingimari (South Salmara).

About

- Geographic Location:** Covers a stretch of 46 km entirely along the Kopili River in Assam.
- Nodal Agency:** Managed by the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways.
- Objective:** Supports intra-state water freight movement, reducing logistics costs and promoting eco-friendly transport.
- Strategic Importance:** Part of Maritime India Vision 2030, which aims to modernise inland waterways for cargo and passenger transport.

4.1 Major National Waterways in India

- NW-1:** Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly River System (Haldia to Allahabad) located in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal
- NW-3:** West Coast Canal (Kottapuram to Kollam), including Champakara and Udyogmandal Canals located in Kerala

5.1 India's Previous Analog Missions

- LHAM 2024 (Ladakh Human Analogue Mission):** Conducted by AAKA Space Studio to test crew resilience and isolation in Ladakh's high-altitude environment.
- Anugami 2025:** Co-led by HSFC with Gaganyatri astronauts in a 10-day isolation study (July 2025).

5.2 Tso Kar Valley

- Location:** Ladakh, India (Changthang Plateau, ~4,500 m altitude)
- Composition:** Two lakes – Tso Kar (saline, "White Lake") & Startsapuk Tso (freshwater)
- Ecological Significance:**

- Declared a Ramsar Wetland Site (2020)
- Habitat for **black-necked crane (Vulnerable (VU))**, bar-headed geese, migratory birds
- Geography: Cold desert ecosystem, surrounded by barren mountains, rich in salt deposits
- Economic/Cultural Aspect: Traditional salt extraction by **Changpa nomadic communities**

6. Rhisotope Project

Context:

- South Africa has launched the Rhisotope Project to curb rhino poaching by tagging rhino horns with radioactive isotopes for detection and deterrence.

About Rhisotope Project

- **Nuclear Tagging:** Radioisotopes are injected into rhino horns, embedding a unique radioactive signature.
- **Rhino-Safe Radiation:** Emits low-dose gamma rays that are safe for rhinos but pose risks to smugglers handling horns.
- **Border Detection:** Tagged horns can be rapidly identified at checkpoints using standard radiation portal monitors.
- **Poaching Deterrence:** Creates legal and medical liabilities for traffickers since nuclear material is tightly regulated.

7.(WHO) has Recently Classified Hepatitis D Virus (HDV) as a high-risk carcinogen

Context:

- The World Health Organization (WHO) has classified Hepatitis D Virus (HDV) as a high-risk carcinogen due to its aggressive disease course, immune evasion, and strong link with liver cancer.

About Hepatitis D

- Hepatitis D is a severe liver infection caused by the hepatitis D virus (HDV).
- **Nature of Virus:** A circular, single-stranded RNA virus with limited protein-coding capacity.
- **Virus Dependency:** Requires Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) co-infection for replication and survival.
- **Infection Types:**
 - **Coinfection** – simultaneous infection with HBV and HDV.
 - **Superinfection** – HDV infection in an already HBV-infected person (more severe).
- **Transmission Routes:** Spread via blood, shared needles, unprotected sex, and rarely through perinatal transmission.

- **Clinical Progression:** May lead to chronic hepatitis, liver cirrhosis, or acute liver failure; considered more severe than HBV alone.

7.1 Carcinogen

- **Definition:** Any substance, radionuclide, or radiation that can cause cancer by altering cellular metabolism or damaging DNA, leading to uncontrolled cell growth.
- **Types:**
 - **Chemical carcinogens** – e.g., tobacco smoke, asbestos, benzene.
 - **Physical carcinogens** – e.g., UV radiation, ionizing radiation.
 - **Biological carcinogens** – e.g., certain viruses (HPV, Hepatitis B & C & D), bacteria (*Helicobacter pylori*), parasites.

8. Darwin Tree of Life (DTOL) Project

Context:

- The Darwin Tree of Life (DTOL) Project is approaching the completion of its first phase.

About:

- A large-scale genome sequencing initiative to decode around 70,000 **eukaryotic species** (animals, plants, fungi, protists) found in Britain and Ireland.
- Forms part of the **Earth BioGenome Project**, which aims to sequence all known eukaryotic species on Earth.
- Uses advanced DNA sequencing technologies and computational tools to generate high-quality reference genomes.
- Collaborative effort involving institutions like the Wellcome Sanger Institute, Natural History Museum, Royal Botanic Gardens (Kew & Edinburgh), and leading universities.
- The first phase focused on sequencing ~2,000 species, covering about one-third of regional eukaryotic families.

8.1 Earth BioGenome Project (EBP):

- **Launch:** Announced in 2018 as a global collaborative initiative.
- **Aim:** To sequence, catalog, and analyze the genomes of all eukaryotic species (~1.5 million) on Earth within 10 years.
- **Vision:** Create a complete DNA library of life, enabling conservation, medicine, agriculture, and biotechnology breakthroughs.
- **Coordination:** International consortium of universities, research institutes, and genome sequencing centers.

9. Alpine musk deer.

Context:



- A CZA (**Central Zoo Authority**) report found that conservation breeding efforts mistakenly targeted the **Himalayan musk deer** instead of the Alpine musk deer.

About: Alpine Musk Deer (*Moschus chrysogaster*)

- Found only in Asia; distributed across India, Nepal, Bhutan, and China.
- Not a true deer; more closely related to Bovidae (antelopes, sheep, goats).
- Solitary and **crepuscular** (active during dawn and dusk).
- **Habitat:** High-altitude coniferous and deciduous forests at 3,000–5,000 m.
- **Diet:** Ruminant herbivore; feeds on forbs, grasses, moss, lichens, shoots, and twigs.
- **Conservation Status:**
 - **IUCN:** Endangered.
 - **CITES:** Appendix I.
 - Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule I.
- **Major Threat:** Poaching for musk, used in cosmetics and traditional medicine.
- Slightly larger and darker than **Himalayan musk deer**.



9.1 Himalayan Musk Deer (*Moschus leucogaster*)

- **Habitat:** Found in western and central Himalayas (India, Nepal, Bhutan, Tibet).
- **IUCN Status:** Endangered.
- **Key Feature:** Known for musk gland (used in perfumes & traditional medicine).
- **Distribution in India:** Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh.

9.2 Central Zoo Authority (CZA):

- **Establishment:** Constituted in 1992 under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 (amendment).
- **Nature:** Statutory body under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi.
- **Mandate:**
 - To oversee the functioning and management of zoos in India.
 - To enforce minimum standards for housing, upkeep, and healthcare of animals.
 - To recognize or derecognize zoos.
- **Functions:**
 - Advises zoos on scientific management & conservation breeding programmes.
 - Coordinates with zoos for ex-situ conservation of endangered species.

10. Sawalkote Hydropower Project

Context:

- Months after India put the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) on hold, the government is moving to revive the long-stalled Sawalkote Hydropower Project in Jammu and Kashmir.

About Sawalkote Hydropower Project

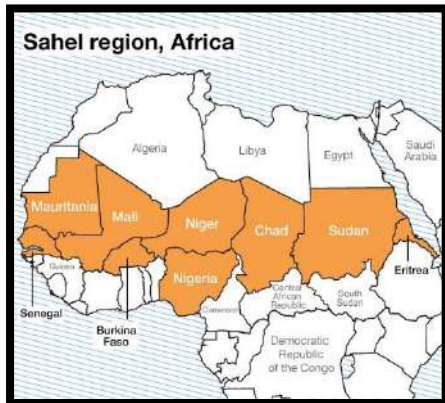
- A 2,185 MW run-of-the-river hydroelectric plant proposed on the **Chenab River** in Ramban district, Jammu & Kashmir.
- Will be the largest hydroelectric project in J&K and among the biggest in North India.
- **History:** First conceptualised in the 1980s, revised multiple times due to environmental and technical concerns.
- **Execution Agencies:** To be implemented by NHPC Ltd in collaboration with JK State Power Development Corporation Ltd (JKSPDC).
- It will enhance power availability in J&K, particularly during winter shortages.
- It has Potential to make J&K a power-surplus region, enabling export of surplus power to the national grid.

Chenab River:

- **Origin:** Formed by the confluence of Chandra and Bhaga rivers at Tandi in Himachal Pradesh (Lahaul-Spiti).
- **Course:** Flows through Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir (Chenab Valley) and Pakistan (Punjab province).
- **Tributary of:** Indus River (joins near Panjnad, Pakistan).
- **Major Tributaries:** Marusudar, Tawi, Thirot, Sohal, Neeru, Jhelum (indirectly connected in plains).

- **Projects in India:** Baglihar Dam, Salal Dam, Dul Hasti, Ratle Hydroelectric Project.

11. Russia has expanded its influence in the Sahel region



Context:

- Russia has expanded its influence in the Sahel region of West Africa, recently signing a nuclear cooperation agreement with Niger.

About Sahel Region

- **Geographic Stretch:** Semi-arid transition zone between the Sahara Desert (north) and the Sudan Savanna (south).
- **Countries Covered:** Parts of Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, Sudan and Eritrea.
- **Landscape & Climate:** Characterised by savanna grasslands, drylands, and steppe with short rainy seasons and long dry spells.
- **River Systems:** Includes sections of the Niger River, Senegal River, and Chari River.
- **Economic Activities:** Primarily subsistence agriculture, pastoralism, and fishing, vulnerable to climate shocks.
- **Resource rich region:** Rich in uranium (Niger), gold (Mali, Burkina Faso), and other minerals.

12. Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty

Context:

- Russia has officially declared that it no longer considers itself bound by the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.

About Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty

- **Signed:** 1987 between the United States and the Soviet Union (now Russia).
- **Objective:** To curb the nuclear arms race by eliminating two categories of ground-based missiles.

- **Background:** Triggered by massive missile build-up in Europe, threatening continental security.
- **Key Leaders:** US President Ronald Reagan & Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.
- **Coverage:** Banned ground-launched missiles with range 500–5,500 km.

13. Nilgiri Tahr



Context:

- A joint census in Kerala and Tamil Nadu reported a population of 2,668 Nilgiri tahrs.

About Nilgiri Tahr

- **Scientific name:** Nilgiritragus hylocrius
- Only mountain ungulate endemic to southern India
- **Habitat:** Shola-grassland ecosystems of Western Ghats (1,200–2,600 m)
- **Distribution:** Mainly in Eravikulam National Park (Kerala), also in Mukurthi NP (TN), Silent Valley (Kerala), and Anamalai Hills
- **Physical traits:** Stocky goat-like build; both sexes with curved horns; males darker with a "saddle patch"
- **Diet:** Primarily grazers feeding on grasses, herbs, shrubs
- **Behaviour:** Diurnal social herbivores; live in herds; active from dawn to dusk
- **Conservation status:**
 - **IUCN:** Endangered
 - Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972: Schedule I
 - **CITES:** Appendix I
- Threats: Habitat loss, climate change impacts, livestock competition, and historical poaching.

14. Goswami Tulsidas – 500th Birth Anniversary

Context:

- The year 2025 marks the 500th birth anniversary of the saint-poet Goswami Tulsidas, a central figure in Bhakti literature and Ram devotion.

About Tulsidas

- Born around 1525 CE, traditionally believed in Rajapur (U.P.).

- Contemporary Dynasty: He lived during the Mughal dynasty, mainly under the rule of Akbar (1542–1605).
- Great Bhakti saint, philosopher, and poet of the **Ramanandi Sampradaya**.
- **Major Works:**
 - **Ramcharitmanas** – Awadhi retelling of the Ramayana for common people.
 - Hanuman Chalisa, Vinaya Patrika, Dohavali, Kavitavali.
- Cultural Contributions:
 - Popularized Ramlila tradition (folk theatre on Ram's life).
 - Established Sankat Mochan Temple at Varanasi.
- Revived spiritual traditions through devotion to Rama and Hanuman.
- **Recognition:** Ramcharitmanas included in **UNESCO's Memory of the World Asia-Pacific Register** (2024).

14.1 Memory of the World Asia-Pacific Register

- Memory of the World (MoW) Programme: A global UNESCO initiative launched in 1992 to safeguard important documentary heritage.
- In the Asia Pacific region, a specific branch called the Memory of the World Committee for Asia and the Pacific (MOWCAP) was established in 1998.
- **India's Entries:**
 - Ramcharitmanas (Tulsidas)
 - Panchatantra (Vishnusharma)
 - Sahridayāloka-Locana (Acharya Anandavardhana with commentary by Abhinavagupta)
 - Archives of Santiniketan (Rabindranath Tagore's works)
 - Records of Zoroastrian Parsis in India (Community archives, no single author)

15. Election of Vice President (17th Vice-Presidential Election)

Context:

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) has announced the schedule for the 17th Vice-Presidential Election.

Election Process

- **Electoral College:**
 - Comprises members of both Houses of Parliament (Lok Sabha + Rajya Sabha).
 - Total 788 MPs (elected + nominated).
 - State Legislatures do not participate.
- **System of Voting:**
 - Proportional Representation by Single Transferable Vote (STV).

- Voting done by secret ballot.
- **Nomination:**
 - Candidate requires support of 20 proposers and 20 seconders (from MPs).
 - Security deposit of ₹15,000 must be submitted.
- **Presiding Authority:**
 - The Election Commission of India (ECI) conducts the election.
 - The Lok Sabha Secretary-General acts as the Returning Officer.
- **Eligibility:**
 - Must be a citizen of India.
 - At least 35 years of age.
 - Must be qualified for election as a Rajya Sabha member.
 - Cannot hold an office of profit under the Government of India/State.

16. International Seabed Authority (ISA) – 30th Session

Context:

- The 30th Session of ISA coincided with the 30th anniversary of its establishment under UNCLOS and the 1994 Part XI Implementing Agreement.

Key Decisions at 30th Session

- **Common Heritage Fund: Progress** made on developing this financial toolbox to support sustainability, capacity-building, and equitable benefit-sharing.
- **Economic Planning Commission:** Operationalized to assess economic impacts of seabed mining and recommend mitigation measures.
- **International Deep Seabed Day:** Adopted 1st November as the official day.

17.1 About International Seabed Authority (ISA)

- **Mandate:** Manages mineral resources of the seabed beyond national jurisdiction (54% of the world's oceans).
- **Unique Role:** The only international body focused on regulating the deep-sea area beyond national borders.
- **Objective:** Ensure regulated, sustainable, and responsible management of deep-sea economic activities, including seabed mining.
- **Headquarters:** Kingston, Jamaica.
- **Membership:** 170 members (169 States + EU); all UNCLOS parties are automatically members.
- **Key Initiatives**
 - **Deep-Sea Biobank Initiative (DBI) 2025:** Establish a global repository of deep-sea biological samples & genetic data for research and capacity building.

- **AREA 2030:** Facilitate high-resolution mapping of the international seabed area by 2030.
- **Sustainable Seabed Knowledge Initiative (SSKI):** Build scientific knowledge base for protection and sustainable management of deep-sea ecosystems.

17. Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA)

Context:

- A Supreme Court-mandated committee found that while 85% of compensatory afforestation targets were achieved, only 67.5% of CAMPA funds have been utilized.

About CAMPA:

- **Constitution:** Set up in 2004 following Supreme Court directions.
- **Legal Framework:** Backed by the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act, 2016 and Rules, 2018.
- **Fund Source:** Charges collected from user agencies diverting forest land for non-forest purposes.
- **Structure:**
 - **National CAMPA (NCAMPA):** Policy guidance, monitoring, and coordination.
 - **State CAMPA (SCAMPA):** Executes compensatory afforestation and related activities.
- **Objectives:**
 - Undertake compensatory afforestation and regeneration of degraded forests.
 - Ensure wildlife protection & habitat improvement.
 - Build capacity for forest and biodiversity conservation.
 - Strengthen measures for forest fire control, soil & moisture conservation, and catchment treatment.

- **Fund Utilization Areas:** Afforestation, wildlife management, eco-restoration, forest fire prevention, infrastructure creation for protection, and biodiversity enhancement.

18. India Electric Mobility Index (IEMI)

Context:

- NITI Aayog has launched the India Electric Mobility Index (IEMI) to benchmark States/UTs on their EV transition, supporting India's decarbonisation and net-zero 2070 goals.

About India Electric Mobility Index (IEMI)

- Developed by NITI Aayog; tracks States/UTs across 16 indicators under three themes:
 - Transport Electrification Progress – demand-side EV adoption.
 - Charging Infrastructure Readiness – allied charging ecosystem.
 - EV Research & Innovation Status – supply-side ecosystem and R&D.
- Scores States/UTs out of 100 for progress.
- Provides a transparent, comparative framework to benchmark progress and identify policy gaps.
- Encourages healthy competition and sharing of best practices.
- Strengthens state-level coordination, integrated planning, and cross-sector collaboration for EV growth.

State Performance Highlights (2024)

- **Overall Leader:** Delhi ranked highest overall, followed by Maharashtra and Chandigarh.
- **EV Deployment:** Delhi, Maharashtra, and Chandigarh emerged as frontrunners.
- **Infrastructure Readiness:** Haryana, Karnataka, Ladakh, and Himachal Pradesh led.
- **Innovation Strength:** Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Karnataka were leaders.
- **Small-State Leader:** Chandigarh topped among small states/UTs, followed by Goa and Delhi.

PRAYAAS Shorts- MPSC Specific

1. National

1.1 India to host AI Impact Summit in Feb 2026

- India is **officially set to host the AI Impact Summit in February 2026**, with more specific dates confirmed as February 19–20, 2026.
- This Summit is **closely aligned with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of democratizing** technology and leveraging AI for public good—spanning areas like healthcare, education, agriculture, climate action, and governance.
- It builds on India's IndiaAI mission, which emphasises accessibility, equity, ethical AI, and local language and cultural relevance

2. State

2.1 First 'Make in India' 1 MW Green Hydrogen Plant Commissioned at Kandla

- On 31st July 2025, **Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal**, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), inaugurated **India's first indigenously-built 1 megawatt (MW) Green Hydrogen Power Plant** at the Deendayal Port Authority (DPA) in Kandla, Gujarat.
- Location:** Deendayal Port Authority (DPA), Kandla, Gujarat
- Scale: 1 MW Green Hydrogen Plant – the first module of a planned 10 MW facility.

2.2 India's first-ever 'Grassland Bird Census'

- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) released India's first-ever Grassland Bird Census at an official event held in Kaziranga (Assam).

About Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve

- Located between** the Brahmaputra River and the Karbi (Mikir) Hills, Assam.
- Kaziranga is a mix of grasslands**, forestlands, and wetlands.
- Designated as a:** National Park (1974), Tiger Reserve (since 2007), UNESCO World Heritage Site (1985), Important Bird Area (IBA) by BirdLife International
- Hosts two-thirds of the global Indian one horned rhinoceroses population – 2,613 (as per 2022 census).
- Known for the **"Big Four"** – Indian one horned rhinoceros, Royal Bengal Tiger, Elephant, Asiatic water buffalo.

2.3 Punjab becomes 1st state to empanel sign language experts under the Juvenile Justice Act

- Punjab has become the first state in India to empanel sign language interpreters, translators, and special educators under the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015.
- Objective: to provide accessible and sensitive justice to children, especially those with hearing and speech impairments.

3.0 Maharashtra

3.1 Sustainable Agriculture Day

- Maharashtra to Observe** August 7 as Sustainable Agriculture Day **Honouring Dr. M.S. Swaminathan.**
- This date was selected to commemorate the birth anniversary of **Bharat Ratna Dr. M. S. Swaminathan, the architect of India's Green Revolution** and a pioneer of scientific farming in the country.
- In recognition of his contributions, the **Government of India awarded him the Bharat Ratna in 2024.**

3.2 Maharashtra Govt announces insurance coverage for Govindas of Dahi Handi

- The Maharashtra government has announced insurable coverage for up to 1.5 lakh Govindas participating in this year's Dahi Handi during Janmashtami.
- Implementation handled by** the Sports and Youth Services Department, working with the Maharashtra State Govinda Association (Mumbai), which verifies participant age, training, and documentation before submission to Pune's Commissioner of Sports.
- The **scheme is being executed in collaboration with Oriental Insurance Co.** and coordinated via the designated Govinda Coordination Committee (Maha).

According to the Government Resolution (GR) issued in late July:

- Death or total permanent disability (e.g. loss of both eyes and limbs): ₹10 lakh compensation
- Loss of one eye, arm, or leg: ₹5 lakh compensation
- Partial or percentage-based permanent disablement: based on insurer's assessment
- Medical expenses incurred due to injury: covered up to ₹1 lakh

3.3 India's First AI Powered Anganwadi in Nagpur

- **Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis inaugurated the nation's first AI powered Anganwadi in Waddhamna village, Hingna taluka, Nagpur district.**
- This pilot centre, established under the ambitious Mission Bal Bharari deploys cutting-edge digital tools like artificial intelligence dashboards, virtual reality (VR) headsets, and interactive content, creating a futuristic, engaging classroom experience for young children.
- Objective: To revolutionize early childhood education in rural areas and bridge the educational gap between rural and urban settings using AI and digital tools.

3.4 Dr. Nitin Kareer

- Dr. Nitin Kareer, the **former Chief Secretary of the state, has been appointed as the Chairman of the Sixth Maharashtra State Finance Commission.**
- The appointment was made by Governor C. P. Radhakrishnan, and a notification regarding the same was issued on Thursday.

Key Points:

- This position became **vacant due to the demise of Mukesh Khullar**, the previous Chairman of the Commission.
- **Khullar was appointed to the post on 1 April 2025**, but unfortunately **passed away suddenly on 7 July 2025**, after serving barely three months.
- The State Finance Commission is a **constitutional body**.
- The **first State Finance Commission in Maharashtra was established in 1994**.
- It plays a crucial role in maintaining financial balance between the state government, central government, government bodies, and local self
- The decision to **constitute the Sixth State Finance Commission was taken by the Maharashtra government in March 2025**.
- A month later, Mukesh Khullar was appointed as its chairman.
- The Governor had initially set 31 December 2025 as the deadline for submitting the Commission's recommendations report.

4.0 Award

4.1 71st National Film Awards

- The winners of the 71st National Film Awards for the year 2023 were announced on 1 August 2025 by the respective juries.

Key points: -

- **12th Fail has been honoured** with the Best Feature Film award at the 71st National Film Awards.
- **Flowering Man** won the **Best Non-Feature Film award**, while **God Vulture and Human** was **recognised as the Best Documentary**. Both films earned their first National Film Award.
- **Shah Rukh Khan (Jawan) and Vikrant Massey (12th Fail) have been awarded the Best Actor award**. This is the first National Film Award of Sharukh Khan in his career.
- **Rani Mukerji was honoured with the Best Actress award** for her powerful performance in **Mrs. Chatterjee Vs Norway**. This is also her first-ever National Film Award.
- Veteran actor Vijayaraghavan and Muthupettai Somu Bhaskar were awarded Best Supporting Actor.

5.0 Important Day

5.1 National Handloom Day – 07 August 2025

- National Handloom Day is celebrated annually on the **7th of August, which marks the launch of the Swadeshi Movement in 1905, in Kolkata**.
- This movement was called out for self-reliance through indigenous products. This very National Handloom Day 2025 is going to be the 11th National Handloom Day, which will be marked with a grand celebration across India, led by the Ministry of Textiles.
- **Theme: "DREAM IT; DO IT"**
- National Handloom Day was first observed on 7th August 2015, marking the 11th anniversary of the National Handloom Day Swadeshi Movement launched on the same date in 1905 in Town Hall, Kolkata.

6.0 Defence

6.1 India-Philippines' first bilateral naval exercise in the South China Sea

- India and the Philippines conducted their first-ever joint naval sail and exercises in the disputed South China Sea (also called the West Philippine Sea).
- Demonstrated both nations' commitment to maritime security, freedom of navigation, and a rules-based international order.

7.0 Book

7.1 M.S. Swaminathan: The Man Who Fed India

- A Biography titled "The Man Who Fed India" has been **released to commemorate the 100th birth anniversary of Mankombu Sambasivan**

Swaminathan (M.S. Swaminathan), which is celebrated on August 7.

- The launch took place at the India International Centre, New Delhi, Delhi, on the occasion of his **100th birth anniversary**, commemorating one of India's greatest champions of food security and the father of the Green Revolution.
- **Written By:** Priyambada Jayakumar
- **Published By:** HarperCollins
- **Green Revolution:** He is called the father of the Green Revolution. The book shares insights



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