



VAJIRAM & RAVI
Institute for IAS Examination

The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

22nd September 2026



CONTEXT: The country's democratic institutions i.e. Houses of parliament and state assemblies no longer serve the purpose for which they were established

Parliamentary Oversight – Overview:

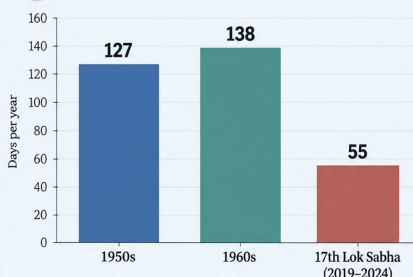
- Lok Sabha functioned – **15% of its scheduled time** and Rajya Sabha for **33%**.
- Question Hour functioned for merely **1% of scheduled time in Lok Sabha and 12% in Rajya Sabha**.
- Of the 11 Bills passed by Lok Sabha, **nine were passed without any MP other than the concerned Minister** participating in discussion.
- Budget Session of 2026, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha functioned for 86% and 92% of scheduled time respectively.

Parliamentary Sitzings and Disruptions: A Historical Snapshot

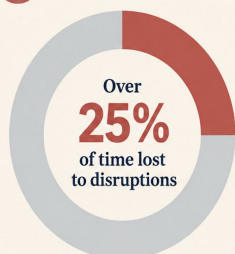
FEWER SITTINGS. MORE DISRUPTIONS. A GROWING CONCERN.



Average Number of Days Both Houses of Parliament Met Per Year



Time Lost to Disruptions



Parliamentary sittings have declined sharply from the 1950s and 1960s to the 17th Lok Sabha, while disruptions now consume over a quarter of the scheduled time.



- **Limited space for the individual MP** – 729 Private Members' Bills were introduced, only two were actually discussed
- **Weakened Institutional conventions** – 17th Lok Sabha functioned without electing a Deputy Speaker.

- **Making the Executive answerable**
- **Improving the quality of legislation**
- **Controlling public finance**
- **Representing society between elections**

Parliamentary Oversight

Factors behind the decline

- Adversarial politics has replaced deliberative politics
- The Executive controls much of the parliamentary timetable
- Party centralisation has weakened MPs' autonomy
- Committee scrutiny remains discretionary
- Politics increasingly occurs outside Parliament

Parliamentary Oversight – Need and Status

- **Fewer meeting of Parliament** – 17th Lok Sabha held about **55 sitting days annually**
- **Accountability time is consumed** due to disruptions – The 2026 Monsoon Session Question Hour in Lok Sabha effectively disappeared
- **Compressed Legislative scrutiny** – 17th Lok Sabha: 58% of Bills were passed within two weeks of introduction
- **Parliamentary Committees are being underused** – 16% in the 17th Lok Sabha.
- **Thinning Financial scrutiny** – 77% of the Budget was guillotined (Budget 2026)



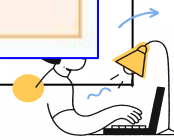
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Parliamentary Oversight – Way Ahead

- **Guarantee adequate sitting time** – The **National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution (NCRWC)** had recommended at least **120 sitting days for Lok Sabha and 100 for Rajya Sabha**.
- **Protect Question Hour** – Ministers should provide timely and substantive answers; greater use of supplementary questioning should be encouraged.
- **Make committee scrutiny the normal rule** – All significant Bills should ordinarily be referred to a **Department-related Standing Committee, Select Committee or Joint Committee**, except where clearly stated urgency makes this impracticable.
- **Create minimum deliberative safeguards for legislation** Except in genuine emergencies, important Bills should not be introduced and passed immediately.
- **Deepen financial scrutiny** – Parliament should ensure that a larger proportion of **Demands for Grants** receives meaningful examination.
- **Give Opposition and Private Members assured space** – Some parliamentary time can be institutionally reserved for subjects chosen by opposition parties and non-government MPs.
- **Reconsider the reach of the party whip** – The anti-defection framework should preserve government stability without eliminating parliamentary judgment.
- **Strengthen presiding institution**– The Speaker and Chairman must be seen as custodians of the House rather than participants in partisan conflict.
- **Improve legislative capacity of MPs** – MPs require: professional research staff; expert briefings; accessible data; and stronger committee support.

Mains Practice Question

Q. “The effectiveness of a parliamentary democracy depends not merely on the government's majority in the House, but on the legislature's capacity to continuously scrutinise the Executive.” Discuss in the context of the declining deliberative and oversight role of the Indian Parliament. (250 word / 15 Marks)



22nd September 2026

CONTEXT: Outer space is no longer only a domain of exploration and development; it is increasingly becoming a strategic military domain.

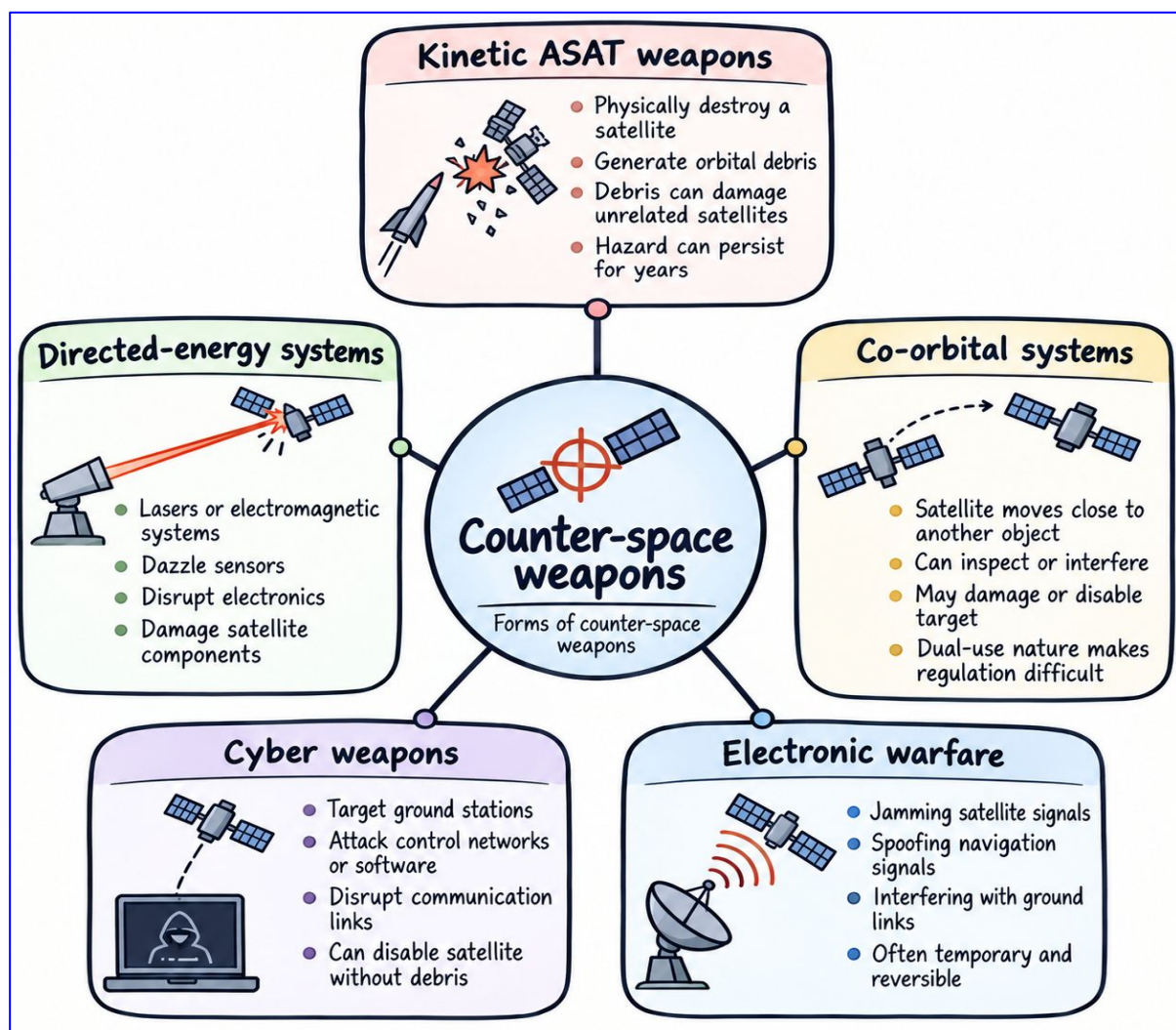
Unsafe Space

Emerging space-security environment – Challenges

- Civilian and military systems are increasingly intertwined
- Space weapons are difficult to define
- Attribution is difficult
- Autonomous and AI-enabled satellites add uncertainty

Perils of Weaponisation of space

- Risk of an arms race
- Space debris can harm everyone
- Civilian life can become collateral damage
- Commercial actors complicate warfare



CONTEXT: Outer space is no longer only a domain of exploration and development; it is increasingly becoming a strategic military domain.

Unsafe Space - International laws and Conventions

The Outer Space Treaty, 1967

- **Nuclear/WMD in orbit** → **prohibited**
All conventional space weapons → **not comprehensively prohibited**
- Requires States to conduct space activities in accordance with international law
- Requires activities to be undertaken with **due regard for the interests of other States**.

Liability Convention, 1972

- It creates rules governing liability for damage caused by space objects.

Registration Convention

- Registration improves identification of space objects and State responsibility

PAROS : Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space.

- It has long been discussed within the UN disarmament framework.
- The UN General Assembly established a new **Open-Ended Working Group on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space in all its Aspects**, intended to work during the 2024–2028 period.

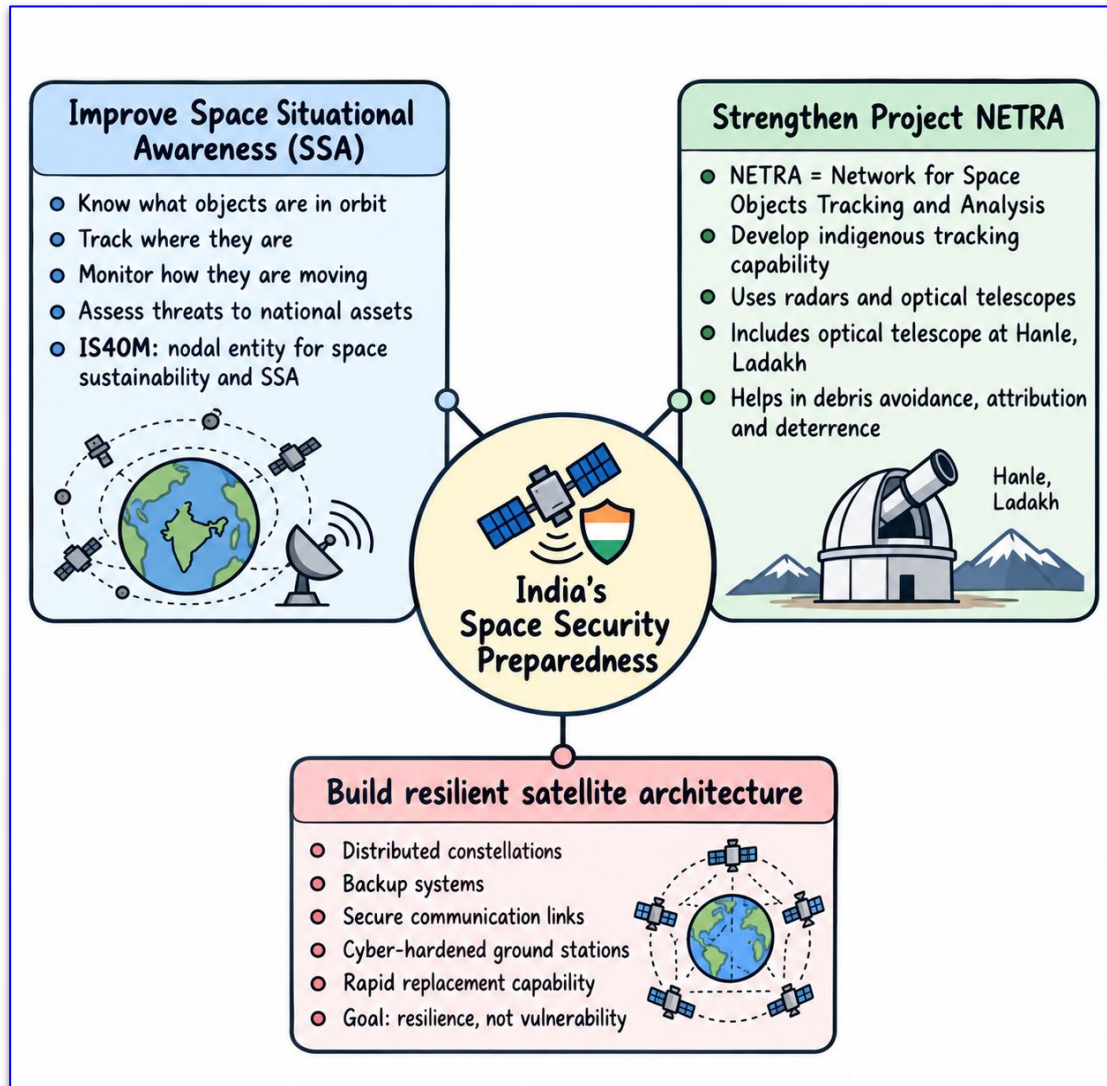
Unsafe Space – Way Forward

Pillar	Key Measures
Legally binding framework	Negotiate a PAROS-type treaty ; ensure verification, universality and non-discrimination .
Responsible behaviour norms	Pending a treaty, adopt rules on safe distances, prior notification of risky manoeuvres, communication during close approaches and restraint on debris-generating activities .
Crisis communication	Establish hotlines and consultation mechanisms among major space-faring States
Transparency & confidence building	Promote greater disclosure of launches, orbital manoeuvres, military doctrines and potentially hazardous activities
Clarify humanitarian/legal rules	Develop clearer norms for civilian satellites, commercial operators, dual-use systems and liability during conflicts.
Regulate autonomous/AI systems	Define rules on human control, autonomous targeting, attribution and escalation thresholds
Strengthen collective space safety	Expand Space Situational Awareness, debris tracking, data-sharing and international cooperation to preserve orbital sustainability.



22nd September 2026

CONTEXT: Outer space is no longer only a domain of exploration and development; it is increasingly becoming a strategic military domain.



Mains Practice Question

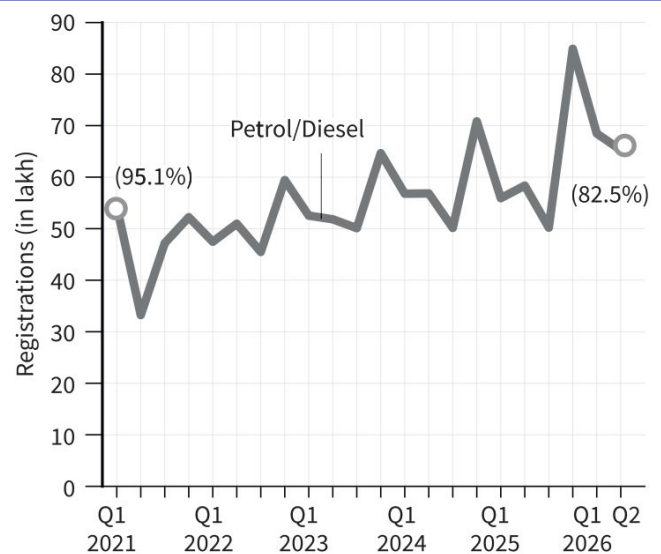
Q. "Weaponisation of outer space threatens global security, civilian systems and space sustainability. Examine gaps in the existing legal framework and suggest measures for effective global governance." (15 Marks / 250 Words)



Decoding the transition to alternative fuels

While adoption of EVs has risen in the passenger vehicles category, it is mainly two-wheeler and three-wheeler categories that are adopting EVs than cars

- **August 2026: Alternative-fuel vehicles overtook petrol/diesel vehicles** in new passenger vehicle registrations.
- **Alternative fuels: 41.95%**
- **Petrol vehicles: 40.85%**
- Alternative fuels here include **EVs, CNG, hybrids and electric combined**.
- Petrol/Diesel Still Dominate Overall Vehicle Registrations (82.5%)
- EV adoption is rising, but the transition is driven mainly by: two-wheelers & three-wheelers



- EV share in total registrations: **1.1% (2021) → 9.1% (2026)**.
- EV share in two-wheelers: **~40% in 2025 → 60.5% in 2026**.
- Petrol/diesel share in new three-wheelers in 2026: **~4%**.
- In cars, petrol/diesel still around **61.6%** in 2026.
- CNG/LPG has become the **second-largest fuel category in cars**.

Why EV Adoption Is Slower in Cars

- **EV cars remain significantly more expensive** than comparable CNG/LPG vehicles.
- **Charging infrastructure** is still inadequate.
- **CNG/LPG infrastructure** is already better established.
- Among cars, consumers often shift first from petrol/diesel to **CNG/LPG or hybrids**, not directly to EVs.



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Fundamental Rights
Newspaper : Indian Express Page Number : 1

Constitutional Provision: Article 22

- Provides safeguards against **arbitrary arrest and detention**.

Article 22(1) – an arrested person has the right:

- to be **informed of the grounds of arrest**;
- to **consult and be defended by a legal practitioner of choice**.
- Under **Article 22(2)**: an arrested person must be produced before the **nearest magistrate within 24 hours** of arrest, excluding journey time;
- detention beyond 24 hours requires the **authority of a magistrate**.

*“Safeguards under Article 22 are **fundamental constitutional guarantees**, not merely procedural formalities.”*

Written Grounds of Arrest: Mandatory Requirement

- The arrested person must ordinarily be furnished the **grounds of arrest in writing**.
- The grounds must be communicated **in a language understood by the arrested person**.
- Failure to furnish the grounds can render: the **arrest illegal**, and the **subsequent remand illegal**.
- The requirement applies **across offences and statutes**, including: offences under the **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS)**; and offences under special enactments.

Supreme Court Guidelines on Re-arrest Before Re-arrest

- The accused must first be given the **written grounds of arrest**.
- Police must make an **application before a magistrate** seeking permission for re-arrest.

The application must explain:

- why re-arrest is necessary**; and
- why grounds of arrest were not furnished during the first arrest**.

Magistrate's Role

- The magistrate must apply an independent **judicial mind** before permitting re-arrest.
- there were **bona fide reasons** for failure to provide the grounds initially; and
- re-arrest is genuinely necessary.
- The magistrate has to decide the application **within one week**.

Additional Safeguards Against Police Abuse

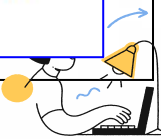
- The application for re-arrest must have the **endorsement of the immediate superior officer** of the investigating officer.

If re-arrest is permitted:

- investigation should be **transferred to another officer**.
- A **departmental inquiry** should be ordered into the earlier illegal arrest.
- The Supreme Court **directed High Courts across India** to grant “suitable mandatory compensation” where arrests violate constitutional/procedural safeguards.

*Article 22(1) safeguards apply “**across the spectrum**” of offences. **Serious allegations do not justify dilution of constitutional safeguards**.*

- **Pankaj Bansal (2023) vs UOI** → written grounds under PMLA
- **Ram Kishor Arora (2023) vs Enforcement directorate** → qualification of written-ground requirement
- **Prabir Purkayastha (2024) vs Govt of NCT** → written grounds reaffirmed
- **Mihir Rajesh Shah (2025) vs State of Maharashtra** → written grounds across offences/statutes, in language understood by accused
- **Jaskaran Jeet Singh Deol v. State of Punjab (2026)** → stringent safeguards governing **re-arrest after an unconstitutional first arrest**



22nd September 2026

**SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Fundamental Right and Judicial interventions
Environment – Health**

Newspaper : The Hindu Page Number : 8

Methanol

- **Methanol (methyl alcohol)** is a **highly toxic alcohol**.
- **Major industrial uses:** manufacture of **formaldehyde, paraformaldehyde, paints, resins** and other chemicals.
- If mixed with liquor, it can cause **severe poisoning, blindness or death**.
- State amended the **Maharashtra Poisons Rules, 1972**, in 2011
- methanol sold to non-drug manufacturers to contain a colourant and bitterant
- verification/licensing requirements for purchasers
- confiscation consequences for certain unlicensed possession.

What did the Supreme Court hold?

The SC **struck down the impugned restrictions as unconstitutional**.

Rights involved:

- **Article 14** – equality/non-arbitrariness.
- **Article 19(1)(g)** – freedom to practise a profession or carry on trade/business.

Why were the Rules Article struck down?

- Preventing methanol deaths was a **legitimate State objective**, but the measures failed the **proportionality test**.
- Mandatory colourant/bitterant had **no reasonable and proximate nexus** with preventing diversion of methanol into illicit liquor.
- Merely verifying a purchaser's licence did not establish **how methanol would actually be used**.

“What is discernable from the above is that in practicality, the impugned rules prescribe a regulatory framework that does not prevent the misuse of methanol in liquor which takes place in the unregulated field. The sub-rule even in the best case of full compliance cannot prevent the misuse it aims to prevent... It addresses a mischief, it does not in fact remedy while imposing a continuous burden on the industries,” it observed.

- The rules imposed a **continuous burden on legitimate industries** without showing that they would effectively prevent illicit liquor.
- SC applied the **proportionality framework** associated with **K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India (2017)**.

SC's Suggested Approach

- **licensing and periodic review**
- stock and consumption records
- return of unused/excess methanol
- **dedicated sealed tankers under excise supervision**
- inter-departmental coordination among **excise, police, transport, industries and health departments**
- monitoring of diversion to illicit-liquor networks.
- more **de-addiction centres, support for affected families and local counselling centres**.

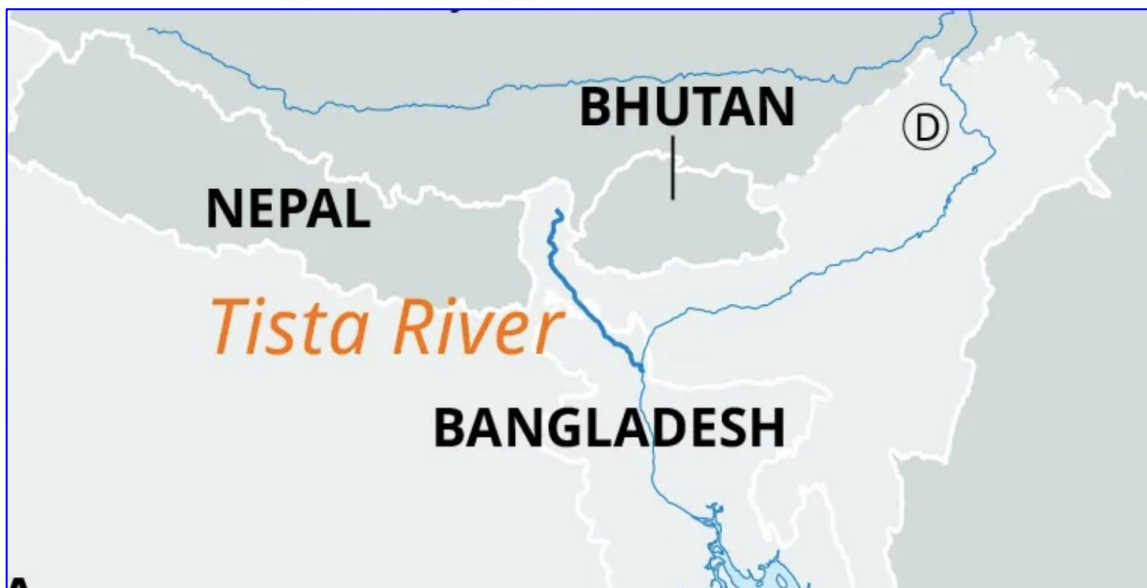


22nd September 2026

SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : *Drainage*

Newspaper : Indian Express Page Number : 12

- **Origin:** Tso Lhamo Lake in North Sikkim, India.
 - It is glacier-fed (Pahurni Glacier, Khangse Glacier) and Chho Lhamo Lake contributing to its flow.
 - It is a major tributary of the Brahmaputra River (Jamuna in Bangladesh)
- Course
- It then flows cutting a **deep gorge through the Siwalik Hills** east of Darjiling (in West Bengal, India).
 - It turns southeast to run through the **Sivok Khola pass** onto the plains of West Bengal.
 - Enters Bangladesh – joins the Brahmaputra River
- Tributaries:**
- Left Bank Lachung Chhu, Dik Chhu, and Rangpo Chhu the
 - Right Bank – Rangit River.
 - 83% of the basin lies in India, while 17% is in Bangladesh



Rhesus Macaque

22nd September 2026

SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : *Species in News*

Newspaper : Indian Express Page Number : 13

About Rhesus Macaque (*Macaca mulatta*)

- Species of Old-World monkey.
- **Distribution:** They are **native to India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Myanmar, Thailand, Afghanistan, Vietnam, southern China**, and some neighboring areas.
- **Habitat:** They may be found in forests, mangroves, scrub, grasslands, and mountainous regions.
- They also **adapt well to human presence and form larger troops in human-dominated landscapes than in forests.**
- **Diet:** Rhesus macaques are omnivorous
- **Social groups:** They live in large groups, often led by a dominant male.
- **Lifestyle:** These are social, diurnal, and both terrestrial and arboreal animals.
- **Communication:** They use vocalizations, facial expressions, and body language
- **IUCN – *Least concern***



Legal Status under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972

Earlier Position

- Listed as a **protected species** under **Part I of Schedule II** of the **Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.**

Change after 2022

- The **Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Act, 2022** removed from the protected-species schedule.

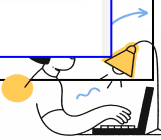
Significance

- This change altered the **administrative responsibility** for monkey management.
- State forest departments are no longer solely responsible for addressing the monkey menace in urban areas.
- In cities they increasingly treated administratively like **stray animals**, bringing **urban local bodies (ULBs)/municipal bodies** into a greater role.

A question of compensation

Last week, a Shimla-based NGO held a protest outside the SMC Commissioner's office demanding a compensation of Rs 5 lakh for the deceased woman. The NGO also demanded stricter action against those found feeding monkeys in Shimla.

The change in legal status, however, has also affected compensation. Under Himachal Pradesh's wildlife compensation policy cited by officials, severe monkey-attack injuries attract a compensation of Rs 75,000, permanent disability Rs 1 lakh, and death Rs 4 lakh. **Since rhesus macaque is no longer covered by the Act, officials indicated that the woman's family is unlikely to qualify under this framework.**



22nd September 2026

Q1. With reference to the Teesta River, consider the following statements:

1. The Teesta originates from Tso Lhamo Lake in North Sikkim.
2. The Teesta is a tributary of the Brahmaputra River and joins it in Bangladesh.
3. The Rangit River is one of the left-bank tributaries of the Teesta.

Which of the above given statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 2 only
- d) All of the above

Answer: c

Q2. Which of the following statements regarding the Rhesus Macaque (*Macaca mulatta*) is Not correct?

- a) It is an Old-World monkey native to several parts of South and Southeast Asia.
- b) It is omnivorous and can adapt to human-dominated landscapes.
- c) It was listed under Part I of Schedule II of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, before the 2022 amendment.
- d) The Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Act, 2022 removed it from the protected-species schedules.

Answer: d

Q3. With reference to the safeguards against arrest and detention under Article 22 of the Constitution, consider the following statements:

1. An arrested person has the right to be informed of the grounds of arrest and to consult a legal practitioner of their choice.
2. An arrested person must ordinarily be produced before the nearest magistrate within 24 hours of arrest, including journey time.
3. The grounds of arrest must be communicated in a language understood by the arrested person.

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

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

Answer: b

Q4. With reference to methanol regulation in India, consider the following statements:

1. Methanol is a highly toxic alcohol and can cause severe poisoning, blindness or death if consumed.
2. The Supreme Court held that preventing methanol diversion into illicit liquor is a legitimate State objective, but restrictions must satisfy the proportionality test.

Which of the above given statements is/are correct?

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

Answer: c

Q5. With reference to international space law, consider the following statements:

1. The Outer Space Treaty, 1967 prohibits the placement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in orbit.
2. The Treaty comprehensively prohibits all conventional weapons in outer space.
3. The Liability Convention, 1972 establishes rules concerning liability for damage caused by space objects.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) All of the above

Answer: c





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