



VAJIRAM & RAVI
Institute for IAS Examination

The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

1st October 2026



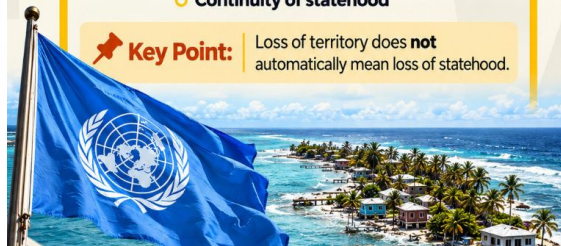
CONTEXT: On 24 September 2026, the UN General Assembly adopted its first political declaration specifically addressing sea-level rise.

WHY IN NEWS?

UN Declaration on Sea-Level Rise

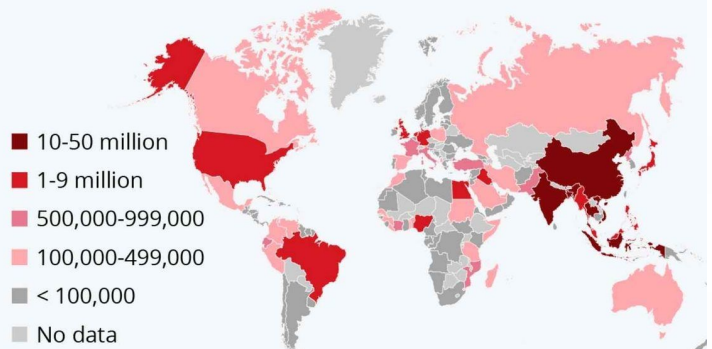
- UN General Assembly adopted the first UN Declaration on Sea Level Rise.
- Recognises rising sea levels as an existential threat.
- Addresses risks faced by low-lying island nations.
- Focuses on:
 - Loss of territory
 - Habitability
 - Maritime rights
 - Continuity of statehood

Key Point: Loss of territory does not automatically mean loss of statehood.



Where Most People Are Affected by Rising Sea Levels

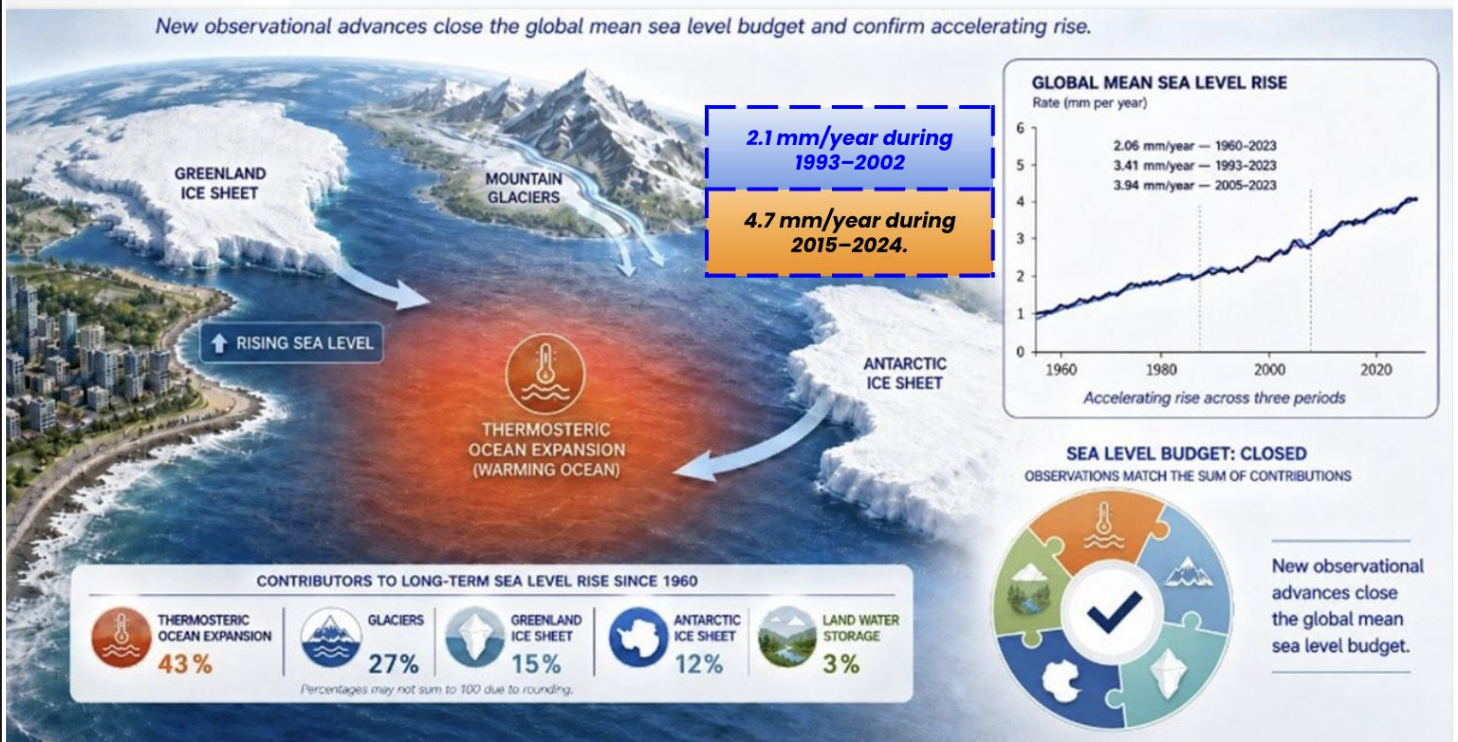
Number of people per country living on land expected to be under sea level by 2100*



* assuming a rise in sea levels of 50-70 cm (2° C temperature increase/not taking into account ice sheet instability)
Source: Scott A. Kulp & Benjamin H. Strauss: New elevation data triple estimates of global vulnerability to sea-level rise and coastal flooding, Nature Communication

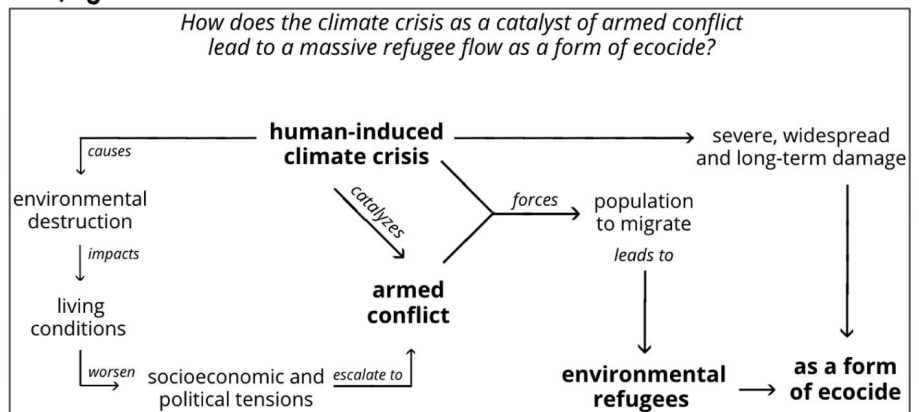
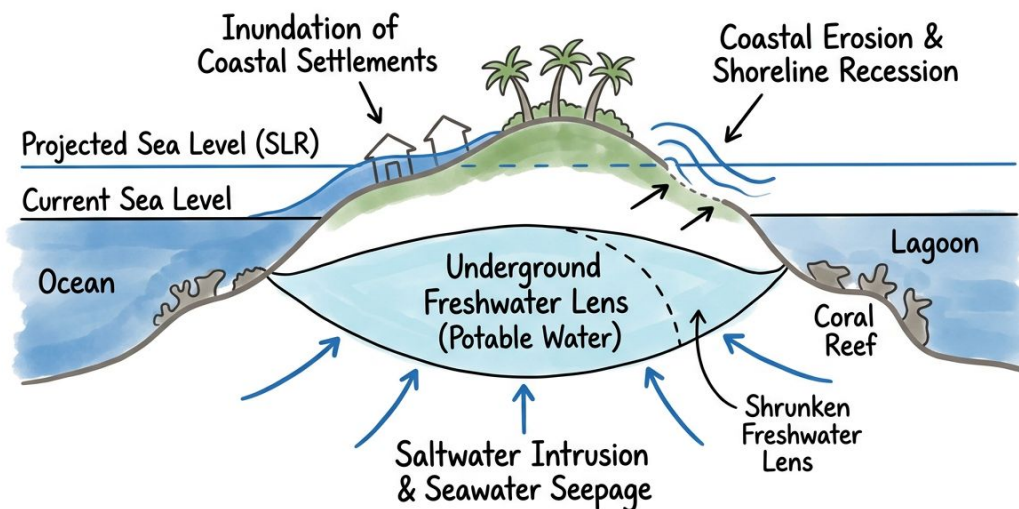
Why is sea level rising?

New observational advances close the global mean sea level budget and confirm accelerating rise.



CONTEXT: On 24 September 2026, the UN General Assembly adopted its first political declaration specifically addressing sea-level rise.

Does a country need land to remain a country?



Elements of statehood

Montevideo Convention on Rights and Duties of States (1933)

- Permanent population
- Defined territory
- Government
- Capacity to enter into relations with other States

UN passes first declaration on sea level rise, protecting island nations' sovereignty

The world, including the U.S., agreed that rising seas will not change national borders even as small islands disappear.

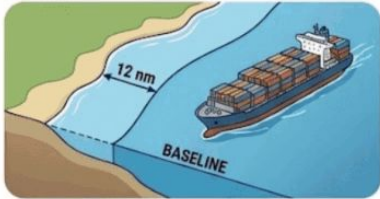


CONTEXT: On 24 September 2026, the UN General Assembly adopted its first political declaration specifically addressing sea-level rise.

What happens to maritime boundaries?

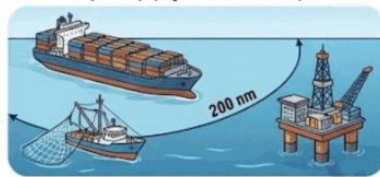
WHAT IS UNCLOS?

1. TERRITORIAL SEA (up to 12 nm)



A maritime zone extending up to 12 nautical miles from the baseline, over which the coastal state has full sovereignty, subject to "innocent passage."

2. EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE (EEZ) (up to 200 nm)



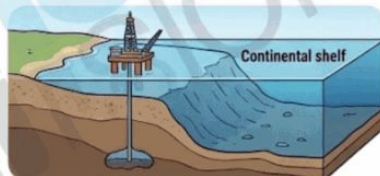
A zone extending up to 200 nautical miles where the coastal state has sovereign rights for exploring, exploiting, conserving, and managing natural resources (e.g., fishing, oil).

3. HIGH SEAS FREEDOMS



Waters beyond national jurisdiction, where all states enjoy freedoms of navigation, overflight, fishing, scientific research, and laying cables/pipelines.

4. CONTINENTAL SHELF



The seabed and subsoil of the underwater landmass extending from the coast. Coastal states have exclusive rights to explore and exploit non-living resources (like oil and minerals).

5. MARINE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



A global obligation for all states to prevent, reduce, and control marine pollution from all sources, including vessels, land-based activities, and seabed exploitation.

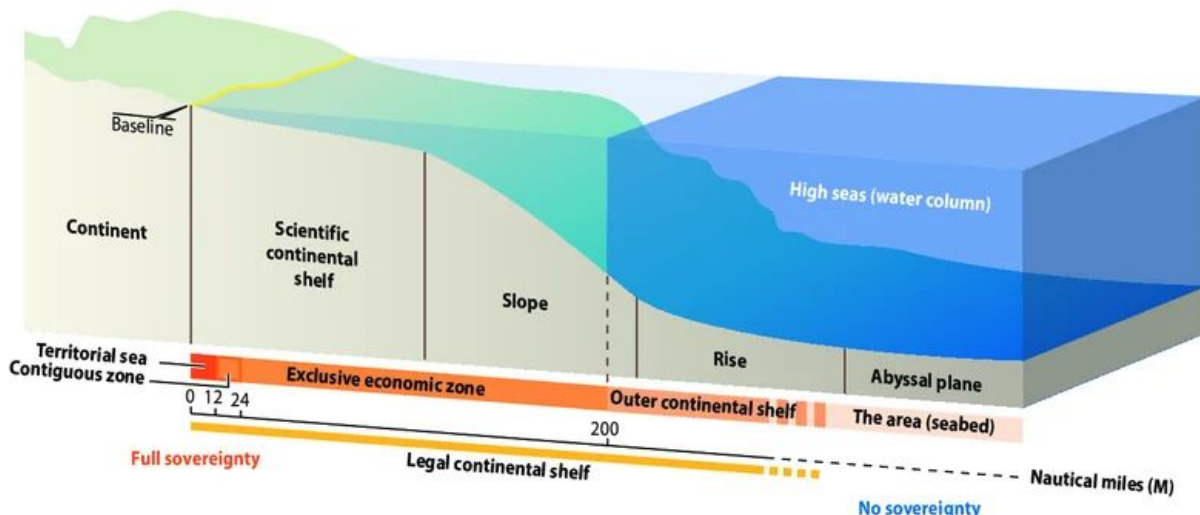
6. DISPUTE SETTLEMENT MECHANISMS



Comprehensive and binding procedures for resolving maritime disputes, including access to specialized bodies like the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS).

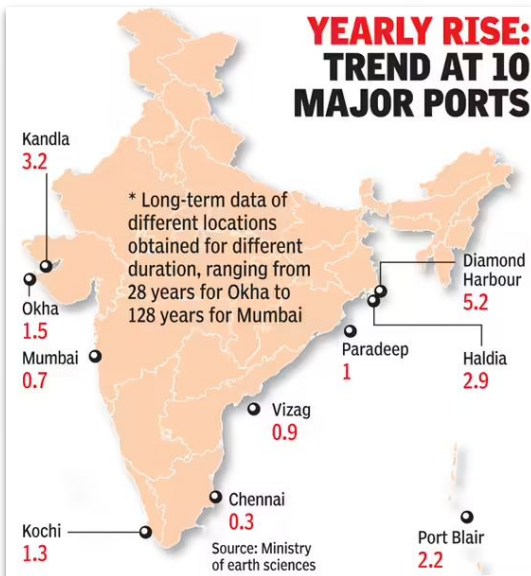
POSITIVE expectations

- **International Court of Justice's** 2025 climate advisory opinion
- **2026** declaration

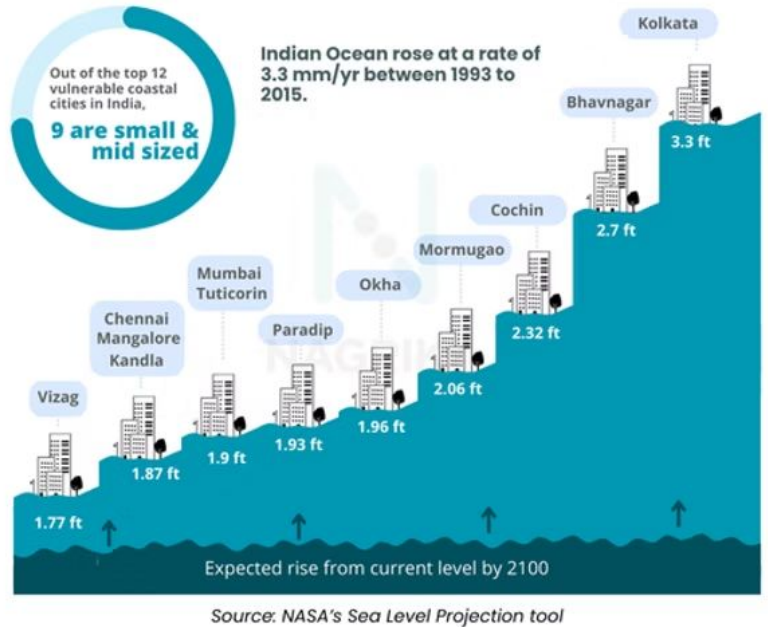


CONTEXT: On 24 September 2026, the UN General Assembly adopted its first political declaration specifically addressing sea-level rise.

Now about India



Small cities vulnerable to sea level rise in India



Sinking Sunderban

A rising sea level is the biggest threat to the world's largest coastal mangrove forests located in India and Bangladesh

- 1 Due to global warming, the polar ice caps are melting faster
- 2 As these huge chunks of ice melt into the sea, they increase the sea level
- 3 Due to the sea level rise, low-land areas are at greater risk of losing more ground to the ocean

IMPACT OF SEA LEVEL RISE



The Sunderban forests (10,000 sq km) is the largest coastal mangrove stretch. It is also the home to poorest of populations in the world. Some 45 lakh people live on the Indian side alone

Due to sea level rise, land equivalent to the size of Kolkata city (170 sq km) has been lost in the Sunderban region in nearly four decades up to 2010



In 1995, Bangladesh's Bholia Island, a part of Sunderban, was half-submerged by rising sea-levels, leaving 5 lakh people homeless



Nearly 15 lakh people have to be permanently relocated outside the Sunderban in India due to rising sea levels

COASTAL EROSION

Latest projections suggest seas could rise on average up to about 1 m this century. This would be enough to drown the Sunderban, where the highest point is around 3 m and the mean elevation is less than 1 m above sea level

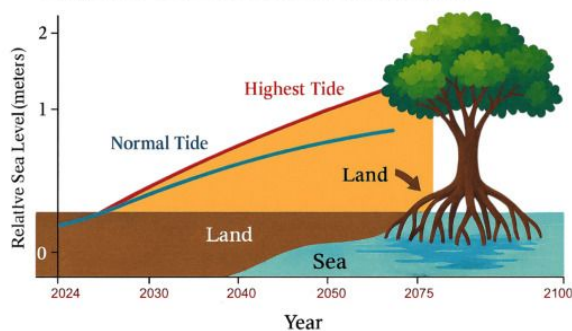


Of the nearly 200 islands in this region, more than 100 face threat of sinking into the Bay of Bengal sea. This means more than half of Sunderbans faces risk from rising sea levels

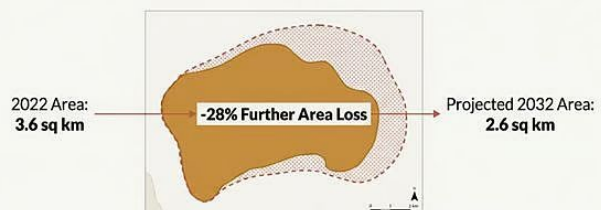
Sources: The Indian Sunderban Mangrove Forests: History, Utilization, Conservation Strategies and Local Perception (2016), World Wildlife (www) India

Now about India: Sunderbans case study

Projected Sea Level Rise in Sunderbans



A Preview of the Future: Ghoramara in 2032

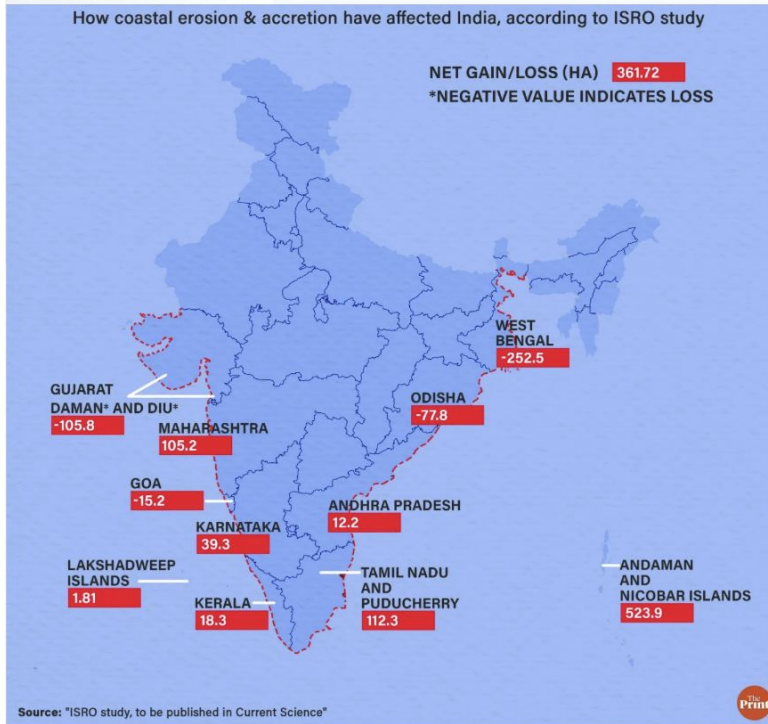


This ten-year horizon is a governable timeframe. Authorities know where erosion will intensify. The risk is not abstract; the question is whether this data is being integrated into planning.



CONTEXT: On 24 September 2026, the UN General Assembly adopted its first political declaration specifically addressing sea-level rise.

Now about India: Coastal Erosion



Coastal erosion is the **loss or landward retreat of shoreline material** due to processes such as:

Waves + currents + storms + sediment imbalance + sea-level rise

MEASURES PROPOSED TO MITIGATE EROSION

Structural mitigation

- Project estimated to cost ₹160 crore

- Sea walls proposed in Bheemili fishermen boat landing area, Mangamaripeta, Peda Jalaripeta, and Jalari Yendada to Vasavanipalem and Shiva Ganesh Nagar

- Retention walls may be constructed in Bheemili beach road, Thota Veedhi, and RK beach road (submarine museum area)

- Groynes at Gokul Park
- Beach nourishment at Rushikonda
- Dune stabilisation at Chepala Uppada
- Groin fields at all hotspots where high or medium erosion is reported

Non-structural mitigation

₹40 crore to be spent on the project

- Ecosystem restoration will be done through vegetation management, capacity building and training, strengthening early warning mechanisms, etc.

- These will be implemented from Sagar Nagar to Thimmapuram and Chepala Uppada to Bheemili



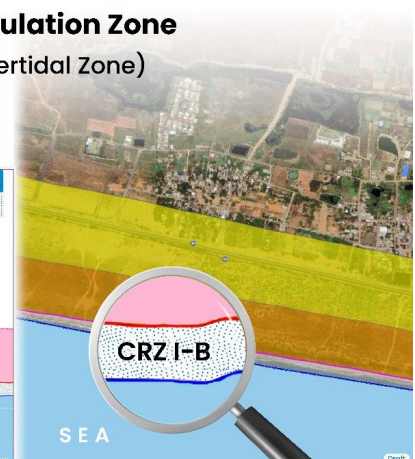
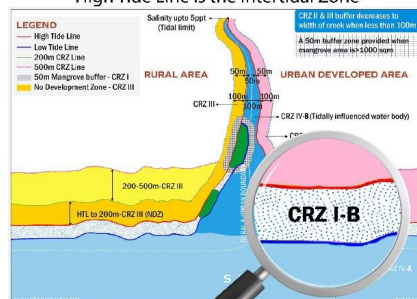
More sinister present issues

- Coastal Regulation Zone Notification, 2019
- Poor drainage + storm surge
- Greater flood risk
- Coastal economies
- Saltwater intrusion
- NO displacement framework

Coastal Regulation Zone

CRZ I-B (Intertidal Zone)

"The area between Low Tide Line and High Tide Line is the Intertidal Zone"

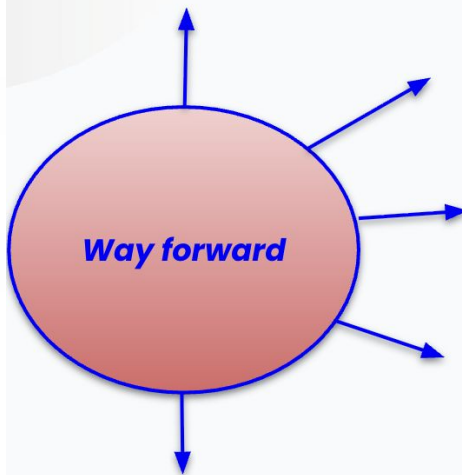


Rising Sea Levels & India's coastline

CONTEXT: On 24 September 2026, the UN General Assembly adopted its first political declaration specifically addressing sea-level rise.

Fiji offers a useful policy idea

Fiji's Climate Change Act, 2021:
Community + Land + Compensation

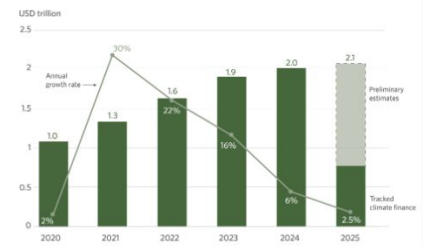


Climate finance
\$310 billion per year by 2035

CZMPs + Disaster management systems

Protect natural coastal buffers:
Mangroves + dunes + wetlands + reefs

R&D + Diplomacy + Human Rights



World Refugee Day 2026
75 Years of the 1951 Refugee Convention

"Becoming a refugee is never a choice. But how we respond is."
- UN Secretary-General António Guterres

Mains Practice Question

Sea-level rise is creating novel questions concerning statehood, sovereignty and maritime zones. Discuss the emerging response of international law.

(15 marks, 250 words)



How to finance rural prosperity?

CONTEXT: From financing the farm to financing everything the farm becomes

India's 1st agri transformation solved a problem

Farm gate to Retail

 **Mains POINTER —**
Agricultural Value Chain

Green Revolution technology

The missing piece is
what happens after
harvest

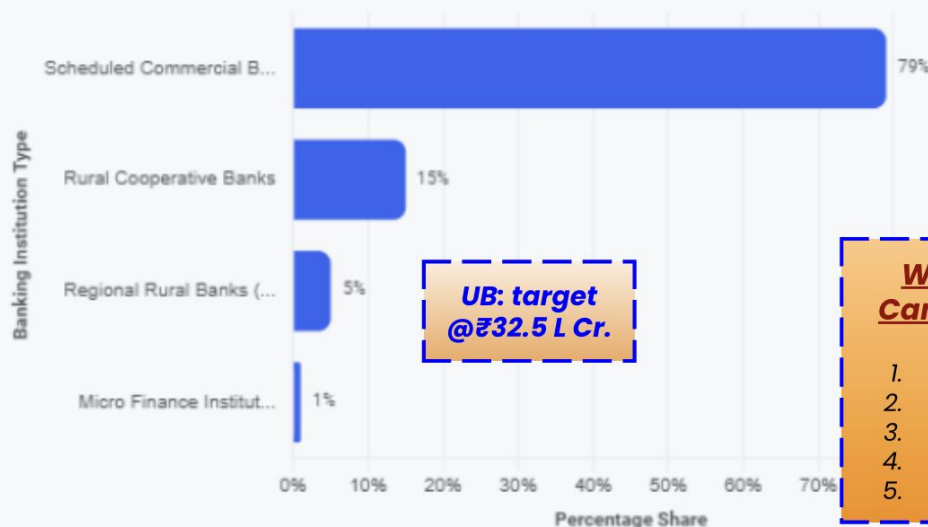
Things that followed

1. Irrigation
2. Fertilisers
3. Institutional credit
4. MSP-related support
5. Agri R&D



Issues of Agri-Finance Data in India

Institutional Share of Agricultural Credit Delivery in India



Informal Sector 30% HH

South 48% agri-credit

60% short-term

Why "More Finance" Alone Cannot Fix Indian Agriculture

1. Cashflow; Diff farm activities
2. Seasonality Mismatch
3. Fragmentation of Land
4. Climate Vulnerability
5. Political Loan Waivers



CONTEXT: From financing the farm to financing everything the farm becomes

What is value-chain financing?



The bank can assess the reliability of the **entire commercial chain**.

Negotiable Warehouse Receipt, WDRA

Receivables Finance

Government-backed credit guarantee

Some Agri-Finance SCHEMES in India

NBM

₹1,290 Cr

Promotes bamboo cultivation
Support for bamboo processing industries

NBHM

₹500 Cr

Supports beekeeping farmers
Honey production & export promotion

PMMSY

₹20,050 Cr

Development of fisheries sector
Infrastructure for fish farming

RGM

₹2,400 Cr

Development of indigenous cattle breeds
Increase milk production

SMAM

₹3,000+ Cr

Supports farm mechanization
Improves farm productivity and efficiency

NMNF

₹1,584 Cr

Promotes chemical-free farming
Improves soil health

ISAM

₹4,548 Cr

Development of agricultural markets
Warehouse & storage support

PKVY

₹1,500+ Cr

Promotes organic farming
Supports farmer clusters

Kisan Credit Card + MISS

Agriculture Infrastructure Fund

PM Kisan SAMPADA

PM Kisan Samman Nidhi

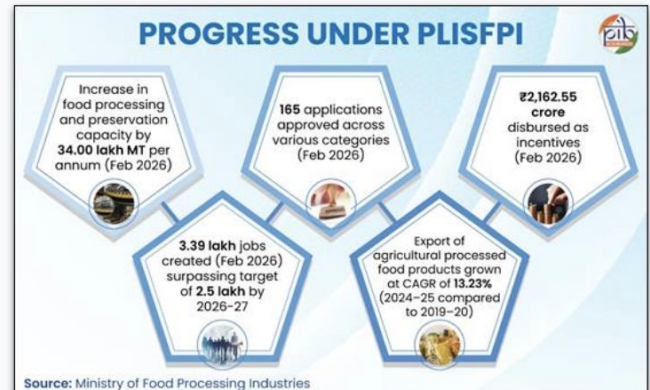
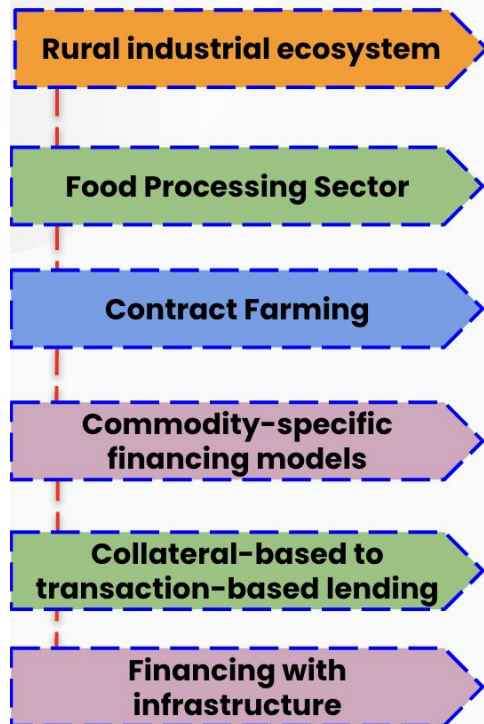
Priority Sector Lending, eNAM



How to finance rural prosperity?

CONTEXT: From financing the farm to financing everything the farm becomes

So, finally what matters for rural prosperity?



Mains Practice Question

Agricultural value-chain financing can become a bridge between farm prosperity and rural industrialisation. Examine the opportunities and risks.

(15 marks, 250 words)



Newspaper : The Hindu Page Number : 13

What is Economic nationalism?

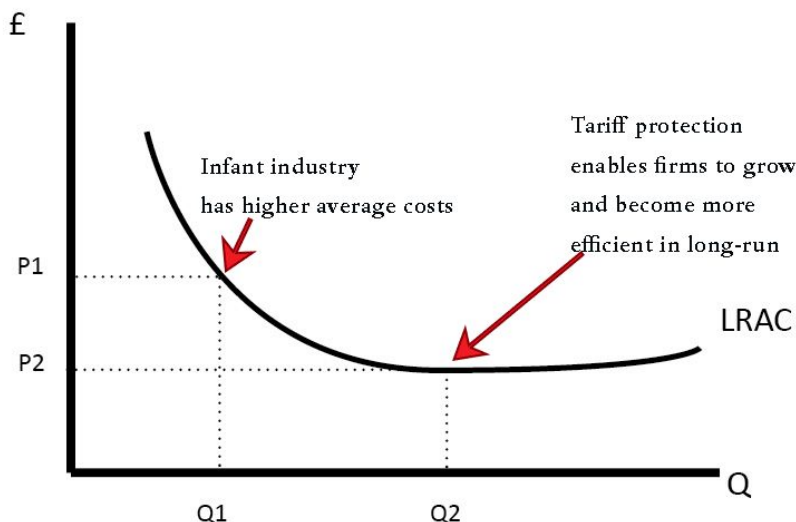


Economic ideology which **favours domestic control** of the **economy**, **labour** and **capital formation**.

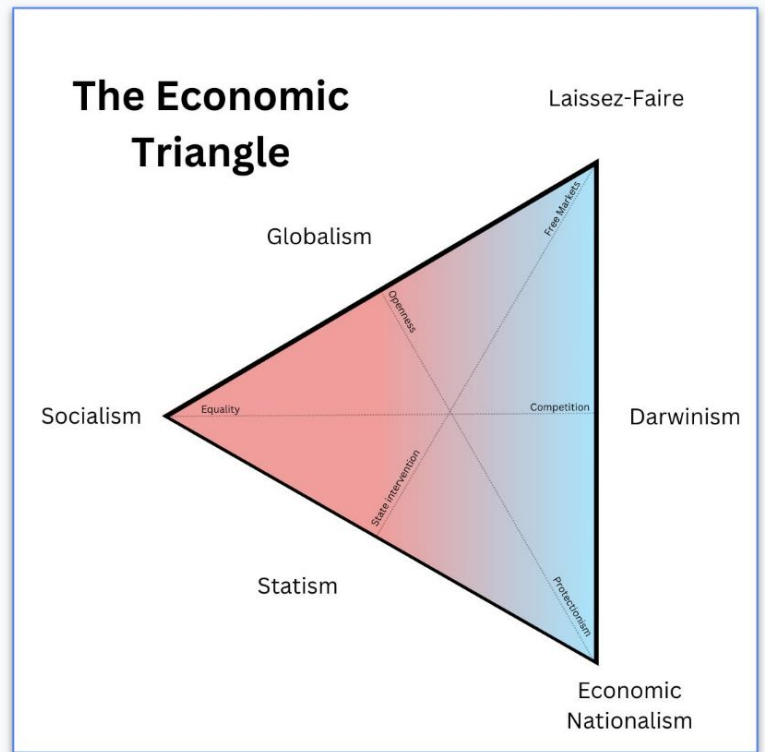
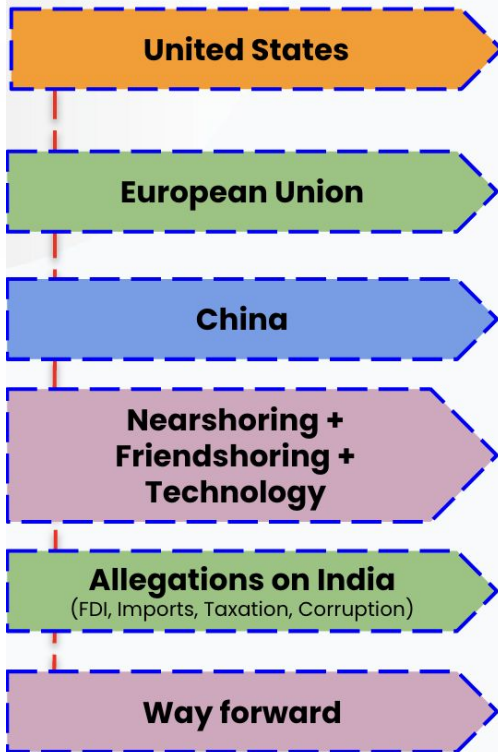
- NATION's **prosperity + civilisation + power = indust development**
- **Basic aim = tariff barriers to protect infant industries**

Economic Nationalism in India

- **1800s:** RR Roy, BP Tarkhadkar, GV Kunte, RVishwanath
- **1900s:** DB Naoroji, MG Ranade, RC Dutt, GK Gokhale, GS Iyer, BG Tilak
- **Atmanirbhar Bharat**



Newspaper : The Hindu **Page Number :** 13

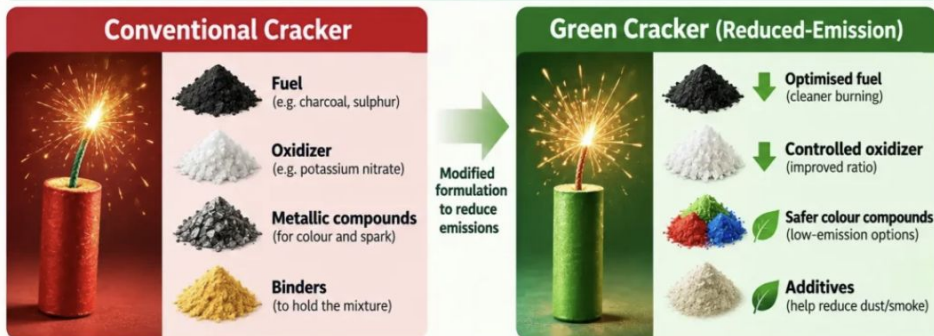


SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Air Pollution

Newspaper : The Hindu **Page Number : 12 | Newspaper :** Indian Express **Page Number : 3**

What are Green Crackers?

What is Different Inside a Green Cracker?



Council of Scientific and Industrial Research–National Environmental Engineering Research Institute

30% less PM + SO₂ + NO₂

100–130 decibels

Banned Substances:
barium nitrate, lithium, arsenic, and lead

Approvals: PESO
CSIR–NEERI Green QR Code

Approved Green Cracker Technologies (CSIR-NEERI)



SWAS
Reduces particulate emissions (smoke)



STAR
Lower gaseous emissions



SAFAL
Safer and cleaner formulation with reduced emissions

Cleaner oxidizers + Less sulfur & aluminum + shell sizes + dust additives

Supreme Court and Firecrackers Regulation

Long-standing legal battle

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 2017 | Sale suspended in NCR
Supreme Court suspends firecracker sales in Delhi-NCR following severe post-Diwali air-quality readings.
Arjun Gopal v. Union of India |
| 2018 | Barium-cracker ban
SC bans firecrackers containing barium salts nationwide; orders development of less-polluting alternatives. |
| 2019 | CSIR-NEERI rolls out green crackers
SWAS, STAR, and SAFAL formulations developed; PESO certification framework in place; Sivakasi manufacturers begin transition. |
| 2021 | Restricted hours framework
SC reaffirms two-hour bursting window for Diwali; enforcement responsibility placed on state authorities. |
| 2025 | Green-cracker sale allowed in Delhi-NCR
Supreme Court relaxes blanket ban; certified green crackers permitted for Deepavali within specified hours. |

Over 5 Lakh Employed
Directly Or Indirectly

80 Lakh Engaged In Selling & Allied Activities During Diwali

Loss Of ₹ 1,000 Cr Per Year
Due To Sale Of Chinese Crackers

Sivakasi Supplies 90%
Of Fireworks Made In India



- **Ruled out a blanket nationwide ban**
- **Next-Generation Joined Crackers**
- Status of **Barium Variants**
- Isolation of **Delhi-NCR**

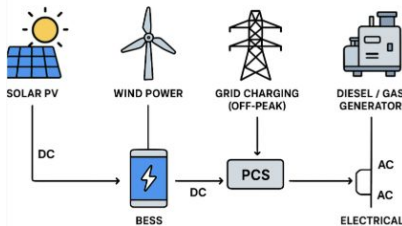
SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Green Infrastructure
Newspaper : The Hindu **Page Number : 13**

Green Energy Corridor Phase-III (GEC-III)

**Renewable
curtailment**

**"Sunny afternoon vs
evening" problem**

**CHARGING SOURCES FOR
BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEMS**



**POWERING INDIA'S
GREEN FUTURE**

**CABINET APPROVES
LANDMARK GREEN ENERGY
CORRIDOR PHASE-III**

Green Energy Corridor
Phase-III (GEC-III): Expansion
of India's Intra-State Transmission
System (InSTS) integrated with

**50 GWh
BESS**

₹50,000 crore

Ministry of New and Renewable Energy

**Total
Investment:
₹1,86,405
CRORE**
(Includes Central Financial
Assistance of ₹54,082 Crore).

**Evacuation
Scale:
Enables transmission
of up to
135 GW
of clean energy.**

Benefits



Paves way for 900 GW clean energy: Crucial
stepping stone toward achieving **900 GW**
installed non-fossil capacity by 2035.



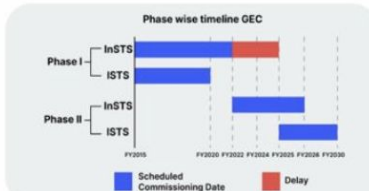
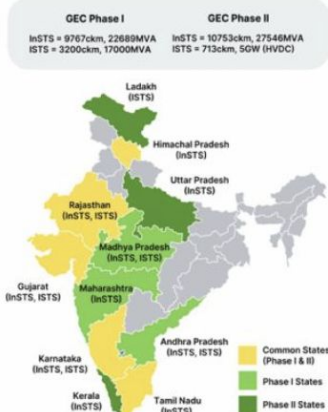
Keeps power affordable: ₹54,082 Crore
Central subsidy directly offsets intra-state
transmission charges, lowering power costs
for end consumers.

**Intra-State Transmission System (₹1.3Lcr)
Inter-State Transmission System**

The scale of India's transmission problem

Green Energy Corridor progress

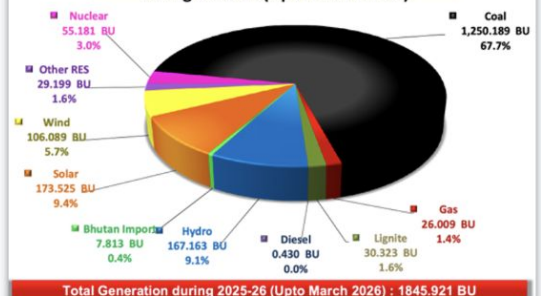
Overview of the GEC initiative (Phases I & II) and
associated RE capacity



Source: Ministry of Power, India Transmission Portal, MNRE, JMK Research

**~ 9% (21 GW) temporary grid
connections**

**Generation Performance (Fuelwise)
During 2025-26 (Upto March 2026)**



Total Generation during 2025-26 (Upto March 2026) : 1845.921 BU

**Generation-transmission
mismatch: restrictions on
evacuation, RoW, 6,900 GWh (FY26)**

500 GW capacity by 2030

SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Green Infrastructure
Newspaper : The Hindu **Page Number : 13**

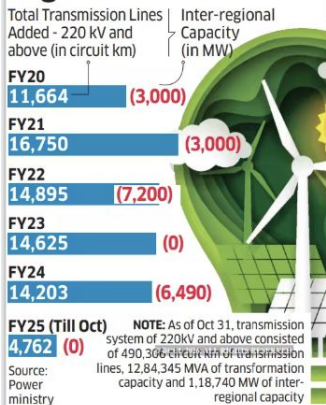
How will GEC-III projects be implemented?

2 broad implementation models

A. Greenfield projects → TBCB
BOOM model by Transmission Service Providers

B. Brownfield/upgradation → CPB

Logistics of Power



PANCHAMRIT INDIA'S FIVE CLIMATE GOALS



50%

of energy requirements from renewable energy by 2030



500 GW

Non-fossil energy capacity by 2030



45%

Reduction of the carbon intensity of the economy from 2005 levels by 2030



1

billion tonnes reduction of projected carbon emissions from now to 2030



NET-ZERO

by 2070



SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989

SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Polity

Newspaper : Indian Express **Page Number : 12**

Decoding the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989

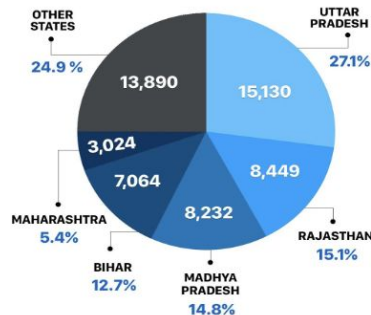
Core Objective & Scope

Prevent commission of offences of atrocities against SCs and STs.

- **Application:** only offences committed by persons who are other than SCs/STs
- **Implementation:** State + UTs

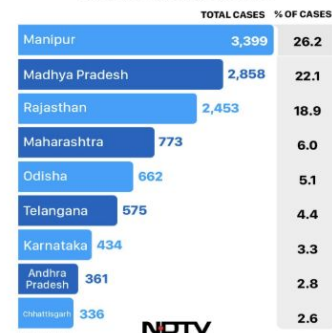
UP TOPS CRIMES AGAINST DALITS

Just six states account for almost 75% crimes against scheduled castes



MANIPUR HAS HIGHEST CRIMES AGAINST STS

The state accounts for over 26% cases, mostly due to rise in ethnic violence



The "Atrocity" Spectrum



Dignity Crimes: Forcing a victim to eat obnoxious substances (human waste), tonsuring (shaving head), garlanding with footwear, or parading them naked.



Economic & Social Strangulation: Wrongful occupation of land, cutting off water/irrigation rights, or enforcing a "social boycott"



Political Violence: Forcing a member of the SC/ST community to vote for a specific candidate or preventing them from filing a nomination.

Stringent Investigation Protocols

Parameter	Mandatory Legal Requirement
Nature of Offence	Cognizable (Arrest without a warrant).
Officer Rank	Cannot by any officer below rank of DSP
Time Limit	Within 60 days .
Reporting	Director of the State Police.

Special Courts

- **Establishment:** State Govt + CJ of HC
- **Legal Representation:** Public Prosecutor or appoint an advocate with at least **seven years of practice**
- **Standard Punishments:** 6 m – 5y + fine.
- **Aggravated Punishments:** In severe cases (1 – life / death sentence)
- **Accountability of Public Servants (Section 4):** If public servant (who from SC/ST) deliberately neglects duties : liable for punishment with imprisonment up to **6 m**.



SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Polity

Newspaper : Indian Express **Page Number : 12**

Calcutta High Court case

What the Calcutta HC held

The petitioner, a member of a Scheduled Caste, complained that two men from general caste communities had used casteist expletives against him on Facebook. Police later filed a closure report, saying Facebook had not provided user details. The complainant filed a petition against that closure in a special court at Alipore, which rejected it. The HC set aside the order, describing the special court's reasons as "perverse" and pulling up the police.

On the question of public view, the court held that it "transcends physical space into the digital domain".

Physical world

Digital world

Public road

Public social-media post

Crowd in marketplace

People viewing a post

Public meeting

Online group/forum

Public announcement

Publicly accessible content

Hitesh Verma v. State of Uttarakhand (2020)

Private occurrence

"Public view": expression refers to circumstances in which members of the public could witness or hear the alleged utterance.

Sooraj V. Sukumar v. State of Kerala (2022)

- **"Ongoing statute" = dynamic**

TO STRENGTHEN ENFORCEMENT MACHINERY UNDER SC/ST ACT

Govt Proposes 40% Hike in SC/ST Atrocity Compensation

Compensation, for now, varies between ₹85,000 and ₹8.25L, depending on nature & severity of offence



Windfall Taxes & Bond Yields

SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Economy
Newspaper : Indian Express **Page Number : 12**

1 WHAT IS A WINDFALL TAX?

- ★ A special tax imposed when companies earn **unusually high profits** because of sudden market shocks.
- ★ India used it mainly in the **oil sector** when global crude prices rose sharply.
- ★ It is a **temporary policy tool**, not a permanent tax structure.



2 WHY INDIA USED IT

- ★ Global oil shocks can create **windfall gains** for producers and refiners.



- ★ The government used the levy to capture some of that **extra profit**.



- ★ It also helped support **domestic fuel supply** and **broader price stability**.



3 TIMELINE OF MAJOR CHANGES



July 2022

Windfall tax introduced on domestic crude and some fuel exports.



2 Dec 2024

Windfall tax on crude products and fuel exports **scrapped**.



27 Mar 2026

Export levies **reintroduced** on petrol, diesel, and ATF to ensure domestic availability during the West Asia crisis.



11 Apr 2026

Duties were **raised further**.



1 May 2026

Revised again to **current rates**.

Mechanism in India

- Special Additional Excise Duty
- Target: export of refined fuels
- Govt reviews and adjusts every fortnight



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Economy
Newspaper : Indian Express **Page Number : 12**

What are bond yields?

... BBC

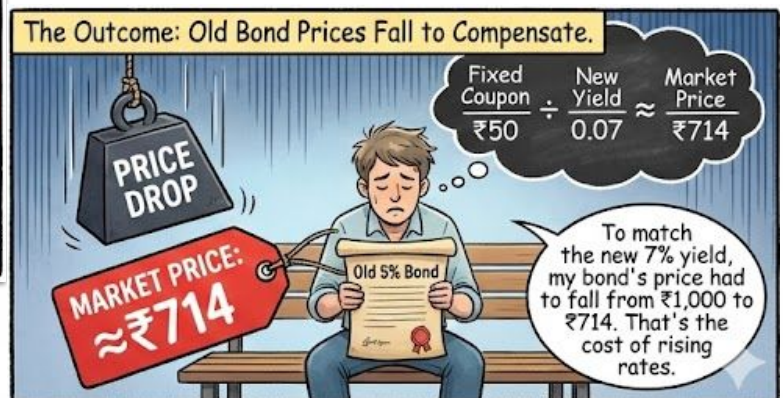
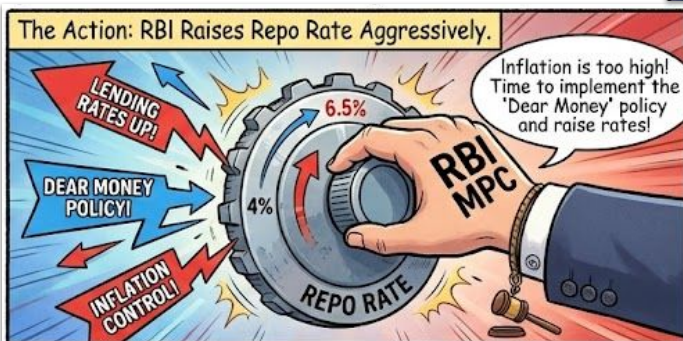
[RBI repo rate: India central bank hikes interest rates after two years](#)

The Reserve Bank of India's surprise move is an attempt to stem rising inflation.

4 May 2022



Two years after world's biggest lockdown, India surges back to normal life | Reuters



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Economy
Newspaper : Indian Express **Page Number :** 12

So why are US Treasury yields rising?

Hindustan Times

US debt hits \$40 trillion: Why are soaring Treasury yields making it worse? | Hindustan Times

US debt has reached \$40 trillion, while Treasury yields are rising sharply, adding to concerns about the country's debt outlook.



① **Inflation**

② **Huge borrowing demand**

US yields matter to India

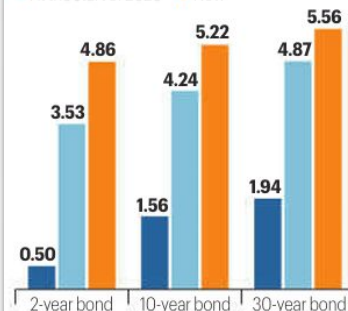
What about Indian government borrowing?

World's "benchmark"

• **Yields rising across durations**

US treasury bond yields (in %)

● Five years ago (October 2021)
● At the start of 2026 ● Now



UPSC PYQ (P) 2021

Indian Government Bond Yields are influenced by which of the following?

1. Actions of the United States Federal Reserve
2. Actions of the Reserve Bank of India
3. Inflation and short-term interest rates

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 only
- C. 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

UPSC PYQ (P) 2013

In the context of Indian economy, 'Open Market Operations' refers to

- (a) borrowing by scheduled banks from the RBI
- (b) lending by commercial banks to industry and trade
- (c) purchase and sale of government securities by the RBI
- (d) None of the above



Q1. Consider the following statements:

Statement I: According to the Montevideo Convention (1933), a defined territory is one of the qualifications of a State.

Statement II: As per the UN General Assembly's declaration on sea-level rise, a State automatically loses its statehood when its territory is submerged.

Which one of the following options is correct?

- a) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct, and Statement II explains Statement I
- b) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct, but Statement II does not explain Statement I
- c) Statement I is correct, but Statement II is incorrect
- d) Statement I is incorrect, but Statement II is correct

Answer: c

Q2. With reference to the Sundarbans, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is the world's largest coastal mangrove forest, shared by India and Bangladesh.
- 2. Ghoramara island in the Indian Sundarbans has lost nearly half of its area over the last five decades due to erosion.
- 3. Its mean elevation is more than 3 metres above sea level, which makes it safe from the projected one-metre sea-level rise this century.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: a

Q3. With reference to firecrackers in India, consider the following statements:

- 1. Green crackers were developed by CSIR-NEERI, with formulations such as SWAS, STAR and SAFAL.
- 2. Green crackers show reduced particulate and gaseous emissions (around 30%) compared with conventional crackers.
- 3. The 2018 Supreme Court order in Arjun Gopal v. Union of India banned firecrackers containing barium salts.
- 4. The Supreme Court in 2025 imposed a complete ban on all types of crackers, including green crackers, in Delhi-NCR.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) Only one
- b) Only two
- c) Only three
- d) All four

Answer: c

Q4. With reference to agricultural value-chain financing in India, consider the following statements:

- 1. Negotiable warehouse receipts are regulated by the Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA).
- 2. The Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana is implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- 3. The Agriculture Infrastructure Fund supports post-harvest infrastructure through interest subvention and credit guarantee.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: c

Q5. Consider the following statements:

Statement I: When interest rates rise in the economy, the market price of an existing government bond with a lower fixed coupon tends to fall.

Statement II: Investors prefer newly issued bonds offering higher yields, so existing bonds must sell at a discount to match the new market yield.

Which one of the following inferences is correct?

- a) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct, and Statement-II explains Statement-I
- b) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct, but Statement-II does not explain Statement-I
- c) Statement-I is correct, but Statement-II is incorrect
- d) Statement-I is incorrect, but Statement-II is correct

Answer: a



Daily Quiz





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