



**VAJIRAM & RAVI**  
Institute for IAS Examination

# The Analyst

**CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout**

**16th May 2026**



**CONTEXT:** Rajasthan seeks permanent seat in Bhakra Beas board

## Interstate Water Disputes: Case Study 1

### Mahadayi

- **Origin:** Bhimgad WS
- **Tributaries:** Rogaro, Kushavati, Nanorem, Nanuz, Valvota, Mapusa, Kalasa Nala
- **Basin Area:** 78% in Goa, 18% in Karnataka, and 4% in Maharashtra

### Dispute

- **Karnataka's Project:** Kalasa-Banduri Nala
- **2010:** Mahadayi Water Disputes Tribunal
- **2018 Verdict:**
  - Karnataka: 13.42 tmcft (1.72 from Kalasa, 2.18 from Bhandura)
  - Goa: 24 tmcft (plus 9.395 tmcft for existing use)
  - Maharashtra: 1.33 tmcft



## Interstate Water Disputes: Case Study 2

### Cauvery

- **1892:** Presidency of Madras and Princely state of Mysore
- **1924:** Agreement for 50 years
- **After 1974:** Karnataka diverting water
- **1990:** Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal
- **2007:** Final award
  - water share - different periods of the year
  - Monitoring authority
  - No detailed formula when insufficient rains
- **2013:** Govt notified the order - Tamil Nadu approached SC
- **2018:** SC judgement - Cauvery a national asset.
  - upheld the water-sharing arrangements finalised by the CWDT
  - Cauvery Management Scheme, CWMA

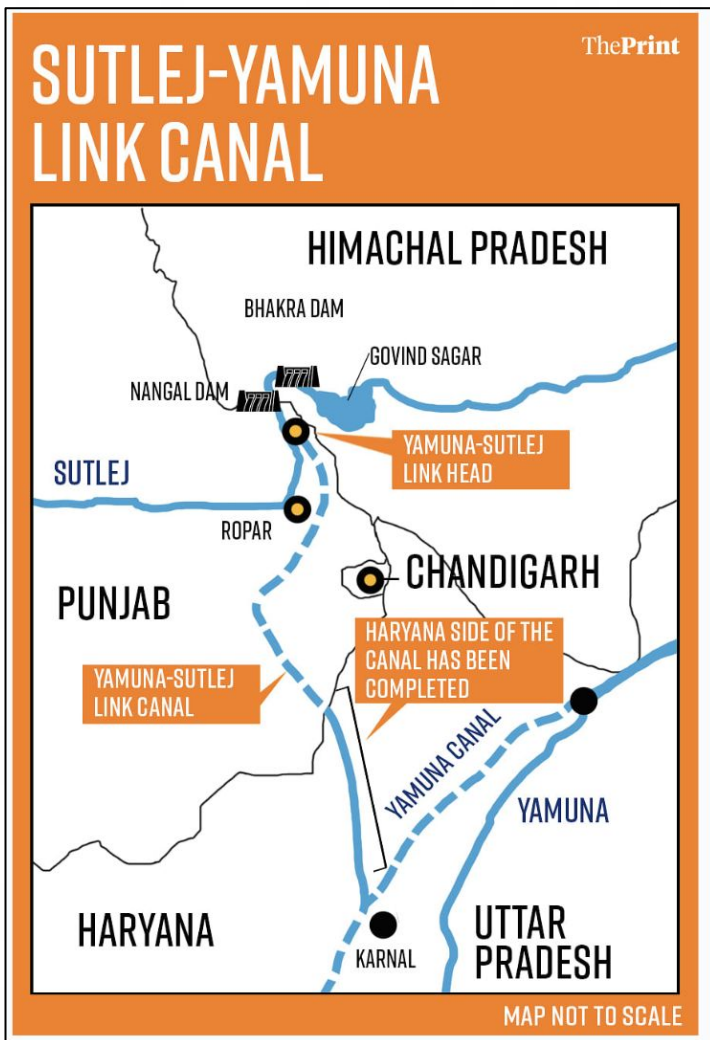


**CONTEXT:** Rajasthan seeks permanent seat in Bhakra Beas board

## Interstate Water Disputes: Case Study 3

### SYL Canal

- **1955:** Ravi and Beas river waters calculated and divided
- **1966:** Punjab Reorganisation Act, Sutlej Yamuna Link Canal planned
- **1980:** Haryana completed, protests by SAD
- **1985:** Insurgency in Punjab, PM accord with SAD - Eradi Tribunal
- Militancy in Punjab
- **2002-04:** Supreme Court direction to Punjab to work on the SYL
- **Punjab Termination of Agreements Act**
- **2016:** SC - PTAA invalid
- **2020:** SC: CMs to negotiate and Centre to mediate



## Interstate Water Disputes

- **Article 262** - bars court's jurisdiction
- **ISWD Act, 1956** - adjudication by tribunals
- **Temporary tribunals** - dissolved after award, force of SC decree, binding on states
- **Governance Challenges**
  - Adversarial litigations
  - No avenues to redress grievances after tribunal dissolved
  - Constitutional crisis - pitching legislature against judiciary
  - Institutional vacuum for implementation
  - Vote bank politics
  - Deficit years allocation
  - Absence of transparent info gathering and sharing

## Solutions

- **Multipronged**
- **ISRWD Amendment Bill 2019**
  - Dispute Resolution Committee - 1 year + 6 M
  - Permanent tribunal - 2+1 years
  - Expert agency for data collection - rain, irrig, SW - at basin level
- Utilising **Interstate Council**
- Not equal but **equitable distribution** - **Helsinki Rules & Campion Rules**
- **State not owner but public trustees**
- **4R**



# Interstate Water Disputes



**CONTEXT:** Rajasthan seeks permanent seat in Bhakra Beas board

## MAINS PRACTISE QUESTION

Discuss the major challenges associated with interstate water disputes in India. What are the constitutional and institutional mechanisms available for their resolution? Suggest measures to ensure cooperative and sustainable water governance.



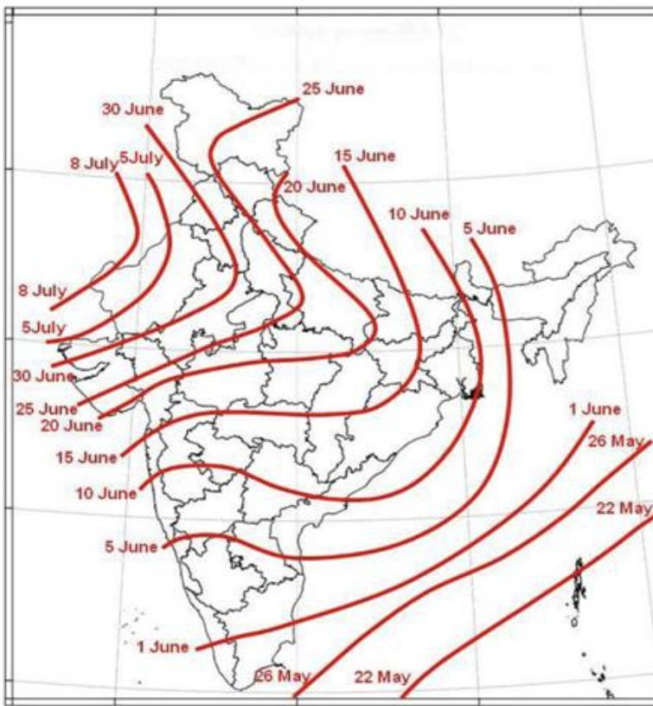
# Monsoon to arrive on May 26: IMD



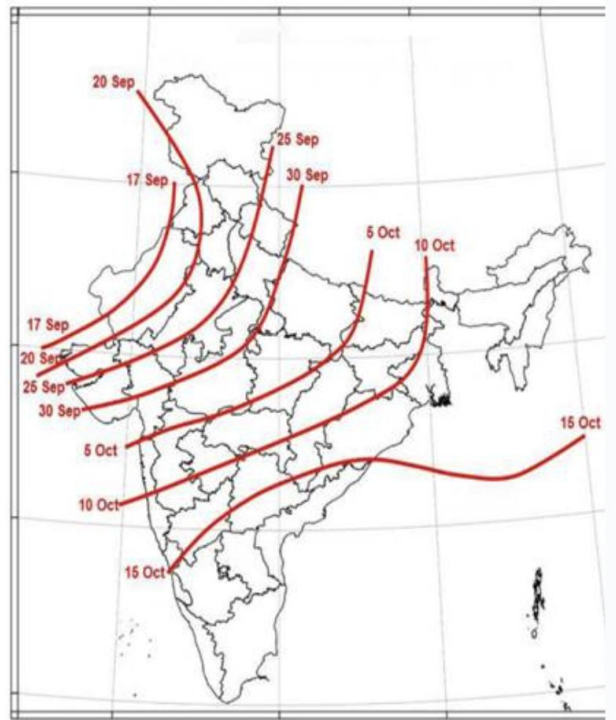
**CONTEXT:** Monsoon to reach Kerala on May 26

## Indian Monsoon

### Normal Dates of Onset of Southwest Monsoon



### Normal Dates of Monsoon Withdrawal



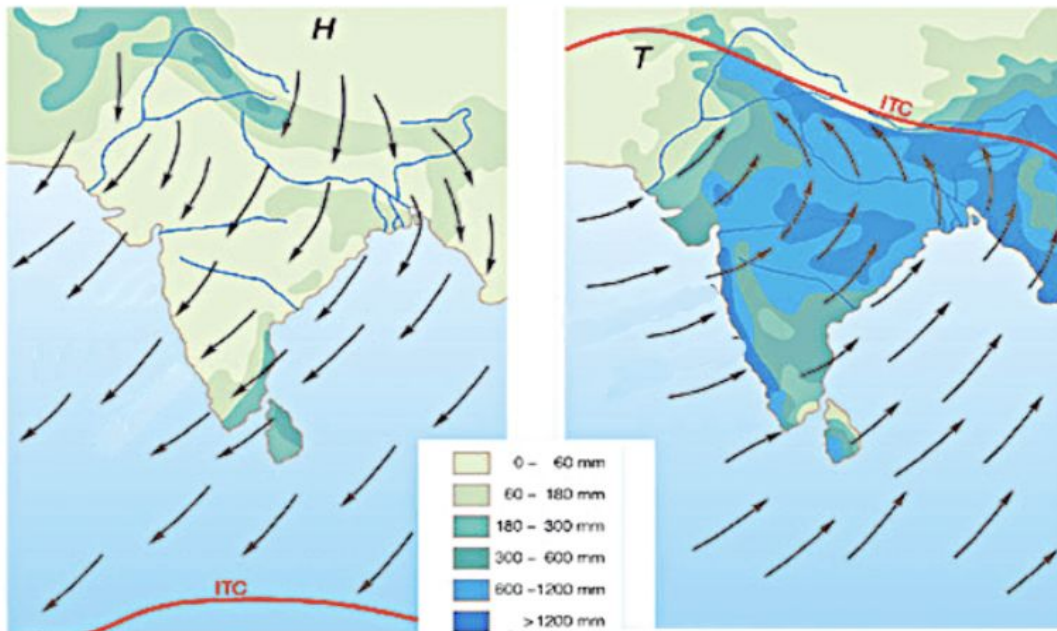
# Monsoon to arrive on May 26: IMD

**CONTEXT:** Monsoon to reach Kerala on May 26

**Factors**

- Differential Heating of Land and Sea
  - Tibetan Plateau Heating

- ITCZ
  - Summer months movement
  - Zone of strong convection
  - Early June
  - October



North-Eastern Monsoon (Wintermonsoon)

Total precipitation Dec. → Febr.

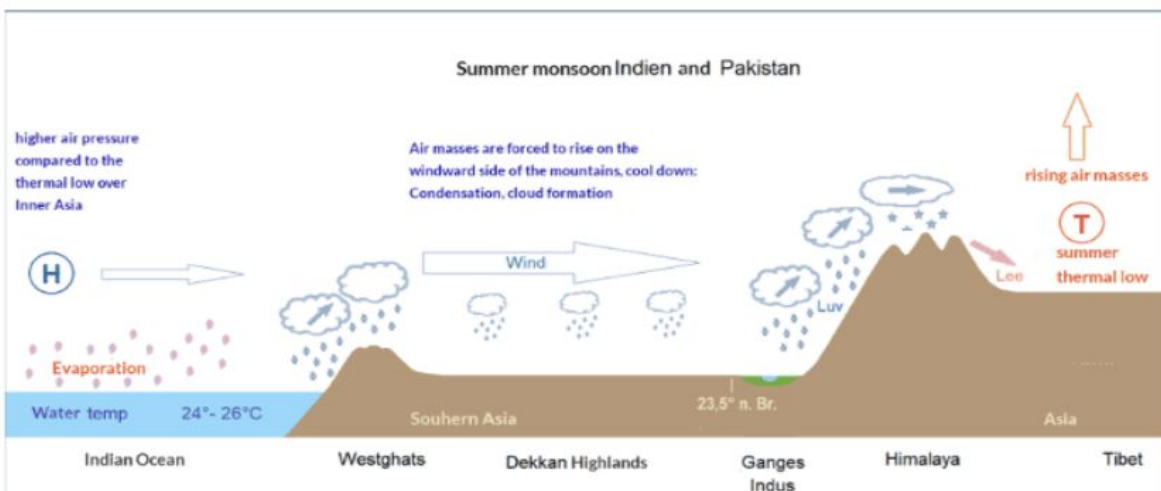
ITC = Intra-Tropical Convergence



South-Western Monsoon (Summermonsoon)

Total precipitation June\_> Sep.

The two monsoon phases in India



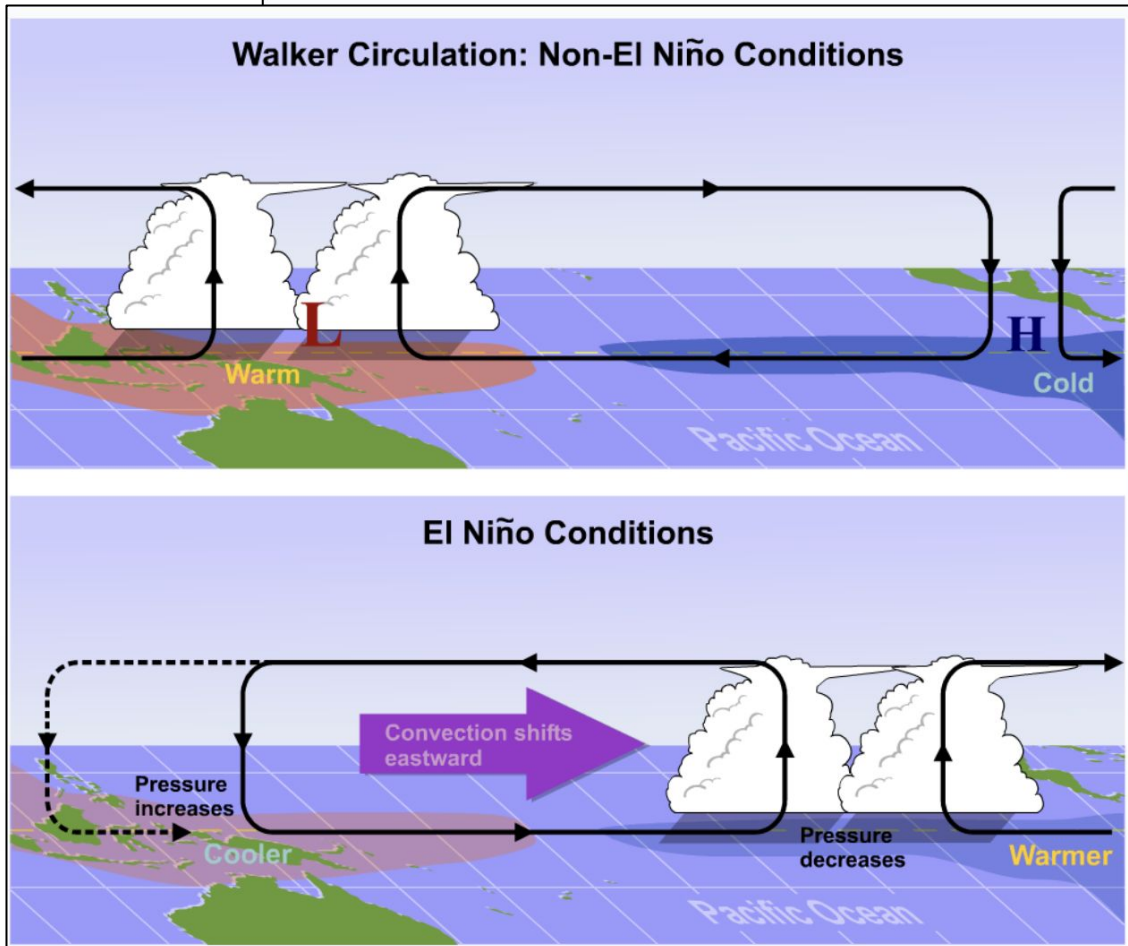
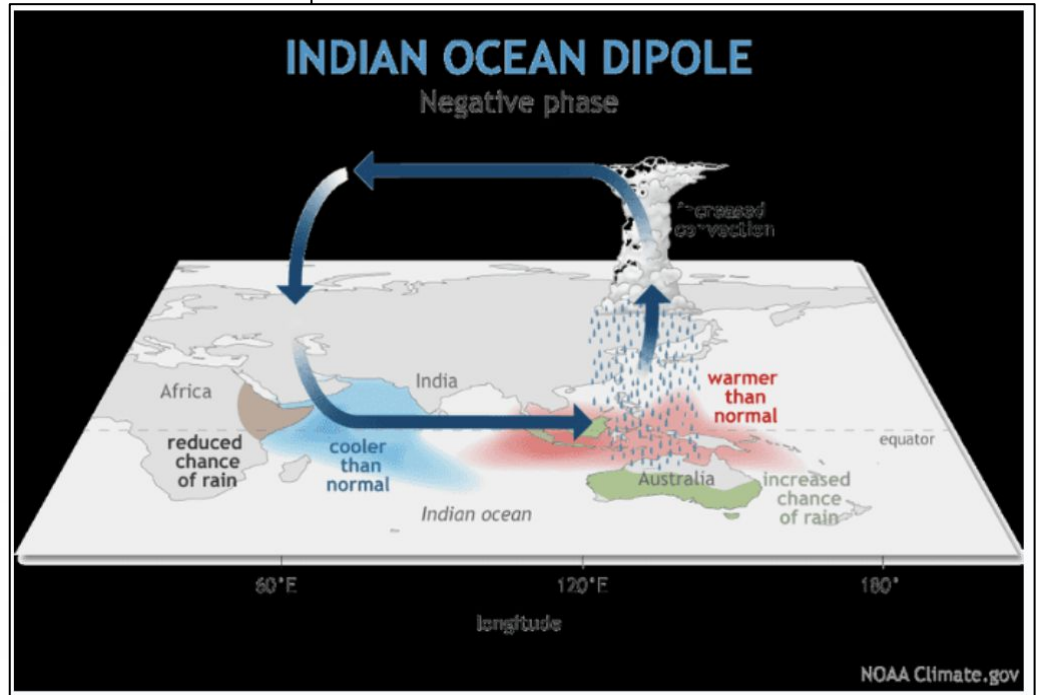
# Monsoon to arrive on May 26: IMD



**CONTEXT:** Monsoon to reach Kerala on May 26

## Factors

- El Nino
  - PO
- Indian Ocean Dipole



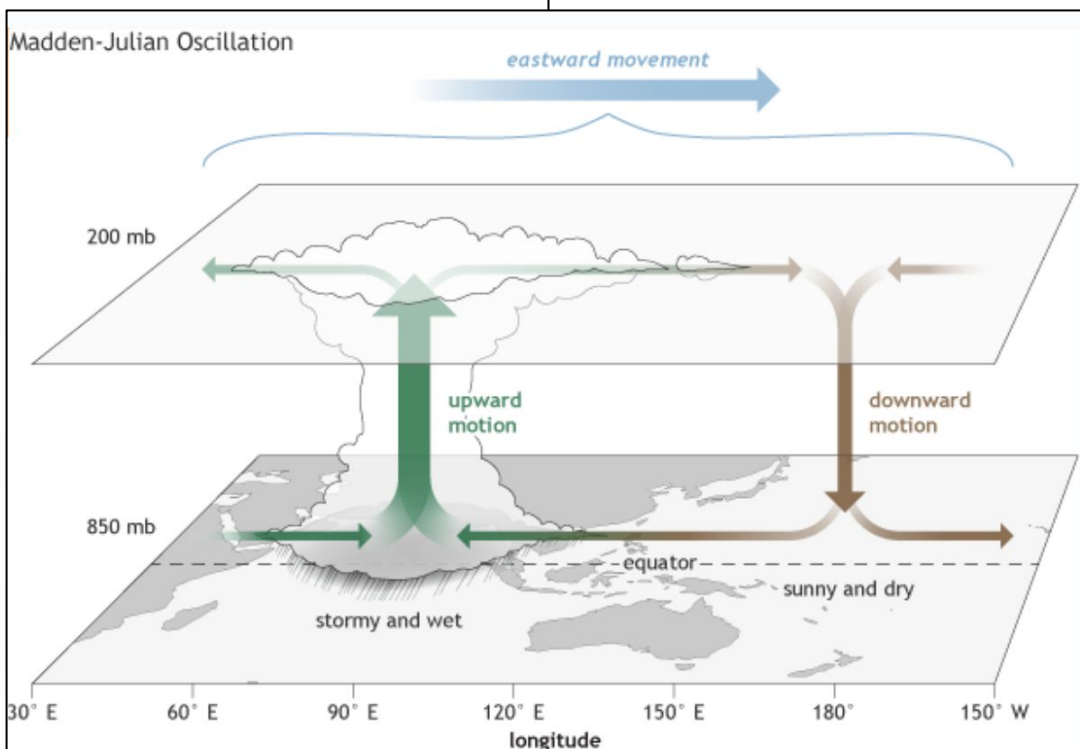
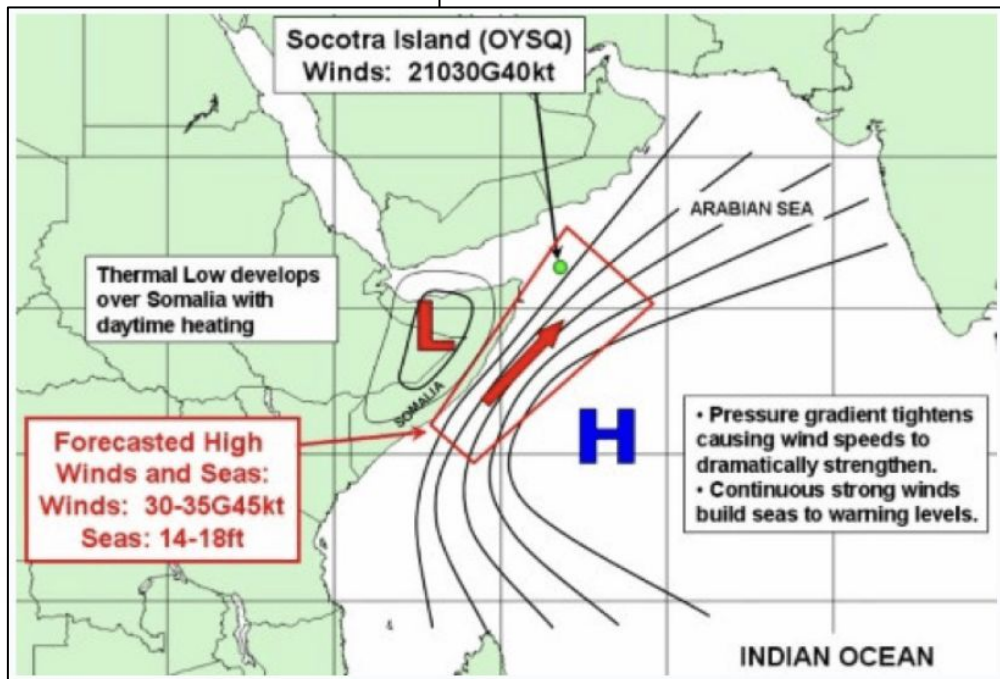
# Monsoon to arrive on May 26: IMD



**CONTEXT:** Monsoon to reach Kerala on May 26

## Factors

- Madden-Julian Oscillation
- BoB/Arabian Sea Surface Temp
- Arctic Amplification
- Subtropical Westerly Jet Stream
- Somali Jet



# Monsoon to arrive on May 26: IMD



**CONTEXT:** Monsoon to reach Kerala on May 26

## CC Impact

- Intensity and Distribution
- Increase in Extreme Weather Events
  - frequency and intensity
- Warming of IO
  - influencing temperature gradient between land and ocean
- Delayed Onset and Extended Withdrawal
  - Crop Cycle

## Role of IMD

- Established in 1875
- under MoES; HQ in Delhi
- Observation stations: India, Antarctica
- 6 Regional Meteorological Centres: Mumbai, Chennai, New Delhi, Calcutta, Nagpur, Guwahati
- Mandate
  - meteorological observations
  - current and forecast meteorological information for weather-sensitive activities like agriculture, shipping, aviation, offshore oil explorations
  - warn against severe weather phenomena: dust storms, snow, cold and heat waves
  - research in meteorology and allied disciplines
- 1 of 6 Regional Specialized Meteorological Centres of WMO

- forecasting, naming, and distributing warnings for tropical cyclones in Northern IOR, including Straits of Malacca, BoB, Arabian Sea, Persian Gulf

## MAINS PRACTISE QUESTION

*Explain the major factors influencing the Indian monsoon system. How is climate change affecting the pattern, intensity, and reliability of the Indian monsoon?*



**SYLLABUS: Prelims:** General issues on Environmental ecology, Biodiversity and Climate Change  
**Newspaper:** The Hindu **Page Number :** 02

## Background

- IIT Kanpur study, 2015 - 17 to 26% PM in Delhi winter due to biomass burning
- SAFAR - 40% contribution to air pollution at peak
- Inversion traps air pollution such as smog near the ground

## Reasons

- Facilitate seed bed preparation and seeding
- Quick & cheap
- Happy seeder is expensive - input costs in agri

## Impacts

- Environmental Pollution - PM10, P2.5, November North, smog, CO, CH4, VOC
- Soil Health - Nutrients & Organic Carbon Content, microbes, lower Nitrogen & Carbon
- Human - skin irritation, neurological, respiratory, life expectancy
- Fertilizer & Electricity subsidies - yield & productivity of same crops

## Steps Taken

- Promotion of Agricultural Mechanisation for In-Situ Management of Crop Residue
- Funds release - 3k in 5 years to NCR states
- Pusa decomposer by IARI
- Punjab Govt
  - proposal - 2.5k cash incentive per acre
  - awareness camps
  - DCs meeting farm union leaders

- Ex-situ management - biomass handling units engaged, brick kilns mandated to use stubble as fuel

## Way Forward

- Alternative Farming Practices - zero tillage, crop diversification, direct seeding
- Harvesting machinery
- Awareness campaigns
- As animal feed
- Recycle
- Manure
- Power generation
- Raw material for bio ethanol
- Palletisation
- Chhattisgarh gauthans
- Improved seed varieties

Stubble burning cases in Punjab and Haryana from April 1 to May 15 rose by 38.80% and 118.89% over the corresponding period last year, the Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) noted in a

It also approved a direction mandating registrations of only electric three-wheelers (passenger and goods) in Delhi from January 1 next year and in the



**SYLLABUS: Prelims:** General issues on Environmental ecology, Biodiversity and Climate Change  
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## CAQM

- Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas, Act 2021
  - Coordination, research, identification, and resolution of problems surrounding AQI
  - Powers
    - Restricting activities influencing air quality
    - Investigating and conducting research
    - Codes and guidelines
    - Issuing directions
    - All directions and orders binding
  - Directly accountable to the parliament
- Composition
    - Chairperson: rank of Secretary or Chief Secretary; 3 years or 70 years
    - 5 ex officio members: CS or Secretaries in charge of environment protection department of Delhi, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh
    - 3 full time technical members
    - Technical members from CPCB, ISRO and NITI Aayog
    - 3 from NGOs



**SYLLABUS: Prelims:** General issues on Environmental ecology, Biodiversity and Climate Change  
**Newspaper:** The Hindu **Page Number :** 04

## Ganges Softshell Turtle

- Or Indian Softshell Turtle
- One of the largest freshwater turtle species
- Appearance
  - Carapace (upper shell), round to oval shaped, green with a yellow border
  - long neck and tube-like snouts: help to extend nose out of the water to breathe
  - Compressed shell: streamlines them, brilliant and fast swimmers
- Habitat
  - deep rivers, streams, canals, lakes and ponds, with sandy or muddy bottoms
  - turbid water; mostly hidden under the sand
- Geographical Distribution
  - Afghanistan, India, Bangladesh, Pak
  - Mainly in Indus, Ganges, Meghna, Brahmaputra, Yamuna, Narmada and Mahanandi river basins
- Diet: omnivorous, feeding on fish, amphibians, mollusks, insects, aquatic plants
- Breed from February to April
- Maintained in the temple ponds of Orissa: considered sacred
- Threat: Habitat alteration and destruction, Poaching and illegal trading for traditional medicines, expansion of agriculture, commercial exploitation

- Conservation Status
  - IUCN Red List: Endangered
  - WPA, 1972: Schedule I

## Kaziranga NP

- Assam
- Single largest undisturbed and representative area in the Brahmaputra Valley floodplain
- 1974: NP
- 1985: declared WHS
- Important Bird Area by BirdLife International
- Terrain: Sheer forest, elephant grass, rugged reeds, marshes, and shallow pools
- NH715: Southern boundary
- Rivers: Diffalu, Moradifalu: southern boundary.
- Flora: dense and tall elephant grasses, small swamplands, water lilies, water hyacinths, lotus
- Fauna: Rhino, Tiger, Eastern swamp deer, Elephant, Buffalo, Hoolock gibbon, Capped langur, Gangetic River dolphin, World's largest population of one-horned rhinoceroses



# Ganges Softshell Turtle



**SYLLABUS:** Prelims: General issues on Environmental ecology, Biodiversity and Climate Change  
**Newspaper:** The Hindu **Page Number:** 04

India's first satellite-tagged Ganges soft-shell turtle, an endangered species, was released in the 1,302 sq. km Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve in Assam

Assam is one of the world's top priority areas in freshwater turtle conservation. Of the eight soft-shell turtles reported from India, five are known from the Kaziranga landscape.

The Ganges soft-shell turtle (*Nilssonia gangetica*), a Schedule I animal under the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972, can be differentiated from other riverine turtles by its distinct arrowhead-shaped markings on the top of the head. In India, the species inhabits



**SYLLABUS: Prelims:** History of India  
**Newspaper:** The Hindu **Page Number :** 10

## Bhojshala Complex

- in Dhar district of MP
- built by Raja Bhoja (1000–1055 A.D.) in 1034 AD
  - greatest monarch of Paramara dynasty
- Served as a university
  - music, Sanskrit, astronomy, yoga, Ayurveda and philosophy
- History
  - 1305 AD: first time attacked by Alauddin Khilji
  - 1514 AD: Mehmudshah Khilji II attacked
    - i. tried to convert it into dargah
    - ii. encroached land outside Saraswati Temple
    - iii. built 'Kamal Moulana' Makbara
- Inscriptions found
  - In the rocks: 2 hymns in Prakrit language of the Karmavatar or crocodile incarnation of Vishnu
  - 2 Sarpabandha pillar inscriptions
    - i. one containing Sanskrit alphabet and main endings of nouns and verbs
    - ii. Other: individual declensions of the ten tenses and moods of Sanskrit grammar

- 1951: declared as a monument of national importance under the Ancient and Historical Monument and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Declaration of National Importance) Act, 1951
- protected by ASI

**T**he Madhya Pradesh High Court on Friday ruled that the disputed site of Bhojshala complex and Kamal Maula Mosque in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh is a temple dedicated to goddess Vagdevi (Saraswati). The court allowed the Hindu community to worship at the site, while dismissing the Muslim community's claim.

The court quashed a 2003 order of the Archaeology Survey of India (ASI) that allowed the Muslim community to offer Friday prayers at the site. The ASI order also permitted the Hindus to offer worship within the Bhojshala complex on Tuesday and Basant Panchami.

The High Court directed the Union government to make efforts to bring back an idol of goddess Saraswati from the London Museum as it had been taken to the United Kingdom in the late 1800s and re-establish in the 11th-Century monument.

The Bench rejected the Muslim side's argument that an August 1935 Ailaan (official proclamation) by the then princely State of Dhar declared the site as a mosque under provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935. The court noted

The court said the ASI had used scientific methods in its survey, including carbon dating and palaeography to determine the age and historical period of the structure, and XRF spot analysis and compositional testing to examine the construction material. "The



**SYLLABUS:** Prelims: Economic and Social Development  
**Newspaper:** The Indian Express **Page Number:** 11

## Impact of crude oil price rise

### 12 years luck coming to end

- From 2014: <\$100
- April: \$115
- ~ \$100 for full year: ~40% increase over previous year's cost
- Household budgets (if fully relayed price rise) OR Govt budget (higher borrowings)
- Borrowing to pay fuel bill defers inevitable
  - Pay today (higher pump prices) Or
  - Tomorrow (higher taxes to repay govt debt)

## Retail prices

- Crude crashed up to 2020-21; but retail prices for commodities (except ATF) went up
- Covid year: crude fell by 30%; petrol and diesel pump prices still increased
- After Covid: increased global demand from economic recovery and supply constraints from Russia-Ukraine war

## Oil prices have never touched \$100 mark in past 12 years



Chart: Udit Misra • Source: CMIE • Created with Datawrapper



# Spike in Crude oil



**SYLLABUS: Prelims:** Economic and Social Development  
**Newspaper:** The Indian Express **Page Number :** 11

## Impact of crude oil price rise

### Inflation

- Wholesale more affected
  - Fuel bigger weight in wholesale calculation
- WPI modest in most years – sometimes negative
- CPI >> WPI; > RBI's target rate of 4%
- Especially after 2020

### Economic growth rates

- Higher crude prices detrimental
- 2015-16 and 2016-17: crude in \$40s/barrel → India's Growth >8%
- 2011-12 to 2013-14: oil prices >\$100 → growth rate ~ 5-6%

### Trade balance/forex

- Trade balance = net effect of exports minus imports of goods
- Dependence on crude oil imports increased over past 12 years
- Higher trade deficit plugged by surpluses from other BoP components (services trade, foreign investments) OR rupee depreciation OR drawing down forex

## Exchange rate

- 2 years in past 15 INR appreciated – 2016-17 and 2020-21 – both crude <\$50
- Sharp depreciation in past year as trade balance weakness not offset by other account surpluses, pressuring exchange rate

## Health of govt finances

- Worsen FD (borrowings to bridge gap between expenses and earnings)
- Covid-era expenses
- Even in pre-Covid years with low oil prices: never achieved FRBM Act target of 3% FD



**SYLLABUS : Prelims:** Economic and Social Development  
**Newspaper:**The Indian Express **Page Number :** 05

## PM SHRI

- Centrally sponsored scheme
- **Objective:** Development of >14,500 schools by strengthening the existing schools (managed by Centre/State/UT/local bodies)
- Nurture students - engaged, productive, and contributing citizens for an equitable, inclusive, and plural society (NPE 2020)
- **2022-23 to 2026-27** - then responsibility of the States/UTs to maintain the benchmarks achieved
- **Selection** of PM SHRI schools through Challenge Mode - schools compete
- **Features:**
  - selected schools act as exemplar schools offering mentorship to other schools in their vicinity
  - as Green Schools
  - pedagogy more experiential, holistic, integrated, play/toy-based (particularly in the foundational years), inquiry-driven, discovery-oriented, learner-centric, discussion-based, flexible, and enjoyable
  - focus on learning outcomes of every child in every grade
  - Assessment based on conceptual understanding and application of knowledge to real-life situations
  - Linkage with Sector Skill Councils and local industry for enhancing employability
  - A School Quality Assessment Framework specifying KPIs to measure outcomes

Bengal signed an agreement with the Centre on Friday to implement the PM-SHRI schools scheme in the state.

While the Centre's PM-SHRI schools scheme - meant to upgrade existing schools into exemplar ones that showcase the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 - was approved in 2022, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Kerala had refused to implement it.

The Education Ministry had linked the release of Samagra Shiksha funds for school education to the implementation of the PM-SHRI schools scheme. Since the three states

While West Bengal under the TMC had objected to the 'PM-SHRI' prefix being applied to schools despite the state government having to shoulder part of the scheme cost, Kerala and Tamil Nadu had refused to sign the MoU on the grounds that the agreement specifies that the state will implement the NEP in its entirety.



**Q1. With reference to the Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM), consider the following statements:**

1. It is a statutory body under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).
2. Its directions and orders are binding on the concerned authorities.
3. The Chairperson must be of the rank of Cabinet Secretary to the Government of India.

**How many of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All Three
- d) None

**Answer: b**

**Q2. With reference to the Ganges Softshell Turtle, consider the following statements:**

1. It is naturally found in the Indus, Ganga, Brahmaputra and Narmada river basins.
2. It is listed as "Critically Endangered" in the IUCN Red List.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Answer: a**

**Q3. With reference to the Bhojshala Complex (Dhar, Madhya Pradesh), consider the following statements:**

1. Bhojshala functioned as a centre for higher learning during the rule of the Pratihara dynasty.
2. Inscriptions found at the site include references to Sanskrit grammar and Prakrit hymns related to the Karmavatar of Vishnu.
3. Alauddin Khilji constructed the Kamal Moulana Makbara within the complex.

**How many of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All Three
- d) None

**Answer: a**

**Q4. With reference to the impact of rising crude oil prices on the Indian economy, consider the following statements:**

1. Wholesale Price Inflation (WPI) is generally more sensitive to crude oil price fluctuations than Consumer Price Inflation (CPI).
2. Periods of low global crude oil prices have historically coincided with relatively higher economic growth in India.
3. A rise in crude oil prices can widen India's trade deficit and exert depreciation pressure on the rupee.

**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: d**

**Q5. With reference to the PM-SHRI Scheme, consider the following statements:**

1. Schools are selected through a challenge-based mechanism.
2. The scheme mandates establishment of entirely new schools with complete financial support from the Union Government.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Answer: a**





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