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SEPTEMBER FIRST WEEK
UPSC/MPSC 2025-26

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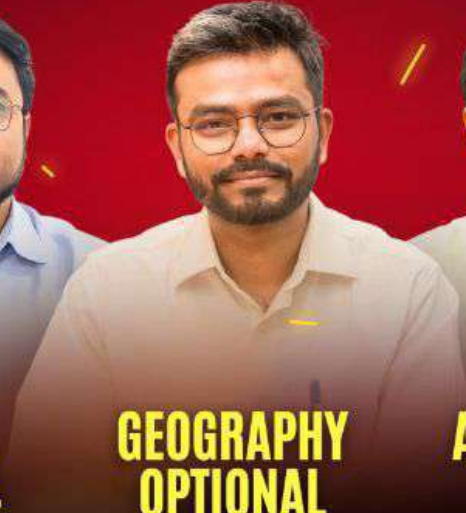
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2. General Studies II

2.1 25th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit

News Context

- Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the 25th SCO Summit held in Tianjin, China, hosted under the theme "Upholding the Shanghai Spirit: SCO on the Move."

Syllabus of Mains : GS 2 – Bilateral, Regional and Global Groupings and Agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

Major Outcomes of 25th SCO Summit

- SCO Development Bank:** Member states approved the establishment of a development bank to fund regional infrastructure and connectivity projects, reflecting a shift toward greater economic cooperation.
- Border Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs):** Proposals were made to transform borders into platforms of cooperation, promoting regional stability and trust.
- Rotating Chairmanship:** Kyrgyzstan assumed the SCO chair and will host the 2026 Summit.
- Support for Palestine:** The Summit reaffirmed support for a just and lasting Palestinian settlement, calling it vital for peace in West Asia.
- Iran Nuclear Commitments:** Members reaffirmed adherence to UNSC Resolution 2231, ensuring Iran's compliance with nuclear obligations and sanctions relief.
- Tianjin Declaration:** Adopted to enhance regional security, economic growth, and multipolar cooperation.

Highlights of the Tianjin Declaration

- Condemnation of Terrorism:** Denounced terrorism in all forms, referencing the Pahalgam and Jaffer Express attacks.
- Empowerment of the Global South:** Stressed the need to strengthen the voice of developing nations amid global trade uncertainties.
- Rejection of Coercive Measures:** Opposed unilateral actions that violate UN Charter principles and WTO norms.
- Initiative on Global Unity:** Formally incorporated the initiative "On Global Unity for a Just World, Harmony & Development."

Role of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in Global Multilateralism

- Expanding Geopolitical Reach**
 - From its Central Asian origins, the SCO has expanded to include 10 permanent members, now representing around 23% of global GDP and 42% of the world's population.
 - Its growing partnerships — including dialogue partners such as Turkey (a NATO member) — highlight its geopolitical diversification and capacity to balance Western-centric alliances.
 - The organisation offers a platform for emerging economies to articulate their interests outside traditional Western frameworks, enhancing strategic autonomy for the Global South.
- Security and Counter-Terrorism Cooperation**
 - The SCO fills critical security voids in Eurasia, particularly in post-NATO Afghanistan, through mechanisms like the Afghanistan Contact Group (ACG).
 - Its Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS), based in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, facilitates intelligence sharing and joint action against terrorism, extremism, and separatism.
 - Joint exercises such as Peaceful Mission strengthen regional military coordination and trust-building among members.

- **Connectivity and Economic Integration**
 - The SCO acts as a catalyst for connectivity in Eurasia, supporting initiatives such as the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and Chabahar Port, thereby linking South, Central, and West Asia.
 - Platforms like the SCO Business Council and Interbank Consortium promote multilateral investment and infrastructure cooperation, boosting intra-regional trade and integration.
- **Platform for Civilisational and Developmental Cooperation**
 - The SCO promotes cultural and developmental collaboration, extending beyond state-level interaction.
 - India's initiatives on start-ups, digital inclusion, traditional medicine, and Buddhist heritage underscore the potential of the SCO to foster people-to-people and knowledge-based engagement.
 - The organisation is increasingly seen as a forum for inclusive and sustainable development, resonating with Global South priorities.
- **Reforming Global Governance**
 - SCO members collectively advocate reforms in global institutions, including the UN, to ensure fair representation and sovereign equality.
 - By emphasizing multipolarity, non-interference, and respect for sovereignty, the SCO challenges the post-World War II power asymmetries that dominate current international structures.
 - It thus serves as a vehicle for democratising global governance and advancing a just, balanced, and multipolar world order.

Significance of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) for India

- **Strategic and Security Importance**
 - Enhances counter-terrorism and intelligence cooperation through the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) and joint military exercises like Peaceful Mission.
 - Provides a platform to engage with China, Russia, Pakistan, and Central Asian states on regional security issues, including Afghanistan's stability.
- **Connectivity and Economic Integration**
 - Supports India's Connect Central Asia Policy, facilitating access to energy resources and trade routes.
 - Aligns with projects such as the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and Chabahar Port, strengthening India's Eurasian connectivity.
- **Diplomatic and Geopolitical Leverage**
 - Serves as a non-Western multilateral forum, balancing India's participation in Western-led groupings like the Quad and G20.
 - Reinforces strategic autonomy and multi-alignment, enabling constructive dialogue even with adversaries like China and Pakistan.
- **Economic and Developmental Cooperation**
 - Promotes regional trade and investment through mechanisms like the SCO Business Council and Interbank Consortium.
 - Expands opportunities for energy cooperation, technology sharing, and market diversification across Eurasia.
- **Cultural and Civilisational Engagement**
 - Projects India's soft power through cooperation in traditional medicine, digital inclusion, and Buddhist heritage conservation.
 - Strengthens people-to-people ties and cultural linkages with Central Asian nations.
- **Role in Global Multilateralism**
 - Provides a platform to voice Global South perspectives and advocate for UN and global governance reforms.

- Promotes multipolarity, sovereign equality, and inclusive global order, aligning with India's vision of a balanced world system.

Challenges for India in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

- **China-Pakistan Axis**
 - The close strategic partnership between China and Pakistan often sidelines India's positions within the SCO.
 - Joint initiatives by both countries sometimes influence agenda-setting in ways that constrain India's diplomatic space.
- **Divergence over Connectivity Projects**
 - India's non-participation in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), due to sovereignty concerns over the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), limits its engagement in key connectivity plans under SCO.
 - This creates a geoeconomic disconnect with other members pursuing BRI-linked projects.
- **Limited Economic Integration**
 - India's lack of direct land connectivity with Central Asia (due to Pakistan's obstruction) restricts trade and investment potential.
 - Bilateral economic cooperation within SCO remains below potential compared to other regional blocs.
- **Strategic Imbalance and Influence of China**
 - China's economic and institutional dominance shapes the SCO's agenda, reducing room for India to influence outcomes.
 - The headquarters and major institutions of SCO (Beijing, Tashkent) are in China or its close partners, reinforcing its leadership.
- **Political and Security Divergences**
 - Conflicting threat perceptions — especially on cross-border terrorism — lead to diluted joint statements or non-specific commitments.
 - India's concerns on terrorism originating from Pakistan often receive limited support from other members.

Way Forward for India in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

- **Strengthen Engagement with Central Asian Republics:** Deepen strategic, economic, and energy partnerships with Central Asian nations to enhance India's presence and reduce Chinese dominance in the region.
- **Enhance Regional Connectivity:** Develop alternate routes like the INSTC and Chabahar Port to secure direct access to Eurasia and overcome Pakistan's transit barriers.
- **Promote Counter-Terrorism Cooperation:** Utilize RATS for better intelligence sharing and coordinated action against terrorism, extremism, and radical networks.
- **Use SCO as a Diplomatic Balancer:** Leverage the platform to engage China and Pakistan constructively while safeguarding India's strategic autonomy.
- **Deepen Economic and Developmental Role:** Expand participation in SCO Business Council and Interbank Consortium to promote trade, investment, and inclusive growth.
- **Advance Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy:** Promote India's image through initiatives on Buddhist heritage, digital inclusion, education, and traditional medicine.
- **Advocate Institutional Reform and Global South Interests:** Push for a more equitable, multipolar, and reformed global order through the SCO's collective voice.
- **Promote Energy and Climate Cooperation:** Collaborate on renewable energy, green technology, and sustainable resource management for long-term regional stability.

Conclusion

- India's engagement with the SCO should remain pragmatic and interest-oriented, focusing on security, connectivity, and balanced regional cooperation. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi remarked, "The SCO should become a voice for peace, prosperity, and stability in the region."
- By aligning this vision with its strategic and developmental goals, India can strengthen its role in shaping a stable, multipolar Eurasian order.

Question for Practice: -

- The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) provides India both opportunities and challenges in pursuing its Eurasian interests." Discuss (10 M ,150 Words)

2.2 Criminalisation of Politics in India

News Context

- According to the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), 31% of MPs and 29% of MLAs have declared serious criminal cases against them a sharp rise from 14% in 2009 to 31% in 2024, reflecting the deepening nexus between crime and politics.

Syllabus of Mains : GS 2 - Salient Features of the Representation of People's Act.

Data and Factual Insights on Criminalisation of Politics (ADR Report 2024)

- **Overall Trends**
 - 45% (1,861 MLAs) across India have declared criminal cases against themselves.
 - 29% (1,205 MLAs) face serious criminal charges, including offences like murder, attempt to murder, kidnapping, and crimes against women.
 - Among Members of Parliament, those with serious criminal cases have risen from 14% in 2009 to 31% in 2024, showing a worsening trend.
- **State-wise Criminalisation**
 - Andhra Pradesh has the highest share of MLAs with criminal cases at 79%.
 - Kerala and Telangana follow closely with 69% each.
 - Other states with high criminal representation include Bihar (66%), Maharashtra (65%), and Tamil Nadu (59%).
- **Serious Criminal Charges (State-wise)**
 - **Andhra Pradesh:** 56% of MLAs face serious criminal charges.
 - **Telangana:** 50% of MLAs are accused in serious offences.
 - **Bihar:** 49% of MLAs face grave charges, including violent crimes.

Underlying Causes of Criminalisation of Politics

- **Prioritising Electability over Integrity**
 - Political parties often value winnability more than moral credibility, giving tickets to candidates with wealth, influence, or caste-based appeal.
 - Many of these figures project themselves as "protector" or "Robin Hood" personalities, using local dominance to build loyal vote banks.
- **Power of Money and Coercion in Elections**
 - High election costs make candidates with illicit funds and muscle power attractive to parties.
 - Lack of transparency in political financing, particularly through cash donations and electoral bonds, allows criminal elements to thrive.
- **Politics-Crime Collusion**
 - Criminals enter politics to secure legal protection and legitimacy, while politicians depend on them for voter mobilisation and intimidation.

- This symbiotic nexus weakens governance and turns public office into a shield for private impunity.
- **Structural and Institutional Weaknesses**
 - The First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) system enables victory with limited but consolidated community support, allowing tainted candidates to win with narrow margins.
 - Absence of internal party democracy concentrates candidate selection in the hands of top leadership, often influenced by money and muscle.
 - Media silence or selective reporting normalises the rise of criminal politicians and dulls voter sensitivity toward ethical governance.

Impact of Criminalisation of Politics

- **Erosion of Rule of Law:** Legislators facing criminal trials undermine constitutional morality and equality before law, eroding public faith in justice.
- **Policy Capture and Corruption:** The politico-criminal nexus enables manipulation of policy and regulatory frameworks to favour vested interests — evident in illegal mining, liquor, and sand mafias.
- **Institutional Weakening:** Criminalised politicians interfere in bureaucratic transfers, police postings, and investigations, compromising institutional autonomy (Second ARC).
- **Governance and Developmental Deficit**
 - Governance becomes self-serving, prioritising protection of personal interests over public service.
 - States with high criminal representation (e.g., Bihar, UP) often show low Human Development Index (HDI) outcomes.
- **Electoral Distortions:** Vote-buying, intimidation, and booth capturing skew electoral fairness, as flagged by the Dinesh Goswami Committee (1990).
- **Crisis of Democratic Legitimacy:** Entry of criminals into legislatures erodes citizens' trust and normalises muscle power as political capital, undermining democratic ethics.

Judicial and Institutional Responses to tackle Criminalisation of Politics

- **Key Supreme Court Judgments**
 - ADR vs Union of India (2002): Mandated disclosure of candidates' criminal, financial, and educational details.
 - PUCL vs Union of India (2004): Recognised the "right to know" as part of freedom of expression (Article 19(1)(a)).
 - Lily Thomas vs Union of India (2013): Immediate disqualification of convicted legislators, removing the 3-month grace period.
 - Public Interest Foundation vs Union of India (2018): Directed parties to publicise criminal antecedents of candidates and justify their selection.
- **Election Commission Initiatives**
 - Compulsory affidavit disclosures before nomination.
 - Enforcement of Model Code of Conduct to curb violence and money misuse.
 - Power to countermand polls in cases of booth capturing or malpractice.
 - Law Commission (2015) Recommendations
 - Disqualification upon framing of charges for serious offences (punishable with ≥ 5 years).
 - Only applicable if charges framed at least one year before elections.
- **Recent Developments**
 - PIL for lifetime ban on convicted legislators under consideration by the Supreme Court.
 - ECI directive (2020) mandates parties to disclose and justify selection of candidates with criminal records.
 - Representation of the People Act (RPA), 1951 provides for disqualification under Sections 8–10A and penalises corrupt practices under Section 125.

Way Forward

- **Comprehensive Electoral Reforms:** Amend RPA to disqualify at the charge-sheet stage for heinous crimes.
- **State Funding of Elections:** Reduce money power and dependency on criminal financiers.
- **Internal Party Democracy:** Mandate transparency in candidate selection.
- **Fast-Track Courts:** Ensure time-bound disposal of criminal cases against politicians.
- **Voter Awareness:** Promote ethical voting through civic education.
- **Media and Civil Society Role:** Sustain pressure through public exposure and advocacy.

Conclusion

- Criminalisation of politics undermines democracy and rule of law, turning governance into a tool of self-interest. As T.N. Seshan aptly said, "If democracy has to survive, politics must be freed from the clutches of crime and money." India must pursue legal reform, political accountability, and voter awareness to restore integrity in public life.

Question for Practice: -

- Despite judicial directives and electoral reforms, criminalisation of politics continues to deepen in India. Analyse (10 M, 150 Words)

2.3 Innovation Corridors for Viksit Bharat

News Context

- Recently, the Prime Minister highlighted the role of innovation corridors as key enablers of the Viksit Bharat 2047 vision, aimed at making India a global technology and manufacturing hub

Syllabus of Mains : GS 2 - Government Policies and Interventions for Development in various sectors and Issues arising out of their Design and Implementation.

What are Innovation Corridors?

- Innovation Corridors are integrated regional hubs that connect research, design, manufacturing, and skilled talent to accelerate technological development.
- They act as ecosystems of innovation, linking academia, industry, start-ups, and government institutions.
- Aim to promote collaborative research and commercialisation of technology in key sectors like semiconductors, clean energy, biotech, and defence.
- Provide shared infrastructure such as fabrication labs, testing facilities, and incubation centres.
- Designed to reduce import dependence, boost high-skill jobs, and enhance India's global innovation capacity.

Rationale for Innovation Corridors

- **Lesson from the Pandemic:** The rapid development of COVID-19 vaccines proved that collaboration between academia, industry, and government can dramatically shorten innovation cycles.
- **Reducing Technological Dependence:** Heavy reliance on foreign technologies in semiconductors, defence, and energy sectors increases strategic vulnerability to supply shocks and tariff barriers.
- **Interdisciplinary Innovation:** Global breakthroughs — such as the James Webb Telescope — show that innovation thrives when scientists, engineers, and entrepreneurs collaborate across disciplines.
- **Harnessing the Demographic Dividend:** India's youthful, tech-savvy population needs structured innovation ecosystems to channel skills into productive, knowledge-driven sectors.
- **Driving Economic Growth:** Innovation corridors can create new value chains and stimulate regional economic transformation, similar to how Silicon Valley drove U.S. growth.
- **Boosting Global Competitiveness:** Strengthened innovation infrastructure helps Indian industries move up the global value chain, enhancing exports in high-tech goods.

- **Bridging the Research–Commercialisation Gap:** Corridors can close the gap between R&D output and market-ready products, improving technology transfer and patent utilisation.
- **Encouraging Public–Private Partnerships:** Innovation corridors can serve as PPP platforms, pooling government support, private investment, and academic expertise.
- **Regional Balanced Development:** Establishing corridors in non-metro regions promotes inclusive growth and prevents innovation concentration in a few urban hubs.
- **Sustainability and Climate Goals:** By focusing on clean energy, EVs, and green manufacturing, innovation corridors align economic growth with climate resilience.
- **Strategic Self-Reliance:** Corridors reduce dependence on critical imports (e.g., semiconductors, defence tech) and strengthen Atmanirbhar Bharat in strategic sectors.

Advantages of Innovation Corridors

- **Strengthening Value Chains:** By clustering semiconductor design, fabrication, and packaging units, India can create end-to-end domestic value chains that reduce dependence on imported components and capture a larger share of global manufacturing value. Such hubs can mirror the integrated supply ecosystems of Taiwan's Hsinchu Science Park or South Korea's Pangyo Techno Valley.
- **Boosting High-Skill Employment:** Innovation corridors stimulate job creation in sunrise sectors such as semiconductors, aerospace, renewable energy, and defence technologies. Each corridor can evolve into a micro-economy of talent, where researchers, engineers, and entrepreneurs co-develop high-value intellectual property.
- **Accelerating Economic Multipliers:** Breakthroughs in core technologies like EV batteries or hydrogen fuel cells generate ripple effects across mining, logistics, grid management, and recycling sectors. A 1% rise in R&D intensity can raise long-term GDP growth by nearly 0.3–0.5 percentage points.
- **Fostering Start-up Ecosystems:** Corridors create innovation density through shared labs, venture funds, and mentorship hubs, reducing the "valley of death" between idea and market. This supports deep-tech entrepreneurship, which typically demands substantial capital and infrastructure.
- **Enhancing Global Competitiveness:** Concentrated innovation zones improve India's position in global value chains. By localising high-end manufacturing and IP generation, India can shift from being a consumer of technology to a producer of frontier innovation.
- **Catalysing Regional Development:** When distributed across Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities, innovation corridors can decentralise growth, reduce regional inequality, and create new industrial clusters beyond metros—similar to how China's Chengdu–Chongqing twin city model unlocked inland innovation.

Challenges in India's Adoption

- **Institutional Fragmentation:** Weak coordination between academia, industry, and research labs limits patent transfers and technology commercialization.
- **Funding Constraints:** Deep-tech sectors face low venture funding and limited long-term capital, restricting high-risk R&D investments.
- **Infrastructure Deficit:** Lack of shared fabrication labs and testing facilities hampers prototyping, especially for start-ups.
- **Regulatory Bottlenecks:** Rigid regulations and absence of sandbox frameworks delay innovation in fintech, biotech, and space sectors.
- **Regional Concentration:** Innovation is metro-focused (Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune), sidelining smaller cities and regional clusters.
- **Talent Retention Issues:** Skilled researchers migrate abroad due to better incentives and research infrastructure elsewhere.
- **Cultural Barriers:** Institutional risk aversion and bureaucratic rigidity discourage experimentation and creative problem-solving.

Way Forward

- **Strengthen Academia-Industry Linkages:** Promote collaborative research through the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF), similar to Stanford-Silicon Valley partnerships.
- **Develop Core Infrastructure:** Establish domestic semiconductor fabrication labs, testing centres, and innovation parks to support rapid prototyping and product scaling.
- **Enhance Funding Ecosystem:** Expand deep-tech venture capital and public R&D grants to support long-gestation projects in AI, quantum computing, and biotechnology.
- **Adopt Regulatory Sandboxes:** Introduce flexible frameworks for fintech, biotech, and clean-tech to allow safe experimentation and faster policy learning.
- **Encourage Corporate Collaboration:** Facilitate cross-industry partnerships inspired by the Cascadia Innovation Corridor (Canada-US model) to integrate research with market deployment.
- **Integrate Multi-City Clusters:** Follow China's G60 Science & Technology Corridor model to connect multiple cities into a single innovation network for scaling production.

Conclusion:

- Innovation corridors can become the backbone of Viksit Bharat 2047 by linking India's talent, technology, and industry into cohesive growth zones. If nurtured through collaboration, decentralisation, and sustained R&D investment, they can transform India from an innovation participant into a global innovation leader.

Question for Practice: -

- Examine the challenges in developing Innovation Corridors in India and suggest measures to overcome them. (15 M, 250 Words)

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3. General Studies III

3.1 Rising Natural Disasters in the Himalayas

News Context

- The Himalayan region, once a climatic buffer, is now witnessing near-daily disasters like flash floods, landslides, and cloudbursts driven by warming, fragile geology, and unregulated development.

Syllabus of Mains : GS 3 - Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment.

Scale of the Crisis

- Between January and August 2025, the 13 Himalayan states recorded at least one disaster per day, killing over 630 people.
- Disaster days have steadily increased — 63% in 2022, 68% in 2023, and 70% in 2024, reflecting a worsening trend.
- In 2024, Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs) in Sikkim destroyed infrastructure, swept away bridges, and displaced thousands.
- Dharali and Harsil in Uttarkashi faced repeated floods that submerged markets and even diverted the Bhagirathi River's course.
- In Mandi district, Himachal Pradesh, rainfall reached nearly 20 times the normal levels, wiping out villages, orchards, and bridges.
- Between June 25 and July 2, 2025, rainfall in Mandi was 482% above average, showing the severity of extreme monsoon bursts.
- The pattern reveals a systemic climatic and developmental crisis, where extreme weather interacts with fragile terrain and poor planning.

Reasons Behind Rising Disasters in the Himalayan Region

- Natural Factors**
 - Climate Change and Warming:** The Himalayas are warming faster than the global average, intensifying rainfall, glacial melt, and erratic weather patterns.
 - Increased Western Disturbances:** Unusual summer activity of western disturbances overlapping with the monsoon trough causes prolonged heavy rainfall and cloudbursts.
 - Glacial Instability:** Rapid glacier retreat and the formation of fragile moraine-dammed lakes increase the frequency of Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs).
 - Fragile Geology:** Being young fold mountains, the Himalayas are inherently unstable; even small triggers can cause landslides and slope collapses.
 - Steep Terrain and River Systems:** High gradients accelerate runoff, leading to flash floods and erosion during intense rainfall events.
- Anthropogenic (Human-Induced) Factors**
 - Unregulated Construction:** Expansion of roads, hotels, and hydropower projects on steep slopes and riverbeds alters natural drainage and destabilises slopes.
 - Deforestation and Land Degradation:** Large-scale tree felling for infrastructure and tourism reduces slope stability and increases surface runoff.
 - Encroachment and Poor Land-use Planning:** Settlements and commercial areas are expanding into floodplains and landslide-prone zones, heightening disaster vulnerability.
 - Hydropower and Dams:** Reservoirs trap sediments, modify local hydrology, and sometimes emit methane, subtly altering local microclimates.
 - Neglect of Scientific Warnings:** Repeated disregard for hazard maps, geological studies, and environmental clearances has amplified disaster risks.

The Way Forward

- **Moratorium on Fragile-Zone Projects:** Large infrastructure projects should be paused until independent geological and hydrological studies are completed.
- **Accurate Hazard Mapping:** Make risk maps public, enforce zoning rules, and prohibit construction on riverbeds or floodplains.
- **Community-Centric Early Warnings:** Deploy localised weather stations and integrate sensor-based alerts with local governance networks.
- **Eco-sensitive Development:** Prioritise slope stabilization, reforestation, and sustainable tourism instead of aggressive construction.
- **Policy Reorientation:** Treat the Himalayas not as a source of revenue but as a natural capital vital for national climate resilience.

Conclusion:

- The rising disasters in the Himalayas reflect a dangerous convergence of nature's fragility and human overreach. As the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) warns, mountain ecosystems are among the most climate-sensitive on Earth. For India, safeguarding the Himalayas demands **shifting from an extraction-based approach to an ecosystem-based governance model**—where every road, dam, or township is planned through the lens of geological and climatic resilience.

Question for Practice: -

- The Himalayas are no longer a climate shield but a climate hotspot." Comment in the context of recent extreme weather events. (15 M, 250 Marks)

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3. General Studies III

3.2 India's Plan for Creating theatre Commands in Defence

News Context

- India is restructuring its armed forces under integrated theatre commands to unify the Army, Navy, and Air Force for faster, coordinated, and multi-domain military operations—marking the most significant defence reform since Independence.

Syllabus of Mains : GS 3 - Various Security Forces and Agencies and their Mandate.

Background & Evolution

- Meaning of Theatre Command: A theatre command is a unified military structure where the Army, Navy, and Air Force operate under a single commander for a specific geographical area or theatre of operation, ensuring integrated planning and execution of missions.
- The concept of joint commands was first proposed after the **Kargil Review Committee (1999)**, which highlighted coordination gaps during the conflict.
- It was further strengthened by the **Naresh Chandra Task Force (2012)**, which emphasised the need for integrated commands to enhance jointness and interoperability.
- The **Shekatkar Committee (2015)** formally recommended the creation of three integrated theatre commands to optimise resources and enable faster operational response.
- The appointment of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) in 2020 and creation of the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) laid the institutional groundwork for implementing theatreisation reforms.

Objectives and Rationale Behind theatre Command

- Jointness & Integration:** Replace siloed service structures with unified commands for cohesive operational planning and logistics.
- Preparedness for Multi-Domain Warfare:** Theatre commands will enable integrated response across land, air, sea, cyber, and space domains.
- Faster Decision-Making:** A single commander controlling all assets in a region eliminates delays from inter-service coordination.
- Resource Optimisation:** Avoid duplication of weapons, logistics, and command structures—ensuring cost-effectiveness.
- Strategic Readiness for Two-Front Threats:** India's dual challenges from China and Pakistan necessitate joint operational readiness and integrated command structures for simultaneous theatres.
- Enhanced Combat Capability:** Theatre commands enable cross-domain coordination, allowing, for example, the Air Force to provide close air support to Army operations while the Navy controls sea lanes—under a unified strategic plan.
- Institutionalising Joint Doctrine and Training:** It promotes interoperability through common operational doctrines, joint training, and shared communication systems.
- Strategic Theatre Model:** Proposed structure includes:
 - Northern Theatre Command: Focused on China border.
 - Western Theatre Command: Pakistan-facing border.
 - Maritime Theatre Command: Indian Ocean region.

Key Challenges

- Inter-Service Concerns:** The Air Force fears division of its limited assets may weaken flexibility and centralised control during conflicts.
- Budgetary Imbalance:** The Army consumes nearly 55–60% of defence spending, leaving limited fiscal space for naval and air modernisation.

- **Doctrinal Divergence:** Each service operates on distinct doctrines; forced integration may lead to command friction and diluted autonomy.
- **Institutional Resistance:** Deep-rooted service hierarchies and lack of joint training impede cultural and procedural transformation.
- **Comparative Caution:** Blindly imitating foreign models (like U.S. or Chinese commands) ignores India's unique continental-maritime hybrid threat environment.
- **Technology and Communication Gaps:** India still lacks secure tri-service communication systems and shared situational awareness platforms essential for joint operations.

Way Forward

- **Phased Implementation:** Begin with pilot theatre commands to test command structure and inter-service coordination.
- **Doctrinal Harmonisation:** Develop a Joint Operational Doctrine aligning service philosophies under a unified warfighting strategy.
- **Civil-Military Dialogue:** Maintain constant engagement between CDS, service chiefs, and government for balanced reform rollout.
- **Technological Integration:** Invest in joint command networks, data-sharing, and battlefield transparency using AI and ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance) tools.
- **Training and Culture Shift:** Introduce tri-service training modules at academies and staff colleges to nurture a culture of jointness from the ground up.
- **Legal and Administrative Framework:** Codify roles, accountability, and conflict resolution mechanisms through a clear Joint Services Act.

Conclusion:

- India's theatre command reform represents the most significant military restructuring since Independence, aligning with the vision outlined by the **Kargil Review Committee (1999)** and operationalised under the **Chief of Defence Staff (2020) framework**.
- It aims to create a truly joint, network-centric, and theatre-oriented force, capable of responding to simultaneous multi-domain threats from land, sea, air, cyber, and space.
- For theatreisation to succeed, India must follow the **"jointness before integration"** principle—building trust, doctrinal harmony, and technological interoperability—so that unity of command translates into unity of purpose.

Question for Practice: -

- What are theatre commands, and how can they enhance India's preparedness for multi-domain warfare? Examine the major challenges in their implementation. (15 M, 250 Marks)

PRAYAAS Shorts- UPSC & MPSC

1. Ramon Magsaysay Award 2025

Context

- The Foundation to Educate Girls Globally (Educate Girls) became the first Indian organisation to receive the Ramon Magsaysay Award 2025.

About

- The NGO works to empower girls through education and challenge cultural stereotypes.
- Other awardees include Shaahina Ali (Maldives) and Flaviano Antonio L. Villanueva (Philippines) for their contributions to public service.

About the Ramon Magsaysay Award

- Established: 1957, in memory of Ramon Magsaysay, the 7th President of the Philippines.
- Purpose: Recognises exemplary leadership and community impact across Asia; often called "Asia's Nobel Prize."
- Categories: Public Service, Community Leadership, Journalism, Peace & International Understanding, and Emergent Leadership.
- Administered by: Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation, Manila, Philippines.
- Notable Indian Awardees:**
 - Vinoba Bhave (1958)** – Bhoodan Movement (Land reforms).
 - Mother Teresa (1962)** – Humanitarian work.
 - Arvind Kejriwal (2006)** – Promotion of transparent governance and RTI activism.
 - Ravish Kumar (2019)** – Ethical and independent journalism.
 - Sonam Wangchuk (2018)** – Innovations in education and sustainable development in Ladakh.
 - Bezwada Wilson (2016)** – Eradication of manual scavenging.
 - Dr. R. Ravi Kannan (2023)** – Affordable, community-based cancer care.

- A recent Harvard study by gastroenterologists found that 86% of air fresheners tested contained phthalates, raising health concerns about their widespread use in indoor environments.

About Phthalates

- Definition:** Phthalates are a group of synthetic chemical compounds used as **plasticisers** (substances added to plastics to make them flexible, durable, and long-lasting)
- Common use:** Found in PVC products, cosmetics, air fresheners, toys, food packaging, and medical devices.
- Types:** Common variants include DEHP (Diethylhexyl phthalate), DBP (Dibutyl phthalate), and DEP (Diethyl phthalate).
- Health Concerns**
 - Endocrine disruptors: Interfere with the body's hormonal system.
 - Linked risks:** Reproductive and developmental issues, liver and kidney toxicity, obesity, and certain cancers.
 - Inhalation hazard:** Airborne exposure from air fresheners, perfumes, or plastics increases indoor pollution risk.
 - Vulnerable groups:** Pregnant women, infants, and adolescents face higher risks due to hormonal sensitivity.
- Regulation**
 - India:** Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) restricts certain phthalates in toys and childcare products.
 - Global:** EU bans several phthalates under the REACH regulation.

2. Phthalates

Context

3. Nijasharana Ambigara Chowdaiah

Context

- Protests erupted in Karnataka demanding action against derogatory remarks made about Nijasharana Ambigara Chowdaiah, a revered 12th-century saint and poet known for his devotion to equality and justice.

About Nijasharana Ambigara Chowdaiah

- Era:** 12th century; part of the **Sharana movement** led by **Basavanna** in Karnataka.

- **Background:** Belonged to the boatmen (Ambiga) community, symbolising inclusivity and dignity of labour.
- **Philosophy:** Preached social equality, spiritual devotion, and opposition to caste-based discrimination.
- **Symbolism:** Regarded as a voice of the oppressed and a social reformer who challenged orthodoxy.

3.1 About Basavanna

- **Era:** 12th-century philosopher, social reformer, and founder of the Lingayat movement in Karnataka.
- **Position:** Served as a minister (Mahamantri) in the court of King Bijjala of the Kalachuri dynasty.
- **Philosophy:**
 - Advocated Sharana philosophy based on equality, rationality, and direct devotion to Shiva (Ishtalinga).
 - Promoted **Kayaka (dignity of labour) and Dasoha (sharing and service)**.
 - Opposed the caste system and Brahmanical dominance.
- **Legacy:**
 - His teachings formed the foundation of the Lingayat faith.
 - Compiled his thoughts in Vachanas—short, profound Kannada verses.
 - Established the Anubhava Mantapa, often considered the first democratic spiritual assembly.

4.Count on Me – Remedial Toolkit for Math Learning

Context

- The Madras Dyslexia Association (MDA) has launched a new remedial toolkit titled 'Count on Me' to help children with learning difficulties in mathematics.

About the Toolkit

- The toolkit supports students with developmental dyscalculia and related math challenges.
- **Method:** Uses visual tools, interactive activities, and multisensory learning techniques.
- **Impact:**

- Benefits children with specific learning difficulties.
- Enhances concept clarity and confidence among all learners.

4.1 About Dyslexia

- **Definition:** Dyslexia is a neurodevelopmental learning disorder that primarily affects reading, spelling, and writing skills, despite normal intelligence and sensory abilities.
- **Cause:** Related to differences in brain regions that process language.
- **Symptoms:**
 - Difficulty reading fluently and decoding words.
 - Poor spelling and writing consistency.
 - Trouble in sequencing, memory, and speed of information processing.
- **Related Disorders:**
 - **Dyscalculia** – difficulty in understanding numbers and mathematical operations.
 - **Dysgraphia** – difficulty in writing and fine motor coordination.

5.BHARATI Initiative

Context

- To accelerate India's agri-food export potential, the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has launched the **BHARATI initiative** — Bharat's Hub for Agritech, Resilience, Advancement and Incubation for Export Enablement.

About BHARATI Initiative

- Implemented by APEDA, under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- It brings together 100 promising agri-food startups, helping them refine their products, meet export standards, and access international markets.
- The programme aims to make India's agri-food exports touch \$50 billion by 2030 through innovation, technology, and entrepreneurship.
- **The focus is on:**
 - Promoting GI-tagged and AYUSH-linked farm products for global niche segments.

- Using AI-driven quality checks and IoT-based cold storage to maintain export-grade freshness and traceability.
- The initiative seeks to turn India's agri-entrepreneurs into global exporters, promoting sustainability and innovation.

- Effective as part of pesticide resistance management due to its multi-site copper-based action.
- **Relevance:** Considered organic-farming compatible, making it a sustainable disease-control option.

5.1 About APEDA

- Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) was set up in 1986 to promote the export of agricultural and processed food products.
- It works under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, supporting exporters through training, financial aid, and market insights.
- APEDA also helps develop quality standards, register exporters, and expand India's footprint in organic and GI-tagged food exports.

6. Bordeaux Mixture

Context

- Coffee and plantation growers in Chikkamagaluru and Hassan districts (Karnataka) are preparing to apply Bordeaux mixture multiple times this year to protect crops after unseasonal rains increased fungal infection risks.

About Bordeaux Mixture

- A fungicide and bactericide prepared by mixing copper sulfate, lime (calcium hydroxide), and water.
- **Origin:** Discovered in the Bordeaux region of France in the late 19th century; one of the oldest chemical fungicides still in use.
- **Purpose:** Widely used to control fungal and bacterial diseases in fruits, vegetables, and plantation crops — especially coffee, grapes, and citrus.
- **Key Properties:**
 - Low solubility and non-volatile, ensuring long-lasting effect even in humid or rainy conditions.
 - Provides a protective coating on plant surfaces, preventing fungal spore germination.

7. PRATUSH Telescope

Context

- Scientists at the Raman Research Institute (RRI), Bengaluru, have proposed a pioneering lunar radio telescope mission called PRATUSH, designed to explore the Cosmic Dawn

About PRATUSH Telescope

- **Full Form:** Probing ReionizATIOn of the Universe using Signal from Hydrogen (PRATUSH).
- **Developed by:** Raman Research Institute (RRI) in collaboration with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- **Objective:**
- To study radio signals from neutral hydrogen (21 cm line) to trace the reionization period of the early universe.
- To help understand how the universe transitioned from darkness to light — the so-called Cosmic Dawn.
- **Mission Life:** Around two years, allowing long-term, high-precision observation with a strong signal-to-noise ratio.

8. Vikram 3201

Context

- At the Semicon India 2025 conference, India unveiled its first fully indigenous 32-bit microprocessor — Vikram 3201, marking a major milestone in India's semiconductor self-reliance and space technology.

About Vikram 3201

- **Developer:** Designed by the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) and fabricated at ISRO's Semiconductor Laboratory (SCL), Chandigarh.
- **Type:** A 32-bit microprocessor specifically engineered for rockets and satellites, not for consumer electronics like smartphones or computers.

- **Significance:**

- Represents India's first end-to-end indigenous design and fabrication of a high-performance processor for launch vehicle avionics.
- Upgraded from Vikram 1601, a 16-bit processor used in ISRO's rockets since 2009.
- A step toward strategic tech autonomy in critical space hardware, reducing dependence on imported chips.

- Traded on exchanges — e.g., Nifty 50 Futures, BSE Sensex Futures.

- **Options Contracts:**

- Provide the right (not obligation) to buy (call option) or sell (put option) a stock or index at a predetermined price before expiry.
- Used to hedge or speculate on market movements.

- **Swaps:**

- Contracts where parties exchange returns based on the performance of an equity asset.
- Commonly used for hedging or synthetic exposure to equities.

- **Forwards:**

- Similar to futures but customized and traded over-the-counter (OTC), not on exchanges.
- Used mainly by institutional players for tailored risk management.

9. Equity Derivatives

Context

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has introduced a new framework to monitor intraday positions in equity index derivatives, aimed at curbing excessive speculation and managing systemic risk from large market exposures.

About Equity Derivatives

- **Meaning:** Financial contracts based on the price movement of stocks or stock indices.
- **Function:** Used for risk management, speculation, and portfolio optimization by investors and institutions.
- **Underlying assets:** Can be individual company shares or broad market indices like Nifty 50 or Sensex.

Major Types of Equity Derivatives

What are Derivatives?

- It is financial instruments whose value is derived from an underlying asset, such as stocks, indices, commodities, currencies, or interest rates.
- **Purpose:**
 - Enable investors to speculate on price movements without owning the asset.
 - Help in hedging risks against price volatility.
 - Allow for portfolio diversification and return enhancement.

- **Futures Contracts:**

- Binding agreement to buy or sell an underlying stock/index at a set price on a future date.

10. Senna spectabilis

Context

- Kerala has successfully executed India's first science-based, community-driven eradication of *Senna spectabilis*, marking a major step toward restoring South India's native forest ecosystems.

About Senna spectabilis

- **Type:** A fast-growing **invasive tree species** belonging to the Fabaceae (legume) family.
- **Origin:** Native to South and Central America, introduced in India as an ornamental and shade tree.
- **Distribution in India:** Found across the Western Ghats, especially in Wayanad, Nilgiri, and Bandipur forest regions.
- **Appearance:** Medium-sized deciduous tree with bright yellow flowers and long seed pods that aid rapid spread.

11. p47 Protein – The Unsung Cellular Protector

Context

- Scientists at the S.N. Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences (SNBNCBS), Kolkata, have discovered that p47, a lesser-known cellular

protein, helps protect other proteins from mechanical stress, opening new possibilities for treating diseases linked to protein instability.

About p47 Protein

- **Nature:** p47 is a cofactor protein that works with p97, a key enzyme responsible for protein degradation, transport, and membrane fusion in cells.
- **New Role:** The study revealed that p47 acts as a “mechanical chaperone” — directly stabilizing proteins exposed to physical forces such as pulling, twisting, or stretching.
- **Mechanism:**
 - Binds to mechanically stressed proteins and helps them refold under tension.
 - Enhances mechanical efficiency during the extraction of proteins from the endoplasmic reticulum (ER) to the cytoplasm.
- **Technology Used:** Researchers employed single-molecule magnetic tweezers to mimic intracellular mechanical forces.
- **Therapeutic Potential:** Could lead to treatments for diseases like heart muscle disorders and laminopathies, where proteins lose structural stability.
- **Significance:** Expands the understanding of accessory proteins as active participants in cellular stress protection and protein quality control.

12. HealthAI Global Regulatory Network

Context

- India has joined the HealthAI Global Regulatory Network (GRN), a global coalition aimed at ensuring the safe, ethical, and transparent use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in healthcare.

About HealthAI Global Regulatory Network

- **Nature:** A Geneva-based independent nonprofit organization promoting equitable access to AI-powered health innovations.
- **Functions:**
 - Builds trust and safety frameworks for AI tools in medicine.

- Maintains a global registry of AI-based health tools for transparency and oversight.
- Facilitates collaboration among health regulators across countries.

Indian Partners:

- ICMR–National Institute for Research in Digital Health and Data Science (NIRDHDS).
- IndiaAI, the Government’s central AI initiative, will collaborate with HealthAI to strengthen AI governance and innovation in health.

About IndiaAI

- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), under the Digital India Corporation.
- **Objective:** To build a comprehensive, inclusive, and responsible AI ecosystem in India.
- **Focus Areas:**
 - Promotion of AI research, startups, and skilling.
 - Use of AI for governance, healthcare, agriculture, and education.
- **Goal:** To position India as a global leader in ethical and innovative AI development.

13. Blue Dragons



Context

Several beaches in Spain were temporarily closed after the sighting of Blue Dragons (*Glaucus atlanticus*), tiny but venomous sea slugs known for their striking appearance and painful sting.

About Blue Dragons

- **Scientific Name:** *Glaucus atlanticus*
- **Habitat:** Found in warm tropical and subtropical waters of the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans.
- **Feeding:** Feeds on Portuguese man o' war and other venomous siphonophores, storing their stinging cells (nematocysts) to use as its own defence.
- **Behavior:** Floats upside down on the ocean surface, carried by winds and currents.
- **Impact on Humans:**
- Can deliver a painful sting causing redness, swelling, nausea, and vomiting.
- Not fatal, but contact should be avoided.

14. Jarosite

Context

- Researchers have dated Jarosite discovered in Matanomadh, Kutch (Gujarat), to be about 55 million years old, providing new insights into ancient volcanic and geochemical processes on Earth — and by comparison, on Mars.

About Jarosite

- **Nature:** A yellow-coloured, iron-rich sulphate mineral composed mainly of iron, sulphur, oxygen, and potassium.
- **Formation:**
 - Forms when iron-bearing minerals chemically react with sulphur and oxygen in the presence of water.
 - Often linked with volcanic or hydrothermal activity and acidic environments.
- **Discovery on Mars:** First identified by NASA's Opportunity Rover (2004), suggesting that liquid water once existed on the Martian surface.
- **Significance:**
 - The 55-million-year-old sample in Kutch offers a terrestrial analogue to understand Martian mineral evolution.
 - Helps scientists study how water-rock interactions and oxidation processes shaped both Earth's and Mars's geological history.

15. National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2025

Context

THE TOPPERS									
OVERALL					ENGINEERING				
2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025
1 IIT Madras	IIT Madras	1 IIT Madras	IIT Madras	1 IIT Madras	1 IIT Madras	IIT Madras	1 IIT Madras	IIT Madras	1 IIT Madras
2 IISc Bangalore	IISc Bangalore	2 IIT Delhi	IIT Delhi	2 IIT Delhi	2 IIT Delhi	IIT Delhi	2 IIT Delhi	IIT Delhi	2 IIT Delhi
3 IIT Bombay	IIT Bombay	3 IIT Bombay	IIT Bombay	3 IIT Bombay	3 IIT Bombay	IIT Bombay	3 IIT Bombay	IIT Bombay	3 IIT Bombay
4 IIT Delhi	IIT Delhi	4 IIT Kanpur	IIT Kanpur	4 IIT Kanpur	4 IIT Kanpur	IIT Kanpur	4 IIT Kanpur	IIT Kanpur	4 IIT Kanpur
5 IIT Kanpur	IIT Kanpur	5 IIT Kharagpur	IIT Kharagpur	5 IIT Kharagpur	5 IIT Kharagpur	IIT Kharagpur	5 IIT Kharagpur	IIT Kharagpur	5 IIT Kharagpur
UNIVERSITIES					COLLEGES				
2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025
1 IISc Bangalore	IISc Bangalore	1 Hindu College	Hindu College	1 Hindu College	1 Hindu College	Hindu College	1 Hindu College	Hindu College	1 Hindu College
2 JNU	JNU	2 Miranda House	Miranda House	2 Miranda House	2 Miranda House	Miranda House	2 Miranda House	Miranda House	2 Miranda House
3 Manipal Academy of Higher Education	Jamia Millia Islamia	3 Hans Raj College	St. Stephen's College	3 Hans Raj College	3 Hans Raj College	St. Stephen's College	3 Hans Raj College	St. Stephen's College	3 Hans Raj College
4 Jamia Millia Islamia	Manipal Academy of Higher Education	4 Kirori Mal College	Vivekananda Centenary College, West Bengal	4 Kirori Mal College	4 Kirori Mal College	Vivekananda Centenary College, West Bengal	4 Kirori Mal College	Vivekananda Centenary College, West Bengal	4 Kirori Mal College
5 Delhi University	Banaras Hindu University	5 St. Stephen's College	Atma Ram Sanatan Dharma College, Delhi	5 St. Stephen's College	5 St. Stephen's College	Atma Ram Sanatan Dharma College, Delhi	5 St. Stephen's College	Atma Ram Sanatan Dharma College, Delhi	5 St. Stephen's College

Source: NIRF 2025 report

- The Union Government released the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2025 results.

About NIRF

- **Launch:** Introduced in 2015 by the Ministry of Education to create a transparent and objective ranking system for higher educational institutions in India.
- **Purpose:**
 - To help students, parents, and policymakers evaluate and compare institutions.
 - To promote quality, competitiveness, and accountability in higher education.
- **Parameters of Assessment (with respective weightage):**
 - **Teaching, Learning & Resources (30%)** – Faculty strength, infrastructure, and academic resources.
 - **Research and Professional Practice (30%)** – Publications, patents, and research impact.
 - **Graduation Outcomes (20%)** – Student success, placements, and higher studies.
 - **Outreach and Inclusivity (10%)** – Gender, regional, and social diversity.
 - **Perception (10%)** – Peer and public perception of the institution's reputation.

16. Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement

Context

- India has set up a 12-member expert panel to align national laws with the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ).

16.1 UNCLOS – The Constitution of the Oceans

About

- The **BBNJ Agreement, adopted in 2023 under UNCLOS**, is a global pact to protect biodiversity and ensure sustainable use of marine resources in waters beyond national boundaries.
- It focuses on creating Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) to conserve ecosystems, regulating deep-sea mining and biogenetic resource use, and ensuring equitable sharing of benefits among nations.
- The treaty mandates Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) for activities that may affect high seas and promotes technology transfer and capacity building for developing countries.
- As of 2025, over 140 countries have signed and 55 have ratified the agreement; **India signed in 2024 but is yet to ratify it.**

- Adopted in 1982, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) defines how countries use and manage ocean space, navigation, and marine resources.
- **Key Maritime Zones:**
 - **Territorial Sea (12 nautical miles):** Full sovereignty of the coastal state.
 - **Exclusive Economic Zone (200 nautical miles):** Rights to explore and exploit marine resources.
 - **High Seas:** Open and free for all nations.
- **Major Institutions under UNCLOS:**
 - International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS): Settles maritime disputes.
 - International Seabed Authority (ISA): Regulates deep-sea mining beyond national limits.
 - Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS): Examines claims to extend continental shelves.

PRAYAAS

PRAYAAS Shorts- MPSC Specific

1. National

1.1 17th CII Global MedTech Summit 2025

- Held in New Delhi.
- 17th edition of the annual MedTech Summit organized by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). Aimed to strengthen India's medical technology ecosystem and global presence.
- **Theme:** "Innovating for a Healthier Future – Make in India, Make for the World."
- Brought together industry leaders, innovators, and policymakers to discuss MedTech advancements. Focused on promoting indigenous manufacturing, R&D, and export competitiveness in the healthcare sector.

1.2 Angikaar 2025 Campaign

- Launched to raise awareness and accelerate implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban (PMAY-U).
- Focus on ensuring housing for all through faster beneficiary inclusion and service delivery.

2. State

2.1 Telangana Passes Bills for 42% BC Quota in Local Body Elections

- Telangana Legislative Assembly recently passed Panchayat Raj (Amendment) Bill, 2025 and Telangana Municipalities (Amendment) Bill, 2025 to Provide 42% reservation for Backward Classes (BCs) in local body elections.
- The bill aims to Aims to **enhance BC representation** in grassroots governance.

2.2 India's First Multi-Lane Free Flow Tolling System

- India's first Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) tolling system to be implemented at Choryasi Fee Plaza on NH-48, Gujarat.
- Will make it the country's first barrier-free toll plaza, enabling vehicles to move without stopping.
- Project Agreement signed between Indian Highways Management Company Limited (IHMCL) and ICICI Bank in New Delhi.

- MLFF uses automated number plate recognition (ANPR) and sensor-based toll deduction for seamless traffic flow.

3. Maharashtra

3.1 Pune Municipal Corporation Wins First Place in E-Governance Reforms

- Recognized under Maharashtra Government's Mission 150 Days initiative.
- Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) achieved first rank in the state for e-governance reforms.
- Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis felicitated the PMC for its outstanding digital governance performance.
- Highlights PMC's progress in digital service delivery and administrative efficiency.

4. Defence

4.1 Achook Prahar' Exercise

- Recently '**Achook Prahar**' Exercise concluded in Arunachal Pradesh
- It is Joint exercise between Indian Army's Spear Corps and Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP).
- Focused on firepower drills and tactical coordination under simulated battlefield conditions ; aimed to enhance inter-agency synergy and combat readiness along the India-China border.

4.2 Military Exercise 'Maitree-XIV'

- 14th edition of the India-Thailand joint military exercise 'Maitree-XIV' began in Umroi, Meghalaya.
- Aims to enhance bilateral defence cooperation, interoperability, and counter-insurgency training between the two armies.

4.3 India-US Joint Military Exercise 'Yudh Abhyas 2025'

- Exercise Location: Fort Wainwright, Alaska, USA.
- Edition: 21st edition of the India-US Joint Military Exercise 'Yudh Abhyas'.
- Focus on high-altitude warfare, cold-weather operations, and joint tactical manoeuvres.

5. Space

5.1 Surya' AI Model for Space Weather Prediction

- **NASA, in collaboration with IBM, launched 'Surya'**, an advanced AI-based model for predicting space weather events.
- Trained on nine years of data from the Solar Dynamics Observatory (SDO).
- Aims to provide early and precise forecasts of solar flares and coronal mass ejections (CMEs).
- **Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs):** Massive bursts of plasma and magnetic fields ejected from the Sun's corona that can disrupt satellites, power grids, and communication systems on Earth.

- Event scheduled from October 27 to November 2, 2025, in Fort Lauderdale, Florida (USA).

8.2 India Tops 25th Commonwealth Weightlifting Championship 2025

- **Event:** 25th Commonwealth Senior Weightlifting Championship
- **Venue:** Veer Savarkar Sports Complex, Ahmedabad
- **India's Medal Tally:** 13 medals — 4 Gold, 6 Silver, 3 Bronze
- **Gold Medal winner in different category:** Ajaya Babu Valluri, Mirabai Chanu, Tushar Chaudhary
- **Silver Medals in different category:** Mehak Sharma, Nirupama Devi Seram, Dilbag Singh

6. Sport

8.1 India to Send First-Ever National Team to Pickleball World Cup

- India will participate in the Pickleball World Cup 2025 for the first time.

7. Important Day

9.1 World Coconut Day

- Observed annually on 2 September to celebrate the coconut's cultural, nutritional, and economic importance.
- Theme 2025: "Uncovering Coconut's Power, Inspiring Global Action."

PRAYAAS