



VAJIRAM & RAVI
Institute for IAS Examination

The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

18th May 2026



CONTEXT: Recent reports of sports funds being diverted for bureaucratic recreational facilities have raised concerns over governance and priorities in India's sports ecosystem.

What is Sports Ecosystem?

- Sports ecosystem refers to the network of:
 - Institutions
 - Infrastructure
 - Policies
 - Athletes
 - Support systems
- that collectively promote sporting excellence.

Do you know ?

➤ India is preparing to host Olympic 2036, and aspires to become a top ten sports nation by 2036 and a top five country by 2047.

India's Sporting Ecosystem

- Sports is a **state subject**.
- However, Central government, through its various schemes, supplements the efforts for state government.
- Sports generates **revenue** and raises country's **soft power**.
- Despite these benefits, only around **6% of India's** population participates in sports.
- (Around 20% in countries like the US, Australia and as high as 60% in Japan).

INDIA AT GAMES OVER THE YEARS

Games	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
2008 Beijing	1	0	2	3
2012 London	0	2	4	6
2016 Rio	0	1	1	2
2020 Tokyo	1	2	4	7
2024 Paris	0	1	5	6



India Wins 29 Medals at Paralympics!

India ranks 18th of 170 countries at Paris Paralympics 2024, with 7 Gold medals.

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1972	1	0	0	1
1984	0	2	2	4
2004	1	0	1	2
2012	0	1	0	1
2016	2	1	1	4
2020	5	8	6	19
2024	7	9	13	29

MEDAL TALLY Paris Olympics, 2024

Order	NOCs	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	United States of America	40	44	42	126
2	People's Republic of China	40	27	24	91
3	Japan	20	12	13	45
4	Australia	18	19	16	53
5	France	16	26	22	64
71	India	0	1	5	6

CONTEXT: Recent reports of sports funds being diverted for bureaucratic recreational facilities have raised concerns over governance and priorities in India's sports ecosystem.

IMPORTANCE OF SPORTS



EMPOWERING A NATION THROUGH SPORTS

Challenges in India's Sporting Ecosystem

- **Weak Talent Identification:**
 - Low Olympic participation due to a lack of early-stage scouting mechanisms.
 - Sports not integrated into education
- **Resource Constraints:**
 - Low sports budget, coupled with severe fund underutilization.
 - Financial Insecurity
 - Limited Sports Science Adoption
- **Infrastructure Gaps:**
 - World-class facilities are unevenly concentrated in a few states, leaving many regions and schools underserved.
 - Urban-rural divide
- **Cricket dominates**
 - In media, sponsorships, and funding (87% of India's sports market)

- **Governance Issues:**
 - Politicisation of federations leading to corruption and ethical scandals (e.g., WFI harassment case).
- **Athlete Mismanagement:**
 - Lack of proper support/guidance leading to avoidable setbacks, such as weight-management disqualifications.
- **Other Hurdles:**
 - Shortage of coaches, gender disparities, low private investment, and a lack of awareness regarding government support.

Government Initiatives

- **Khelo India**
 - Grassroots talent development
 - Infrastructure support
- **Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS)**
 - Elite athlete support
- **Fit India Movement**
 - Promote fitness culture



Sports Ecosystem of India

CONTEXT: Recent reports of sports funds being diverted for bureaucratic recreational facilities have raised concerns over governance and priorities in India's sports ecosystem.

- **National Sports Policy 2025 (Khelo Bharat Niti)**
 - Sports as career option
 - Use AI, data analytics, and emerging technologies for performance tracking
- **National Sports Development Fund (NSDF)**
 - Offers financial assistance for training, infrastructure, and athlete welfare through PPP.
- **Khelo India Rising Talent Identification (KIRTI) Programme**
(For 9–18 yr children)

Union Budget 2026-27: Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports

₹4,479.88 crore

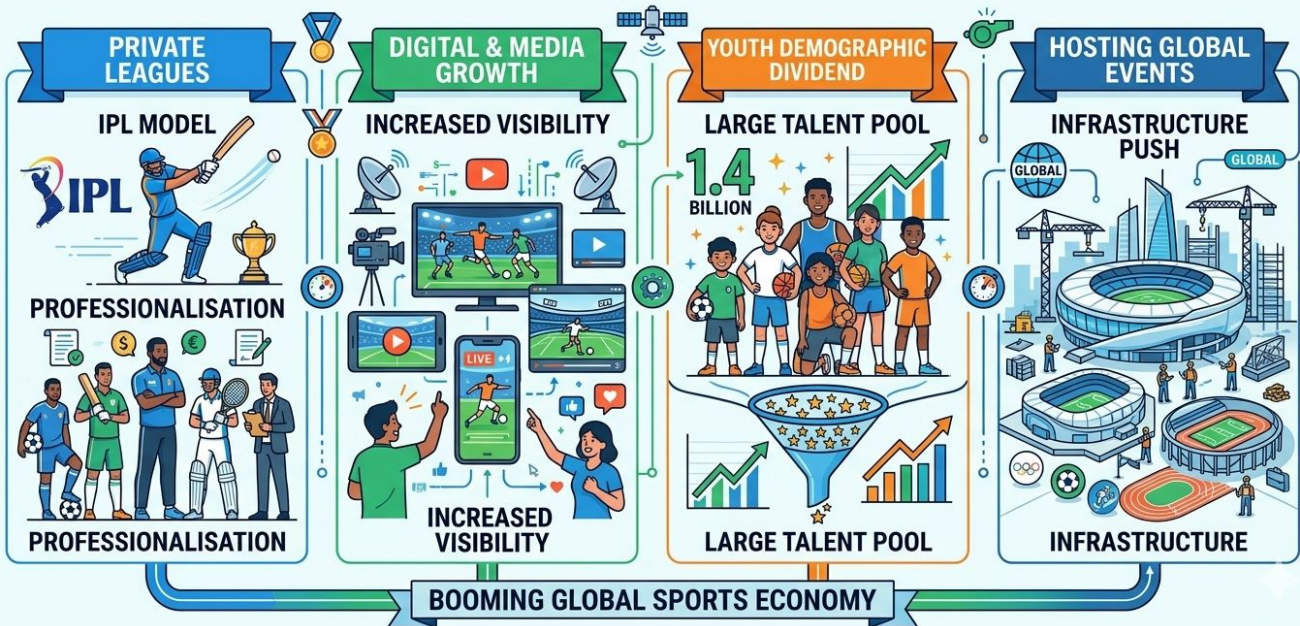
(BE 2026-27)

Highest-ever allocation for the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports



Increase of ₹1,133 crore

EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES IN SPORTS



CONTEXT: Recent reports of sports funds being diverted for bureaucratic recreational facilities have raised concerns over governance and priorities in India's sports ecosystem.

What should be done?

Grassroots Revolution

- Sports in school curriculum

Governance Reforms

- Transparency in federations

Sports Science Integration

- AI, analytics, nutrition support

Public-Private Partnership

- Corporate investment

Women & Inclusive Sports

- Equal opportunities
- Para-athlete support

One State-One Sport policy

- Region specific sports

MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION

Discuss the major challenges in developing a robust sports ecosystem in India.

(10 marks, 150 words)



Judicial Pendency

CONTEXT: To tackle the mounting judicial pendency crisis, the government has expanded the strength of the Supreme Court bench.

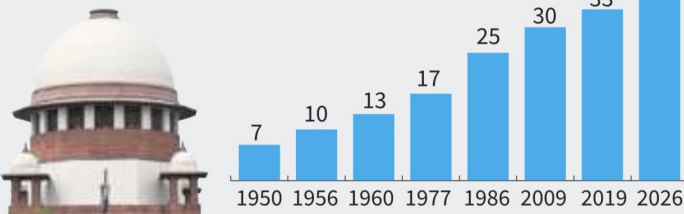
Judicial numbers

The top court currently has a backlog of over **93,000 cases**, which is threatening to reach six figures even as the court is going into summer recess, or 'partial working days', in June

The Framers of the Constitution had originally in Article 124(1) envisaged a Supreme Court consisting of the CJI and 'not more than seven judges' until 'Parliament by law prescribes a larger number'

The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956 as originally enacted, provided for the maximum number of judges (excluding the CJI) to be 10

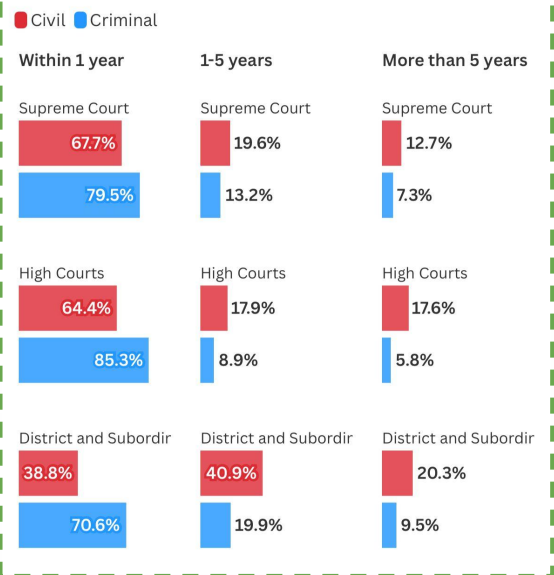
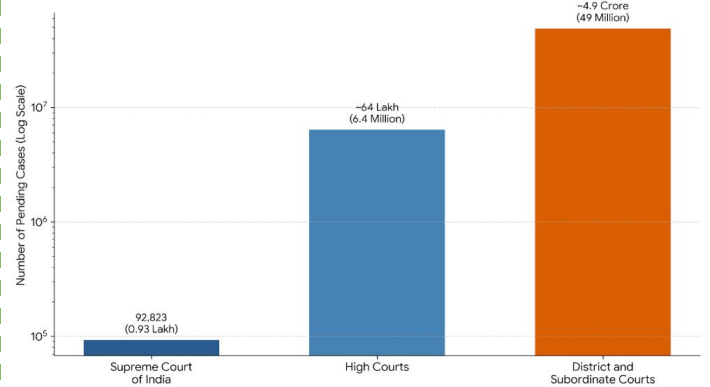
Graph shows increase in strength of the Supreme Court
(Maximum number of judges excluding the CJI)



Allahabad HC blames State government, police for pendency of cases

Bench says many young and committed judicial officers are unable to function effectively because of severe staff shortage, lack of police cooperation in executing summons and warrants, and delay in forensic reports

Case Backlog by Judicial Tier in India (As of 2026)



1. Reasons for Judicial Pendency

Reason	Description
1. Judicial Vacancies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Around 30% of sanctioned posts in High Courts and 20% in subordinate courts remain vacant. Appointments under Articles 124 and 217 are often delayed due to procedural bottlenecks.
2. Complex and Outdated Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdated civil laws retain procedural complexities, causing adjournments, lengthy trials, and delays.
3. High Number of Government Litigations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government is the biggest litigant (~50% of all cases, as per the 126th Law Commission Report), increasing pendency through routine appeals.
4. Inefficient Case Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of proper case listing, prioritisation, digital case tracking, and judicial time management worsens backlogs.
5. Infrastructure Deficit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shortage of courtrooms, lack of digitized records, and limited technological support were highlighted by the Justice Ramachandran Committee (2018).
6. Frequent Adjournments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In M/S Shiv Cotex v. Tirgun Auto Plast (2011), the Supreme Court criticised the routine grant of adjournments, observing that it leads to undue delays and miscarriage of justice.
7. Undertrials and Criminal Pendency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertrials constitute over 75% of the prison population (NCRB 2023); pending trials exacerbate systemic clogging.



CONTEXT: To tackle the mounting judicial pendency crisis, the government has expanded the strength of the Supreme Court bench.

Impacts of Judicial Pendency

- **Access to Justice**
 - Delayed justice = denial of rights
- **Undertrial Crisis**
 - Large prison population = undertrials
 - Violates Article 21
- **Economic Impact**
 - Contract enforcement delays
 - Reduces investor confidence
- **Social Impact**
 - Family disputes prolonged
 - Victim trauma increases
- **Erosion of Trust**
 - Declining public confidence in judiciary

Constitutional & Legal Perspective

- **Article 21**
 - Right to speedy trial part of:
 - Right to life & liberty
- **Important Judgments**
 - Hussainara Khatoon vs State of Bihar
 - Speedy trial recognized as fundamental right
- **Malimath Committee Report**
 - Recommended reforms in criminal justice system

2. Steps Taken to Address Judicial Pendency

Step	Description
I. Legislative & Procedural Reforms	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (BNS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Replaces CrPC, enforces time-bound investigation, limits adjournments, introduces e-FIRs & e-summons. ● Enacted in 2023, it empowers digitisation and speeds up criminal justice delivery.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gram Nyayalayas Act, 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establishes village-level courts for faster access to justice in rural areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● National Mission for Justice Delivery and Legal Reforms (2011) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Aims to reduce delays, improve case flow, and promote institutional ADR.
II. Institutional Innovations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fast Track and Special Courts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focused courts for heinous offences (rape, corruption, POCSO) to accelerate trials. ● Example: MoJ Report 2023: Over 1100 Fast Track Courts operational.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mechanisms like Lok Adalats, mediation to reduce court burden and offer amicable settlement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Example: Patel Engineering Ltd. v. NEEPCO (2023): SC upheld pre-litigation mediation in commercial cases.
III. Technological Interventions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● e-Courts Mission Mode Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enables e-Filing, digital summons, video hearings, and National Judicial Data Grid(NJDG) for pendency tracking.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Publicly accessible dashboard for real-time pendency and disposal tracking across Indian courts.



CONTEXT: To tackle the mounting judicial pendency crisis, the government has expanded the strength of the Supreme Court bench.

IV. Judicial Monitoring & Case Law

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supreme Court Directions on Adjudgments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directions to discourage frequent adjournments and ensure discipline in trial scheduling. Shiv Cotex v. Tirgun Auto Plast (2011): SC criticised undue adjournments. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suo Moto Interventions by Supreme Court | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SC proactively addresses chronic pendency and disposal delays in PIL and criminal matters. |

3. Way Forward

Suggestion	Description
1. Filling Judicial Vacancies Exeditiously	• Implement timelines for Collegium and Government to process appointments swiftly (Second Judges Case jurisprudence).
2. Procedural Reforms	• Amend CPC, CrPC to discourage adjournments and introduce strict case management frameworks (based on Malimath Committee recommendations).
3. Government Litigation Reform	• Implement National Litigation Policy (proposed in 2010) to ensure “ minimum appeals, responsible litigation. ”
4. Strengthening Lower Judiciary Infrastructure	• Higher budgetary allocations (only 0.08% of GDP currently spent on judiciary) are needed for courts, technology, and manpower.
5. Expanding E-Courts and Virtual Hearings	• Institutionalise hybrid hearings, digital evidence filing, and AI-based cause list management (as piloted by the Delhi HC).
6. Robust Undertrial Reforms	• Adopting Justice Chandrachud's ' Bail, Not Jail ' directive following the spirit of SC's guidelines on undertrials in Hussainara Khatoon v. State of Bihar (1979) .
7. Promoting ADR and Mediation	• Mandatory pre-litigation mediation (Mediation Act of 2023) to ease trial courts' burden.
8. Best Practices from States	• Gujarat's evening courts , Telangana's paperless courts model could be replicated nationally.

MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION

Examine the causes of judicial delays in India and suggest reforms to ensure speedy justice.

(15 Marks, 250 words)

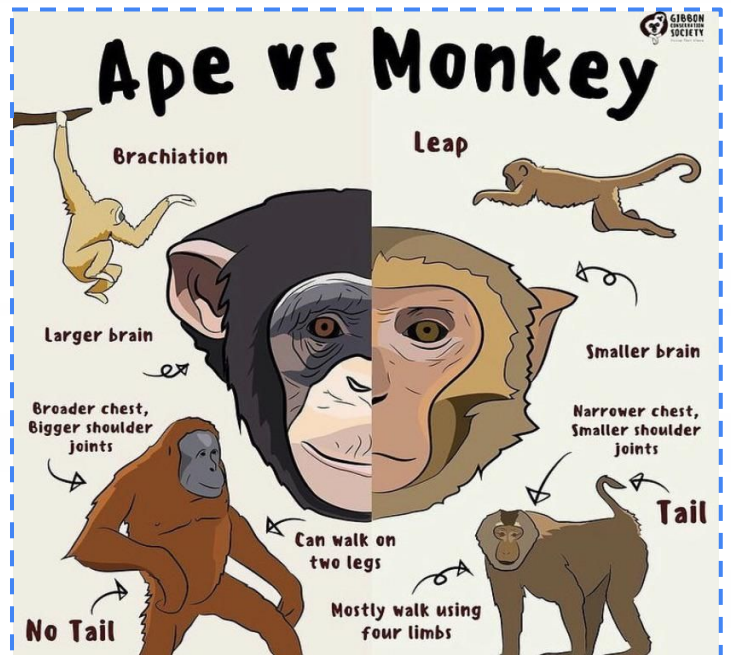
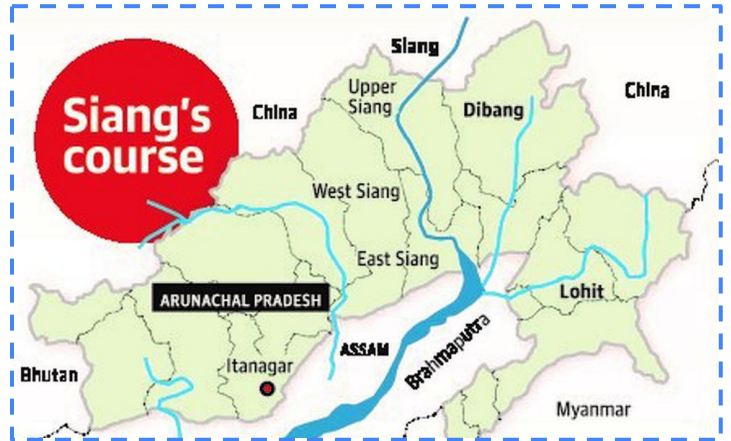


Syllabus: PRELIMS: Species in News
Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 1

Hoolock Gibbon

- India's **only ape species**
- Distribution in India - found across **all 7** Northeast states.
- Habitat:
 - **Tropical evergreen & semi-evergreen** forests
- Species in India:
 - **Western** Hoolock Gibbon
 - **Eastern** Hoolock Gibbon
 - **Mishmi Hill** Hoolock Gibbon
- Key Features:
 - Arboreal, Diurnal
 - **No tail**
 - Known for loud calls
- IUCN Conservation Status:
 - Endangered - Western HG
 - Vulnerable - Eastern HG
- Protected under Wildlife Protection Act, 1972
- Major Threats:
 - Habitat fragmentation
 - Deforestation
 - Hunting

- Important Protected Areas:
 - **Hollongapar Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary (Jorhat, Assam)**



Hoolock Gibbon

Only ape species found in India

Scientific name: *Bunopithecus hoolock*

Habitat: tropical semi-deciduous & deciduous forests; prefers three-tier canopies

Distribution: NE India (Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura), Bangladesh, Myanmar, S. China

Two species in India: Eastern (*H. leuconedys*) & Western (*H. hoolock*)

Threats: habitat loss, jhum cultivation, poaching



Exam Traps

- It is a monkey species → **WRONG**
- Found in Western Ghats → **WRONG**
- Has a long tail → **WRONG**
- Found only outside India → **WRONG**
- Lives mainly on ground → **WRONG**

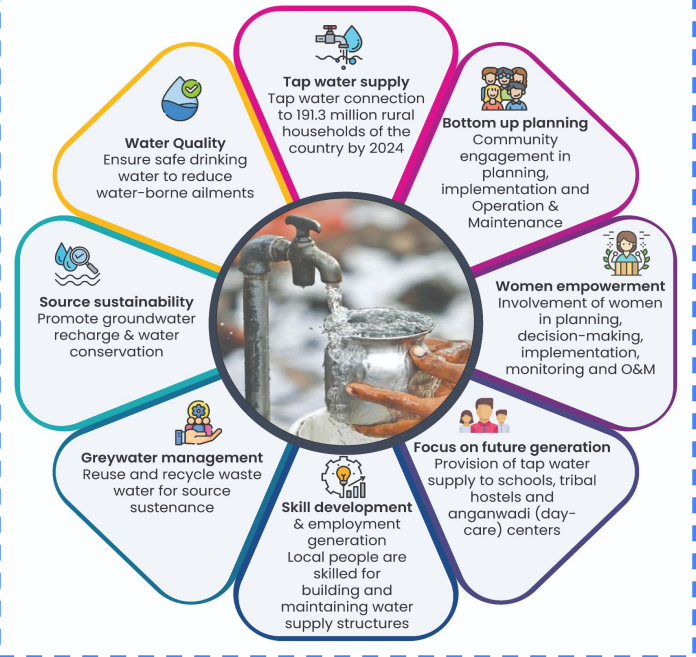


Syllabus: PRELIMS: Government Schemes
Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 1

Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)

- Launch date: **15th Aug. 2019**
- By **Ministry of Jal Shakti**
- Objective:
 - Provide **Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTC)** to every **rural** household by 2024.
 - **JJM 2.0**, extending its final implementation timeline from 2024 to **December 2028**
- Target:
 - **"Har Ghar Jal"** → safe & adequate drinking water
 - **55 litres** of water per person per day
- Key Components:
 - Source sustainability
 - Greywater management
 - Water quality monitoring
 - Rainwater harvesting
- Special Focus Areas:
 - **Water-stressed regions**
 - Arsenic/fluoride-affected areas
 - SC/ST habitations
- Implementation:
 - Village Water & Sanitation Committees (commonly called **Pani Samitis**)
 - Members from SHGs, ASHA Workers, Anganwadi teachers, etc.
 - JJM focuses on **integrated demand and supply-side management** of water at the local level.
- Nature of Scheme: **Centrally Sponsored**
- Constitutional Angle:
 - **Drinking water - State Subject**
- Related Initiative:
 - Urban counterpart → AMRUT

COMPONENTS OF JAL JEEVAN MISSION



Exam Traps

- Launched before 2014 → **WRONG**
- Applies mainly to urban households → **WRONG**
- Implemented by Ministry of Rural Development → **WRONG**
- No role for local communities → **WRONG**
- Only infrastructure creation, no water quality component → **WRONG**



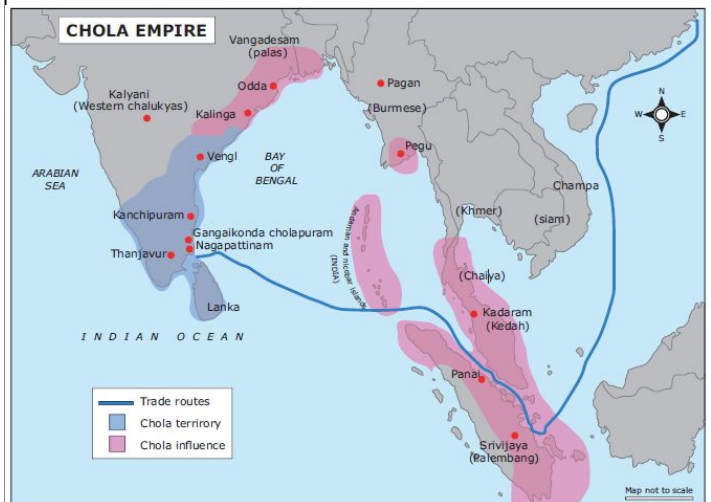
Syllabus: PRELIMS: Polity
Newspaper: The Hindu, **Page No. 6**

Chola Dynasty

- Major dynasty of South India (Tamil region)
- Period:
 - Early Cholas, documented in Sangam literature (600 BCE–300 CE)
 - Imperial Cholas flourished 9th–13th century
- Capital:
 - **Thanjavur**
 - Later **Gangaikonda Cholapuram**
- Founder of Imperial Cholas:
 - **Vijayalaya** Chola (850–870)
- Important Rulers:
 - Raja Raja Chola I (985–1014)
 - Rajendra Chola I (1014–44)
- Administration:
 - Well-developed local self-government
 - Village assemblies: **Ur, Sabha, Nagaram**



- Military Power:
 - **Strong navy**
 - Expeditions to Sri Lanka & Southeast Asia
- Economy:
 - Agriculture-based with advanced irrigation
 - **Active maritime trade**
- Temple Architecture:
 - Famous for Dravidian style temples
 - Example: **Brihadeeswara Temple**
- Art & Culture:
 - Bronze sculptures (**Nataraja**)
 - Tamil literature patronage
- Sources:
 - Copper plate inscriptions, temple inscriptions



Exam Traps

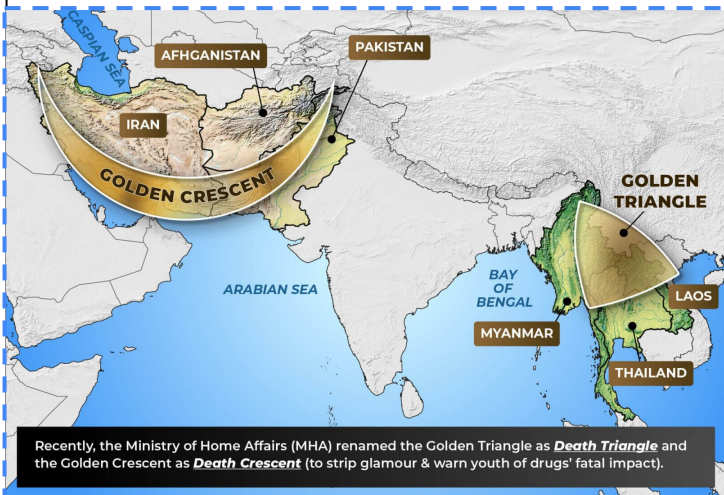
- Cholas lacked naval power → **WRONG**
- Brihadeeswara Temple built by Pallavas → **WRONG**
- Sabha was urban merchant guild → **WRONG**
- Chola architecture followed Nagara style → **WRONG**
- Cholas had no links with Southeast Asia → **WRONG**



Syllabus: PRELIMS: Drug Trafficking
Newspaper: The Hindu, **Page No. 10**

Golden Triangle

- Tri-border Mekong area of:
 - **Myanmar**
 - **Laos**
 - **Thailand**
- Major opium & heroin production region
- Geographical Feature:
 - Mountainous, remote terrain → difficult law enforcement
- India Connection:
 - Affects India's Northeast region
- Recent Trend:
 - Myanmar's Shan State dominates **synthetic methamphetamine drug** production
 - Methamphetamine (meth) is a powerful, highly addictive central nervous system stimulant.

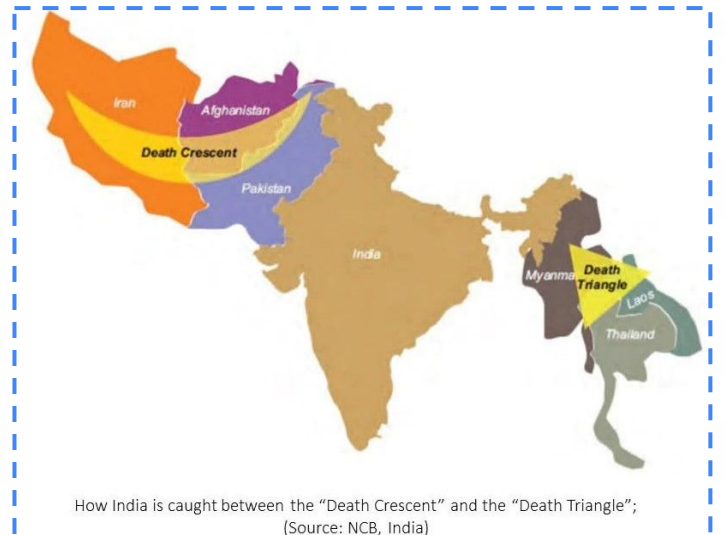


Exam Traps

- Golden Triangle located in West Asia → **WRONG**
- India is part of Golden Crescent → **WRONG**
- Both regions mainly produce cocaine → **WRONG**
- Golden Crescent includes Myanmar → **WRONG**

Golden Crescent

- Border areas of Southwest Asia:
 - **Afghanistan**
 - **Pakistan**
 - **Iran**
- One of the world's largest illicit opium-producing regions
- Key Country:
 - Afghanistan historically major opium producer due to Prolonged warfare and Taliban-linked insurgencies weaken governance
- India Connection:
 - Drug trafficking impacts Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat routes
- Security Link:
 - Narco-trafficking linked with terror financing & **organized crime**



- Drug trade linked only to health issues, not security → **WRONG**
- Thailand is part of Golden Crescent → **WRONG**



Syllabus: PRELIMS: Disease Outbreak
Newspaper: The Hindu, Page No. 1

Ebola Outbreak in Congo

- Disease:
 - Caused by **Ebola virus**
 - Viral hemorrhagic fever with high fatality rate
- Affected Country:
 - Democratic Republic of the **Congo** (DRC) and **Uganda** (17th Ebola Virus outbreak)
- Transmission:
 - Contact with **infected bodily fluids**
 - Animal-to-human transmission (bats suspected reservoir)
- Symptoms:
 - Fever, bleeding, weakness, organ failure
- First Identified:
 - **1976** near **Ebola River in DRC**
- Major Concern:
 - High mortality + weak health infrastructure

Urban Heat Island Effect

- WHO Role:
 - It coordinates outbreak response
- Vaccines/Treatment:
 - **Ebola vaccines available** (e.g., rVSV-ZEBOV)
 - Supportive treatment critical
 - Vaccine **not available** for the new variant - **Bundibugyo Virus**
- Challenges in Congo:
 - Conflict zones
 - Poor healthcare access
 - Misinformation
- Public Health Importance:
 - Example of **zoonotic** disease outbreak

DR Congo battles fresh Ebola outbreak

Health authorities on Friday confirmed a fresh Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), reviving concerns over the country's vulnerability to recurring flare-ups of the deadly disease

HEALTH AGENCIES SOUND ALARM
The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention said results detected the virus in 13 of 20 samples tested. The agency said it is convening a meeting with authorities from Congo, Uganda and UN agencies to contain the situation.

246 Confirmed cases in DR Congo	65 Suspected Ebola deaths	50,000 Estimated Ebola deaths across Africa over 50 years
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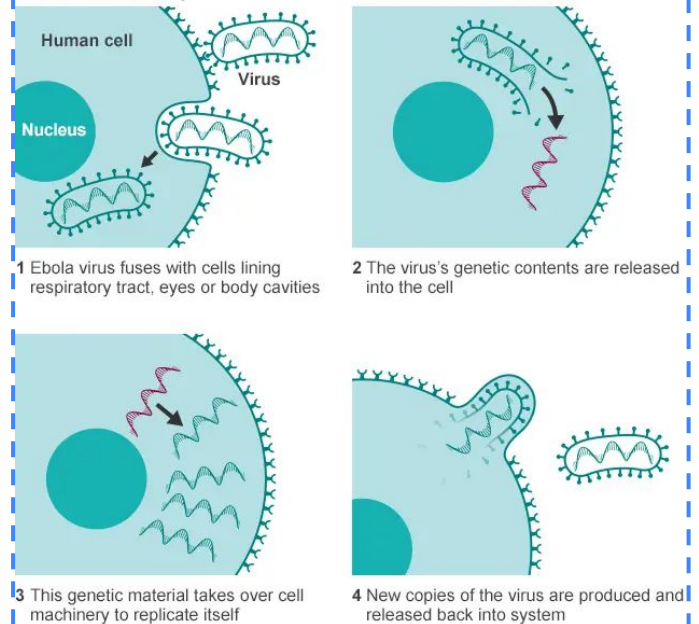
WHERE IS THE LATEST OUTBREAK?
The outbreak has been detected in the gold-mining towns of Mongwa and Pwampara in the remote Ituri province, where poor infrastructure hampers response efforts. Ongoing violence by the Islamic State-linked Allied Democratic Forces and proximity to Uganda and South Sudan raise additional concerns.

WHY DOES EBOLA KEEP RETURNING TO DRC?
17 Ebola outbreaks recorded in the country
5 months ago: Last outbreak, which killed 43 people
1,000 Deaths in the deadliest outbreak (2014-2020)
The virus is endemic to rainforest regions, where mining, hunting and forest encroachment increase human-wildlife contact and risk of spillover. Fragile healthcare, delayed response and chronic conflict fuel further spread.

A DEADLY DISEASE
First identified in 1976 in what is now DR Congo, Ebola is believed to have originated in bats. It is among the world's deadliest infectious diseases, with fatality rates ranging from about 25% to nearly 90%. The virus spreads through direct contact with bodily fluids and can cause fever, vomiting, diarrhoea and internal bleeding. Weak health systems and delays in detection allow outbreaks to escalate rapidly.

Health workers treat an Ebola patient in DRC's Butembo during an outbreak in 2018. AFP

How Ebola virus spreads



Exam Traps

- Ebola is bacterial disease → **WRONG**
- Spread mainly through air like measles → **WRONG**
- Ebola first identified in Asia → **WRONG**
- No vaccine exists → **WRONG**
- WHO has no role in outbreak management → **WRONG**



Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the Hoolock Gibbon:

1. It is the only ape species found in India.
2. It is primarily arboreal and depends on continuous forest canopies for movement.
3. In India, it is naturally found only in the Western Ghats and the Nilgiri Hills.
4. It is classified as a Schedule I species under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a) 1, 2 and 4 only
- b) 1 and 3 only
- c) 2 and 4 only
- d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer: a

Q2. Consider the following statements regarding the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM):

1. The Jal Jeevan Mission aims to provide Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs) to all rural households in India.
2. The Ministry of Rural Development implements the mission.
3. Under the mission, priority is given to water-quality-affected areas, such as those affected by arsenic and fluoride contamination.
4. The mission also emphasises community participation and village-level water management plans.

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

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) Only Three
- d) All Four

Answer: c

Q3. Regarding the Chola Dynasty, consider the following statements:

1. The Imperial Chola dynasty was founded by Vijayalaya Chola in the 9th century CE.
2. Gangaikonda Cholapuram served as one of the capitals of the Cholas.
3. The Chola administration is known for a highly developed system of local self-government through institutions such as Ur, Sabha and Nagaram.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: a

Q4. Regarding the illicit drug-producing regions known as the "Golden Triangle" and the "Golden Crescent", consider the following statements:

1. The Golden Triangle lies in the tri-border region of Myanmar, Laos and Thailand.
2. The Golden Crescent includes parts of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran.

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: c

Q5. Consider the following statements regarding Ebola Virus Disease (EVD):

1. Ebola Virus Disease is a bacterial hemorrhagic fever primarily transmitted through contaminated water.
2. The disease can spread through direct contact with infected bodily fluids.
3. Fruit bats are considered a likely natural reservoir of the Ebola virus.
4. Ebola was first identified near the Ebola River in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a) 2, 3 and 4 only
- b) 1 and 2 only
- c) 3 and 4 only
- d) 1, 2 and 4 only

Answer: a





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