



VAJIRAM & RAVI
Institute for IAS Examination

The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

20th August 2026



CONTEXT: The article provide factual arguments for how PM – KUSUM is not solely responsible for India's Groundwater crisis

Mains Heading 1: Increasing **Groundwater exploitation** due to Renewable Energy Scheme?

Context of News :

- ❑ **Argument :** "Solar irrigation under PM – KUSUM will worsen the groundwater crisis."
- ❑ Heavily subsidised or free electricity has led to unsustainable groundwater abstraction ,contributing to **falling water tables & depleting aquifers**
- ❑ **Counter Argument :** Gujarat's Suryashakti Kisan Yojana (SKY) scheme has led to much more sustainable use of Water & Energy Conservation

World's biggest reservoir :
Groundwater makes up a whopping **97%** of all usable freshwater

Stored in voids between grains & cracks within rocks

Ecological Niche : Feeds lakes & rivers & acts as natural sponge

Source of drinking water & Irrigation for Agricultural Productivity

CGWB Ground Water Resources Assessment (GWRA) 2025 :

- Available Annual extractable resource : **407 BCM / year**
- Extracted (2025) : **247 BCM / year**
- Agriculture (**87%**) > Domestic Use (**11%**) > Industry (**2%**)
- **730** Assessment Units were "Over - Exploited"
- **Haryana + Punjab + Delhi = Groundwater extraction above 100%**

Mains Heading 2: MACRO Issue? **Water Scarcity** in India :

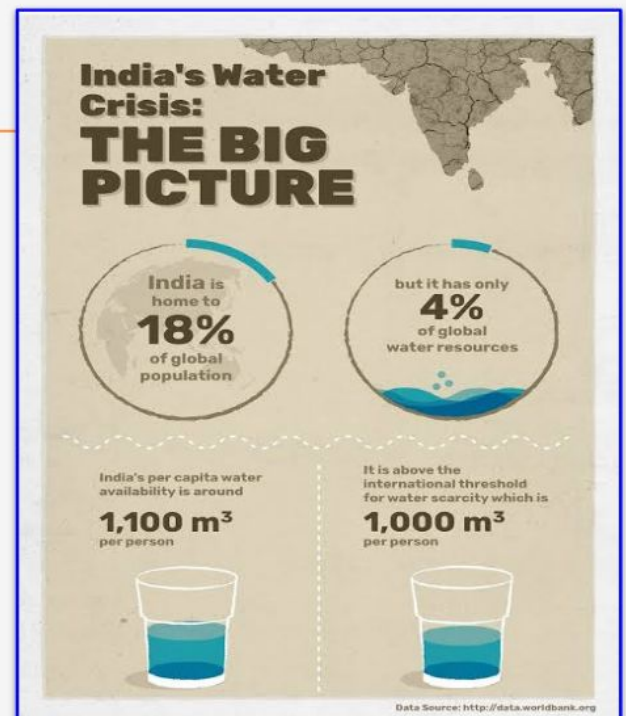
Composite Water Management Index By NITI Aayog :

Issue of Water scarcity in India

- **>600 million** people face "high to extreme" water stress
- **>25% households** do not have drinking water on premise
- **70% water** is contaminated

Economic Impact

- **21 megacities** will run out of groundwater by 2025
- **Compromise Food security = Less water for irrigation**
- **Impact Human development = SDG 6 & HDI 2025 : 130th/193**
- **Inter - State water sharing disputes**



CONTEXT: The article provide factual arguments for how PM – KUSUM is not solely responsible for India's Groundwater crisis

Mains Heading 3 : "Dark Clouds" of **Climate Change** on Groundwater security :

India's economic growth to slow to 6.8% FY27 amid West Asia crisis, El Nino impact

Earlier this month, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had raised growth projections from 6.6% to 6.7% citing resilient domestic economy.

- ❑ **Supply Shock** leading to "**Recharge Uncertainty**"
- ❑ **Demand Shock** : Higher temperatures increases evapotranspiration & crop water requirements
- ❑ **Tragedy of Commons** : Depletion cost shared across an aquifer
- ❑ **Adaptive capacity trap** : Vicious cycle of repeated drought periods & increased pumping
- ❑ **Inter - Generational Equity** : Water tax on future generations

Data to validate Your Arguments :

Rainfall contributes to **60%** of India's annual groundwater recharge

Groundwater has shrunk to depth of **20-40 m** below ground level in "Green revolution" belt

Groundwater will warm by **2.1 degree celsius** by 2100 CE

Mains Heading 4 : What is **PM – KUSUM**?

"Help farmers access reliable daytime solar power for irrigation, reduce power subsidies & decarbonise agriculture"

Component A

- ❑ **10,000 MW** decentralised, grid connected solar/ renewable power plants
- ❑ Farmer, FPOs or Panchayats = Establish **500 KW – 2 MW** Energy plants
- ❑ **Sell surplus to DISCOMS**

Component B

- ❑ Installation of **20 Lakh** Standalone Solar powered Agriculture pumps
- ❑ Areas without Grid supplied Electricity
- ❑ Substitute **Diesel based** irrigation

Component C

- ❑ Solarisation of **35 lakh** grid-connected agricultural pumps
- ❑ Combined target was about **34,800 MW** of solar capacity by March 2026

Subsidy Model

- ❑ Central Financial Assistance (CFA): **30%**
- ❑ State Government subsidy: at least 30%
- ❑ Farmer contribution: up to 40%



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नवीन एवं
नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
NEW AND
RENEWABLE ENERGY

PM-KUSUM Key Achievements

As on July 2026



11.6+ lakh
Solar pumps
deployed



28+ lakh
Farmers
benefited



15.8 + GW
Decentralized
renewable energy
capacity added



806 million litres
Diesel saved
annually



15.5 million tonnes
Carbon emissions
reduced
every year



₹12,300+ crore
Released under
PM-KUSUM



Powering agriculture with solar energy
and strengthening farmer livelihoods



[mnreindia](https://mnreindia.gov.in)



[mnreministry](https://mnreministry.gov.in)



mnre.gov.in

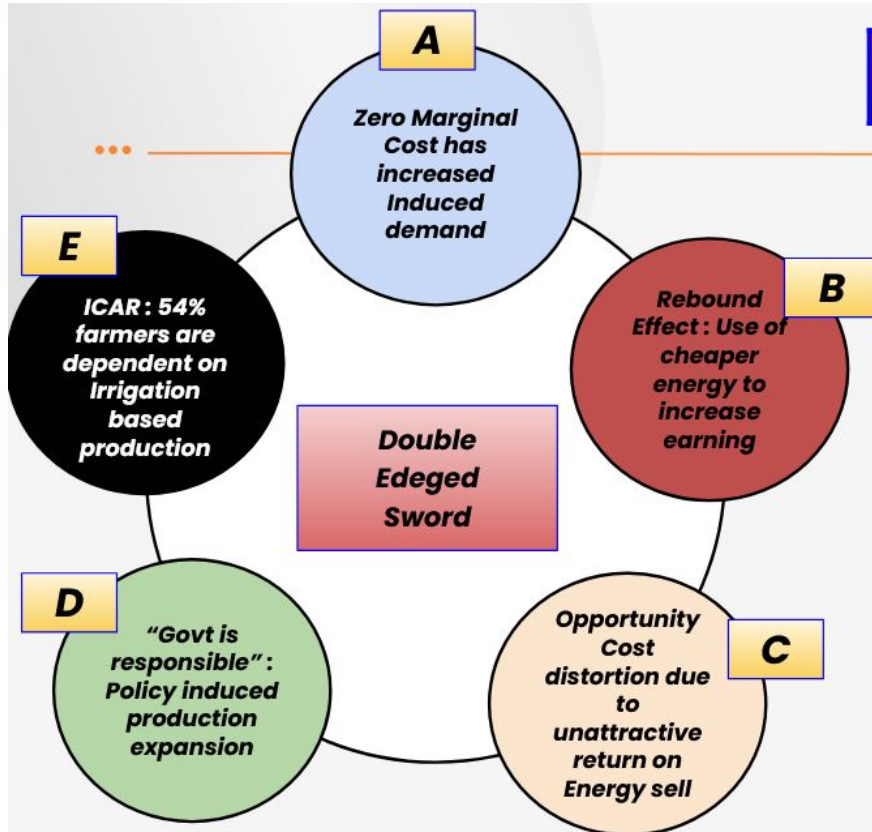


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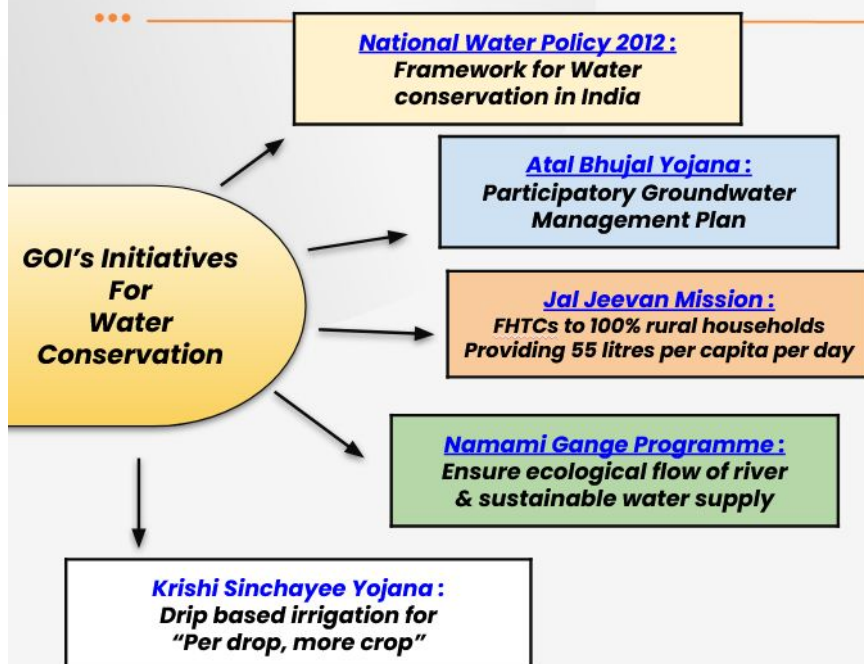
Mains Heading 5 : How PM - KUSUM Led to Groundwater exploitation?

Counter - Arguments by today's article?

- ❑ **Gujarat's SKY Scheme** : Grid connected solar model to sell surplus & earn alternative income
- ❑ **Fee-for-service** centralised solar model of Bangladesh
- ❑ **Farmers' irrigation behaviour** : Shaped by local hydrogeology, cropping patterns, marginal returns to irrigation & soil type
- ❑ **Focus on Climate benefits Offered** : Groundwater irrigation generates 45-62 million tonnes of CO2 emission / year



Mains Heading 6 : Other steps taken for Water Conservation in India?



Case Study : Ralegan Siddhi Village in Maharashtra

Semi arid - drought prone village in Marathwada region

Check dams, percolation tanks & contour bunds

Afforestation & "Gully plugging"

Crop diversification : ban on water intensive crops & introduced micro-irrigation



PM – KUSUM & Groundwater



CONTEXT: The article provide factual arguments for how PM – KUSUM is not solely responsible for India's Groundwater crisis

Mains Practise Question

Question : What is **PM – KUSUM Yojana**? Is it responsible for India's Groundwater crisis? Critically Evaluate.
(150 words, 10 marks)



Gaps for Vulnerable section in Census 2027



CONTEXT: The article highlights the issues being faced by the People with Disabilities due to "Government apathy" even a decade after enactment of the RPWD Act 2016

Chapter 1: "**Basics**" of Census 2027:

Context of News :

- ❑ **National Platform for the Rights of the Disabled (NPRD) : raised concerns over the proposed classification of disabilities for enumeration in Census 2027**
- ❑ **Only 9-category framework does not adequately include several disabilities recognised under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016**

First mention of Census	Arthashastra
Detailed Census Data	Ain i Akbari
First complete census of city : Dacca	Henry Walter
First Non - Synchronous census 1872	Lord Mayo
First Synchronous Census 1881	WC Plowden

- **Decennial Census : Census Act 1948**
- **Census = Union Subject under Article 246**
- **Office of Registrar General**
- **under Ministry of Home Affairs**

CENSUS BASICS

THE POPULATION CENSUS has been conducted since 1872;

2027 CENSUS will be the 16th such exercise, and the eighth since Independence.

A RANGE OF DATA, including data on housing conditions, amenities and assets, demography, religion, language, literacy and education, economic activity, migration, fertility, etc., are collected along with the headcount of individuals at the village, town, and ward levels.

₹14,618.95cr

BUDGET has been sought by the Office of the Registrar General of India (RGI), which is under the Ministry of Home Affairs, for the conduct of Census 2027, according to sources.

34 lakh enumerators and field functionaries will be involved in conducting the Census. The enumerators will use their own smart-phones for collecting data. In SECC 2011, dedicated tablets were used.



INDIA'S POPULATION was 1.21 billion as of March 1, 2011. It is now estimated to have become the most populous nation in the world.



Gaps for Vulnerable section in Census 2027

CONTEXT: The article highlights the issues being faced by the People with Disabilities due to "Government apathy" even a decade after enactment of the RPWD Act 2016

Chapter 2 : Who are "Disabled" people?

Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016

Types of Disabilities :

- Blindness
- Leprosy cured person
- **Locomotor disability**
- Dwarfism
- Intellectual disability
- Mental illness
- Specific learning disability
- Hearing Impairment
- Muscular dystrophy
- **Acid attack victims**
- Parkinson's disease
- Thalassemia
- Hemophilia
- **Sickle cell disease**
- Autism spectrum disorder

UNCRPD :
"Invisible Minority"

WHO : "Impairment,
activity learning &
participation
restrictions" normal
for other human
beings

1.3 Billion
disabled globally

MoSJ reply in LS 2024 :
2.68 crore or 2.21% of population

80% : Reside in
Developing countries

Movement : **54 Lakh**
Hearing & Seeing : **~ 50 Lakhs each**

21 categories listed in
RoPWD Act 2016

Chapter 3 : Affirmative action for "Disabled" people?

Penalties

Violation of Offences :
₹10,000 - ₹5 Lakh

Serious Offences
:Imprisonment :
6 months - 5 years

Falsely claim disability benefits :
Fine upto ₹ 1 Lakh or
Imprisonment upto 2 years

Article 14 : Right to Equality,
Accessibility & Reasonable
accommodation

Section 3 : "No
person shall be
discriminated
on ground of
disability"

**Increased
Quota of
Reservation :**
4% in
Government
Jobs &
5% in Higher
Education

**Rights of
Persons with
Disabilities
Act 2016**

Right to Education Act 2009

**Faster
Adjudication
under Special
Courts**

**High Penalties
for Offences**



Gaps for Vulnerable section in Census 2027

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Chapter 3 : Affirmative action for "Disabled" people?

Reflection on Ground?

Falling short

■ Despite the 2016 law raising reservation from 3% to 4%, the strength in Union govt. jobs have never crossed 1.1%.

■ Their numbers have stayed between 20,000–22,000 from 2016 to 2022, making up just about 1% of the workforce



Group-wise representation (2022)

Group A: Lowest share

Group B: 1.53%

Group C (non-Safai Karmachari): 1.1%

Group C (Safai Karmachari): 1.93%

UPSC 2025 Results :

4. Appointment to the various Services will be made according to the number of vacancies available with due consideration to the provisions contained in the Rules for the Examination. The number of vacancies reported by the Government to be filled is as under:

SERVICES	GEN	EWS	OBC	SC	ST	Total
I.A.S.	74	18	47	28	13	180
I.F.S.	22	06	15	08	04	55
I.P.S.	60	15	42	22	11	150
Central Services Group 'A'	211	48	141	73	34	507
Group 'B' Services	79	17	61	27	11	195
Total	446	104	306	158	73	1087*

*Includes 42 PwBD vacancies (10 PwBD-1, 14 PwBD-2, 09 PwBD-3 & 09 PwBD-5)

Chapter 4 : What are the issues faced by Disabled people?

"No data based Policy making"

- Only **28.8 %** of PwDs have disability certificate
- **21.8 %** receive some aid from government
- **1.8 %** receive help from NGOs

- **"Policy Blindness"**
- **Eligible individuals miss benefits**
- **Prevailing inequities persists**

"Discriminatory Tax Barriers"

- **High taxation on assistive devices or medical aids**
- **Prosthetic limbs, wheelchairs, brailers etc**

- **"Policy Paralysis"**
- **High OOPe**
- **WHO : OOPe accounted for >50% health expenditure**

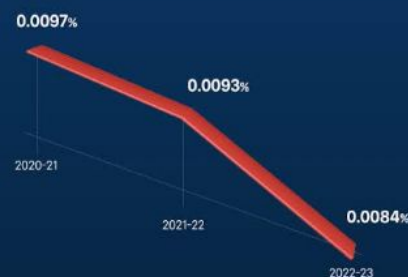
2.2% of Indian population suffering from disability, says NSO survey

In India, the prevalence of disability was 2.2% - with 2.3% in rural and 2% in urban areas
Among males, prevalence of disability was 2.4%, while it was 1.9% among females, the survey said

GST on assistive devices: Why are people with disabilities being taxed for their survival?

Wheelchairs, hearing aids, crutches, Braille paper and screen readers still attract 5 per cent GST, in what critics label a shocking structural inequity

UNION BUDGET ALLOCATIONS SPECIFIC TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AS A PERCENTAGE OF GDP



Source: Union Budget 2022-23 documents, Ministry of Finance, Government of India



Gaps for Vulnerable section in Census 2027

CONTEXT: The article highlights the issues being faced by the People with Disabilities due to "Government apathy" even a decade after enactment of the RPWD Act 2016

RPWD Rules 2023

- **Rule 15 : Accessibility norms for ICT products enabling digital inclusion**
- **Ramps, accessible toilets & transportation for disabled**
- **Unique Disability Identity cards (UDID) : White, Yellow & Red classification**
- **Registration of Medical authority on UDID portal**

Shortcomings :

- **Accessibility standards are treated as "Advisory" & not mandatory : No compliance & penalty mechanism**
- **Lack of Health Infrastructure : Specialist doctors, diagnostic equipments**
- **Government schemes : Mandatorily submit "Proof of Identity"**

Chapter 4 : What are the **issues** faced by Disabled people?

Non - Accessible India :

- **Survey of Public Buildings by UNESCO Representatives :**
 - **50% do not have ramps**
 - **25% availability of Wheelchair**
 - **5% have tactile paving**
- **Only 3% of Public buildings in India are "fully accessible"**

Chapter 5 : What are the **steps** taken?

Accessible India Campaign

Steps Taken Across India

SPARK Project by ILO & IFAD

GLAD Network of UNESCO

Niramay Initiative by Chhattisgarh Government

Adoption of UNCRPD in 2006



SUGAMYA BHARAT ABHIYAN
Key Achievements So Far

- 1748 government buildings retrofitted with accessibility features.
- 709 railway stations fully accessible, 4,068 partially accessible.
- All 35 international airports now feature accessibility features such as ramps and Braille systems.
- 95 Central Government websites made accessible under MeitY's Content Management Framework.
- 3,120 out of 3,533 bus stations across 24 States /UTs equipped with accessibility features.



Gaps for Vulnerable section in Census 2027



CONTEXT: The article highlights the issues being faced by the People with Disabilities due to "Government apathy" even a decade after enactment of the RPWD Act 2016

Mains Practise Question

Question : What are the salient features of the *Rights of People with Disabilities Act 2016*? How far it has faired to ensure the "*Idea of Accessibility*"?
(10 Marks, 150 words)



Newspaper : The Hindu, **Page No :** 12

'Transmission constraints threaten India's renewable energy expansion'

Newspaper	The Hindu
Page Number	12

Context of News :

Study by ICRA : "As solar penetration deepens, grid operators increasingly face the challenge of balancing **midday oversupply with evening deficits**, a phenomenon that intensifies transmission congestion, renewable curtailment & rapid ramping requirements from thermal assets"

India's Total Renewable Energy Capacity : **279 GW**

MoNRE (April, 2026) : Total installed solar capacity : **154 GW** (2014 : 2.8 GW)

Wind Power Capacity : **52 GW**
Wind Corridors : G > TN > K > Raj > Maha

ICRA : More than **50** RE Projects Under construction as of June, 2026

RE : **35%** of Electricity Generation By 2029-2030

"Value Additions" for Mains 2026 :

Issues with Solar Power Generation

Grid congestion during Peak hours lead to intermittent supply

37% RE capacity at Substations affected by curtailment during peak hours

Delays in firming PPA & Land acquisition for Projects

Energy requirement : **2.5 times** increase by 2047

2047 : Energy requirement will reach **2380 GWh**

15-20% Utilisation shortage due to failure of Transmission lines

01
Rooftop solar installations in **1 crore** households by FY 26-27

02
300 units of free electricity per household per month

PM SGBY

03
Outlay of **~₹75000 crore**

04
Central Subsidy : **60%** of system cost upto 2 KW



SYLLABUS: Prelims: Government Policies & Interventions
Newspaper : The Hindu, **Page No : 12**

Context of News :

- ❑ The Supreme Court has turned to **Gen Z & Gen Alpha** to "educate" their elders against the careless & excessive generation of everyday garbage
- ❑ **Requirement of "Social Engineering"**: Entitled to generate but not to cooperate and control the impact of solid waste management

Intensity of Threat : CPCB Report 2024 :

- India : **1.85 Lakh tonnes** of waste daily
- 96% collected > 61% treated > **21%** landfilled
- 0.34 kg / person / per day (2023) to **0.7 kg / person / day (2025)**
- Surpass **Germany** (4th position) by 2030
- Only about **50%** of generated waste is treated

India to generate 0.7kgwaste per person per day: by 2025: Report

Clean India Journal Editor 0



The rise in living standards fuelled by the industrial revolution and economic growth has dramatically reshaped consumption patterns, resulting in complex challenges for solid waste management (SWM). This shift in lifestyle has significantly increased the proportion of inorganic materials in waste, complicating SWM and elevating it to a global concern. A Report

SC Calls for Waste Management

Solid Waste Management Rules 2026

MoEFCC under **EPA 1986 & Article 253** : Stockholm Declaration

Waste Generators must segregate waste in 4 streams

Bulk Waste Generators

Segregate waste at source & hand recyclable material to authorities

Polluter Pay Principle: Environmental compensation for improper waste handling

Centralised Portal to track waste generation, collection & processing

Building with floor area : >20,000 m²

Water consumption of 40,000 litres or more

Electricity generation of 100 kg/day waste or more

Societies, malls, colleges, hotels, RWAs etc

Segregation of Waste :

Wet waste : biodegradable kitchen waste

Dry waste : plastic, paper, metal & glass

Sanitary waste : used diapers or sanitary pads

Special care waste : paint cans, bulbs or expired medicines/batteries

SC Calls for Waste Management

SYLLABUS: Prelims: Government Policies & Interventions
Newspaper : The Hindu, **Page No : 12**

What can be done?

Inclusion of
**"Repairability
Factor"** in Design
& Procurement
Policies

Social
Engineering :
**PRAKRITI
Mascot**

Use of
Biotechnology
: **Ideonella
Sakaiensis**

PPP for
increased
fund
allocations to
Municipalities
& use of **CSR
funds**

**"On Site
composting
& Waste to
Wealth"
Plants**



TV BRICS INTERNATIONAL
MEDIA
NETWORK

05:15 «BRICSterview»

12.01.26 • 15:00 • Ecology

China's Hangzhou leads
global shift towards
zero-waste cities

On Tuesday, Australia takes another step
towards reshaping its throw-away society.

A range of single-use plastic, including straws,
cutlery and micro beads in shampoo, will be
banned in its most populous state, New South
Wales (NSW), in a bid to reduce waste.



India needs clear "Arctic Narrative"

SYLLABUS: Prelims: International Treaties & Organisations
Newspaper: The Indian Express, **Page No:** Explained

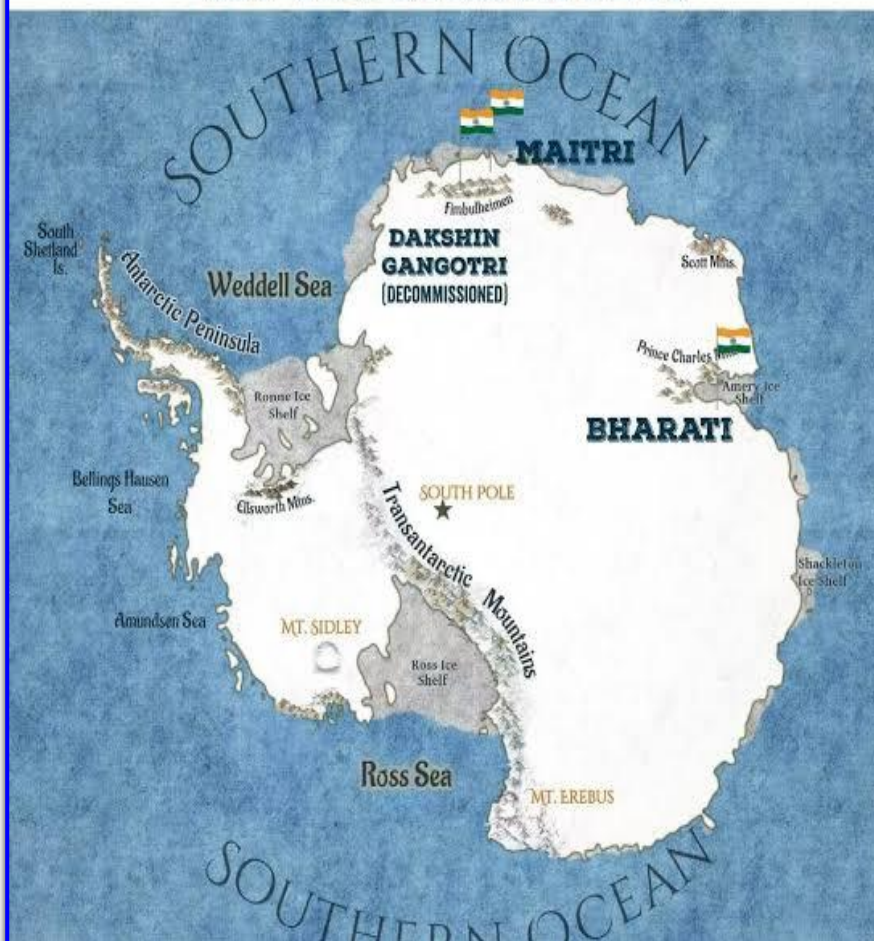
Context of News :

Report by
Parliamentary
Standing Committee
on External Affairs :
"India's Role &
Presence in Arctic &
Antarctic Regions"

India's Research in Arctic :

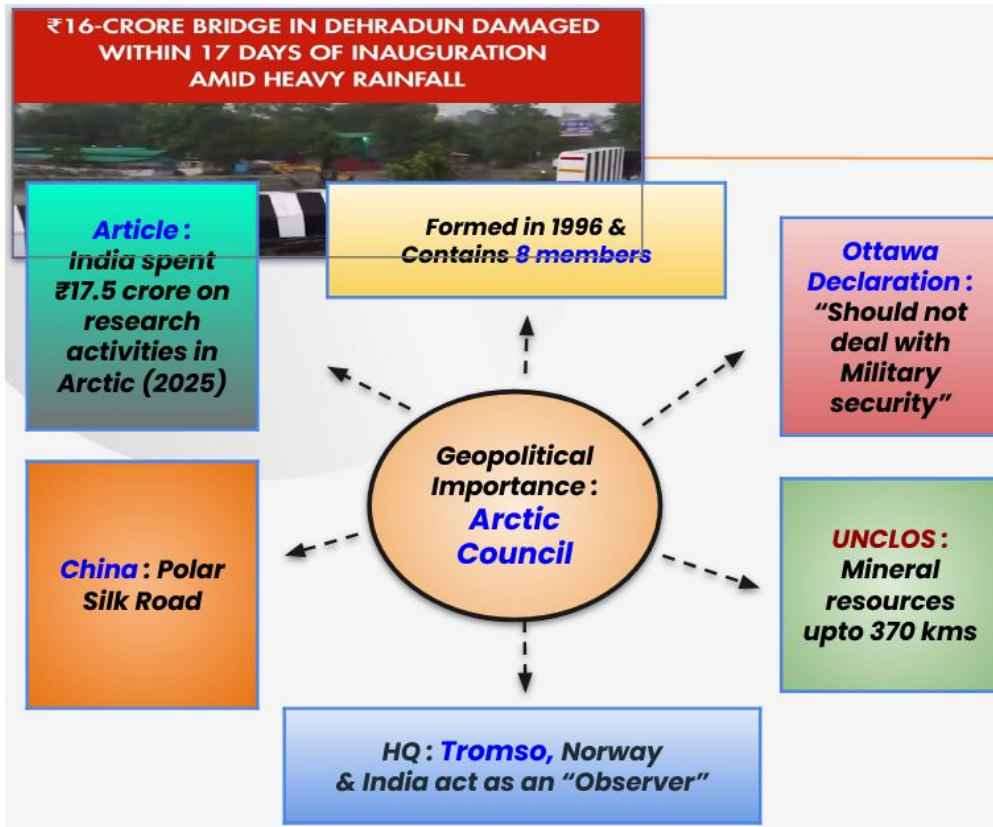
- ❑ **Svalbard Treaty 1920** : Indians can visit **Svalbard Archipelago** (Norway & North Pole) without Visa & engage in commercial ventures
- ❑ 1 out of 2 Developing nations to have research station at Arctic : **HIMADRI (2008)**
- ❑ Recent Research : **Arctic - Indian Monsoon Teleconnection**
- ❑ 1900-2020 : Temperature risen by **4 degree celsius**
- ❑ Arctic sea ice declining by **13% per decade**
- ❑ **IndArc** = Underwater observatory to study Arctic

INDIAN RESEARCH STATION IN ANTARCTICA



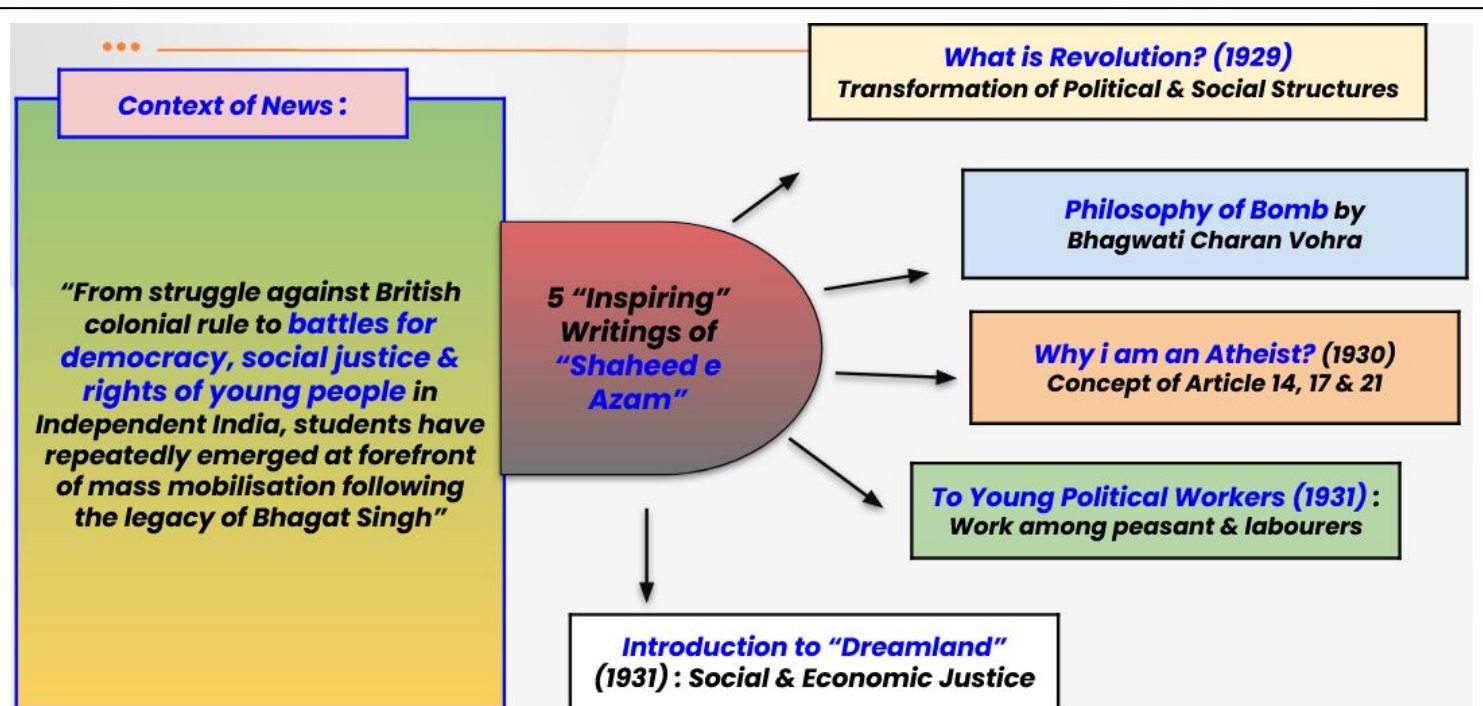
India needs clear "Arctic Narrative"

SYLLABUS: Prelims: International Treaties & Organisations
Newspaper: The Indian Express, **Page No :** Explained



Students upholding Bhagat Singh's Legacy

SYLLABUS: Prelims: Modern History : Significant Personalities
Newspaper : The Indian Express, **Page No : 13**



Bhagat Singh (1907-31)

Naujawan Bharat Sabha 1926

HSRA 1928 @ Feroz Shah Kotla

17th December 1928 : John P. Saunders
: Rajguru, Sukhdev, C. Azad

Public Safety & Trade Dispute Act 1926

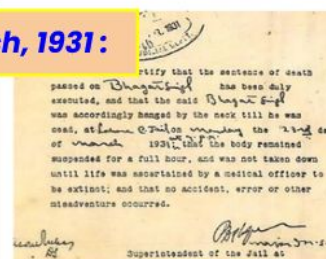
8th April 1929 : "Make deaf hear"

"Black Flag" Demonstrations
At Karachi Session 1931

23rd March, 1931:



Photo of Singh (back row, fourth from right) in the Lahore College Drama Club (1924)



Death certificate of Bhagat Singh



Singh's photo during his first arrest



SYLLABUS: Prelims: Government Policies & Interventions
Newspaper : The Hindu, **Page No : 12**

Mid Day Meal Scheme

Context of News :

- ❑ At least 34 children of Parsa Middle School in **Nalanda district** of Bihar fell ill after consuming midday meal on Tuesday
- ❑ Following allegations that **detergent powder** was served instead of salt "by mistake"

Salient Provisions of Scheme :

PM POSHAN –
Pradhan Mantri Poshan
Shakti Nirman

Rights based statutory
foundation under
**National Food Security
Act 2013 (NFSA)**

Centrally
Sponsored Scheme

Implemented by
Ministry of Education

Eligibility?

Up to **Class VIII** or
within the age group of
6–14 years

Entitled to :

One free mid-day meal
every day except on
school holidays

In which Institutions?

Schools run by local bodies
or Government or
Government-aided schools

Nutritional Component :
450 calories (Primary) &
700 calories (Upper
Primary)

Meal must meet the
nutritional standards
specified in Schedule II
of the NFSA

**Bal Vatika & Special
Training Centres (STCs)**

100–150 grams of Food
Grains & 20–30 grams
of Pulses

**Strict ratio for
Vegetables, Oil & Fat**



Q1. With reference to the Census in India, consider the following statements:

1. The first mention of the Census is found in Arthashastra.
2. The first non-synchronous census in India was conducted in 1872 during the tenure of W.C. Plowden.
3. The first synchronous census in India was conducted in 1881 under Lord Mayo and W.C. Plowden.

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

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

Answer: a

Q2. With reference to waste management in India, consider the following statements:

1. India generates around 1.85 lakh tonnes of waste daily as per the CPCB Report 2024.
2. About 96% of waste is collected, of which around 61% is treated, and 21% is landfilled.
3. Only about half of the total generated waste is treated.

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

Q3. How many of the following countries have parts within the Arctic Circle?

1. Sweden
2. Finland
3. Greenland
4. Canada
5. United States

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: d

Q4. Which of the following writings were authored by Bhagat Singh?

1. Why I am an Atheist
2. Philosophy of the Bomb
3. Introduction to "Dreamland"

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: b

Q5. With reference to the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, consider the following statements:

1. It covers children up to Class VIII or in the age group of 6–14 years.
2. The scheme provides 700 calories for primary students and 450 calories for upper primary students.

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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