



VAJIRAM & RAVI
Institute for IAS Examination

The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

30th March 2025



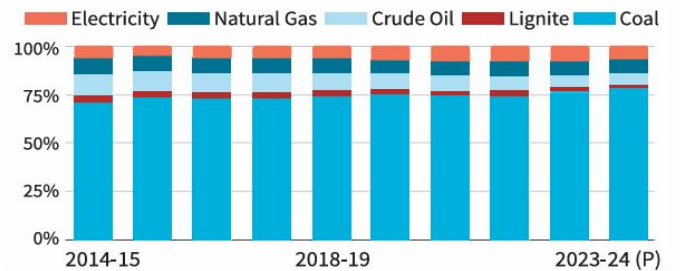
Rising Coal Use Despite Renewable Push

CONTEXT: India's coal reliance increased to 79% in FY24, despite the government's push for renewables.

- Coal's share in India's total energy generation rose to **79%** in 2023-24.
- This is an increase of **2 percentage points** compared to the previous year.
- Coal has consistently contributed **over 70%** to India's total energy production since **2014-15**.
- Coal production grew by **12%** in 2023-24 compared to the previous year (2022-23).
- In 2022-23, coal production had already seen a **decadal high growth rate of 15%**.

Coal dominates

Coal in the share of total energy production (in petajoules) increased from 77% in FY23 to 79% in FY24.; about a fourth of the coal supply is imported

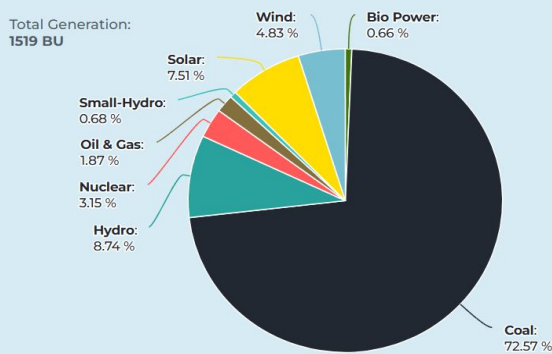


Source: Energy Statistics of India 2025, MoSPI

India Power Generation - Overview

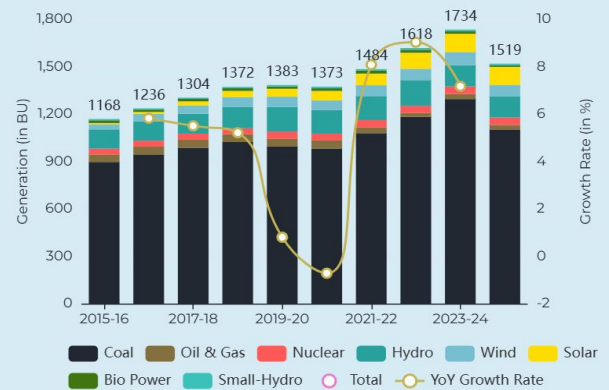
Installed Capacity ☐ Generation

Power Sources Mix - Generation
(as on 31st January 2025)



Power Sources Trend - Generation

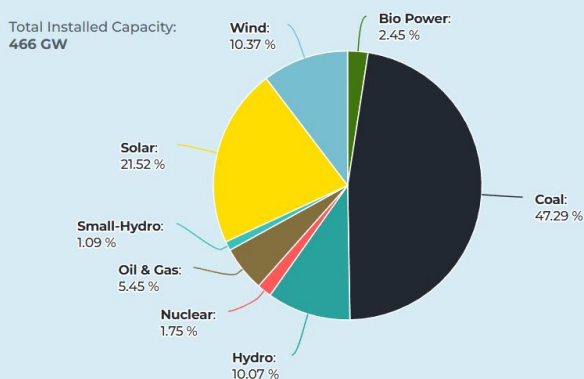
from 2015-16 to 2024-25 (as on 31st January 2025) (in BU)



India Power Capacity - Overview

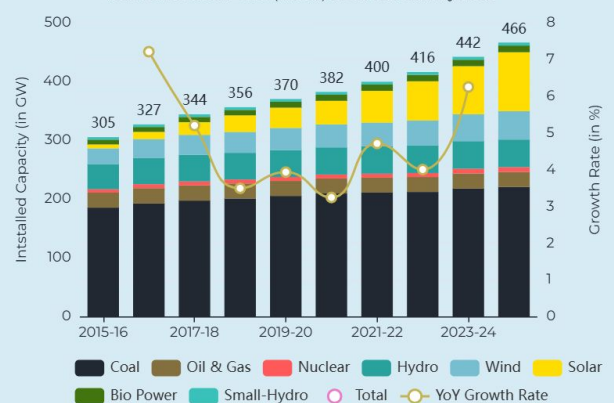
Installed Capacity ☒ Generation

Power Sources Mix - Installed Capacity
(as on 31st January 2025)



Power Sources Trend - Installed Capacity

from 2015-16 to 2024-25 (in GW) as on 31st January 2025



30th March 2025

CONTEXT: India's coal reliance increased to 79% in FY24, despite the government's push for renewables.

Reasons for High Coal Reliance

- Abundant Reserves : 5th largest coal reserves globally
- Insufficient Integration :
- Cost Effectiveness: affordable compared to imported fuels like gas or oil.
- Job and Economic Stability : 4 million Indians are directly or indirectly.
- Economic Viability
- Infrastructure and Technological Constraints



Impacts of High Coal Use

- Environmental Concerns
- Risks associated with Health
- Economic Vulnerabilities
- Social Disruptions
- High Greenhouse Gas Emissions

ANOTHER EMISSION CRISIS

NCR thermal power plants emit **281** kilotonnes of SO₂ (June 2022–May 2023)

With Flue Gas Desulfurization (FGD) tech it could drop to **93** kilotonnes – a 67% reduction

India is now the world's largest SO₂ emitter, responsible for over 20% of global anthropogenic SO₂ emissions, driven by coal-heavy energy

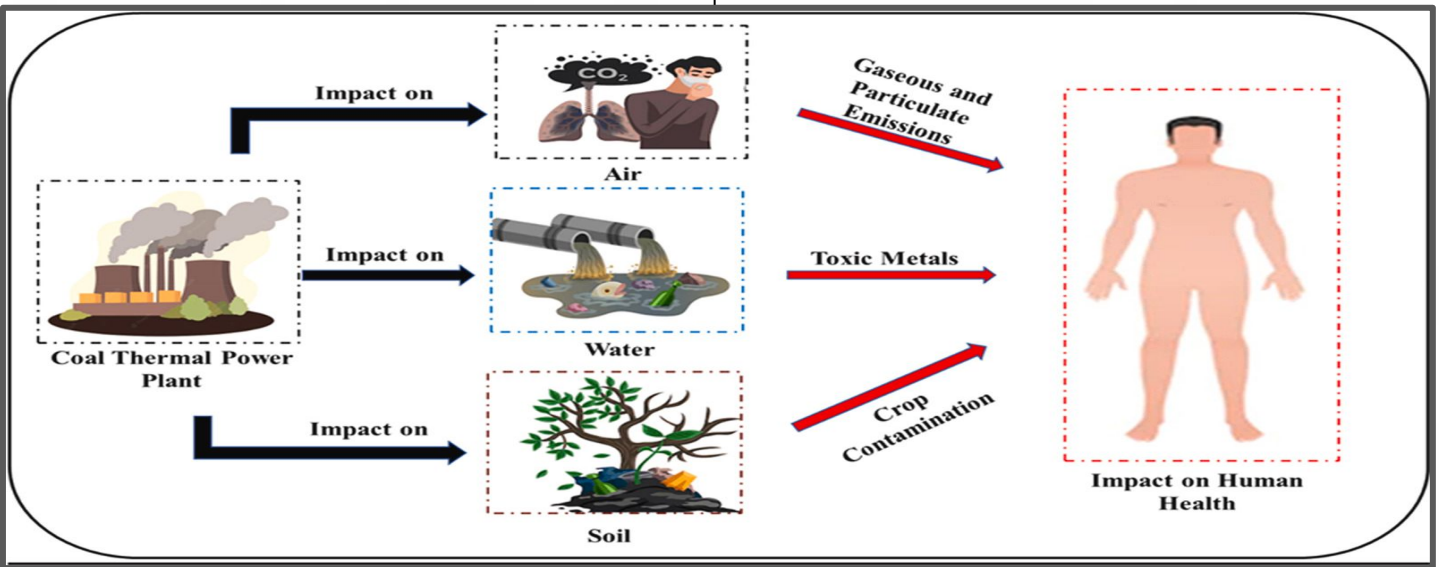
PLANTS IN FOCUS

- 11 coal-based plants within 300km of Delhi
- Goindwal Sahib in Punjab (just outside 300km)



POTENTIAL SO₂ EMISSION REDUCTION

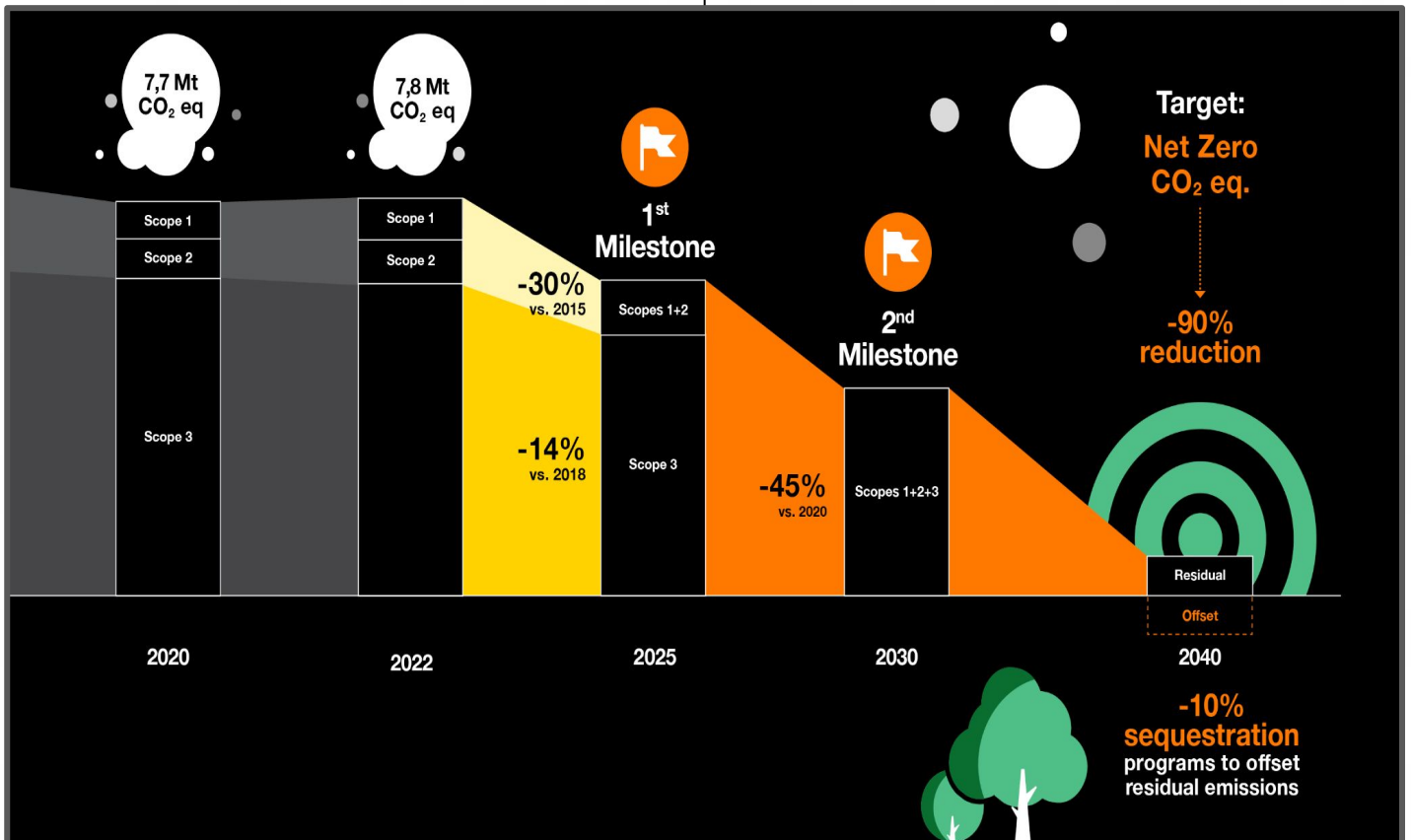
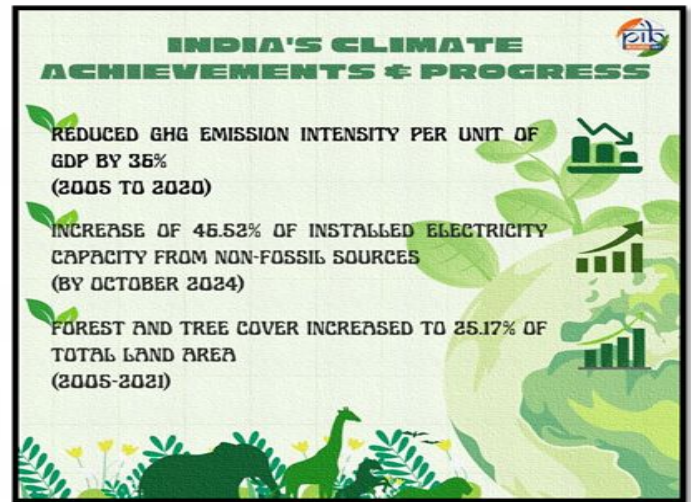
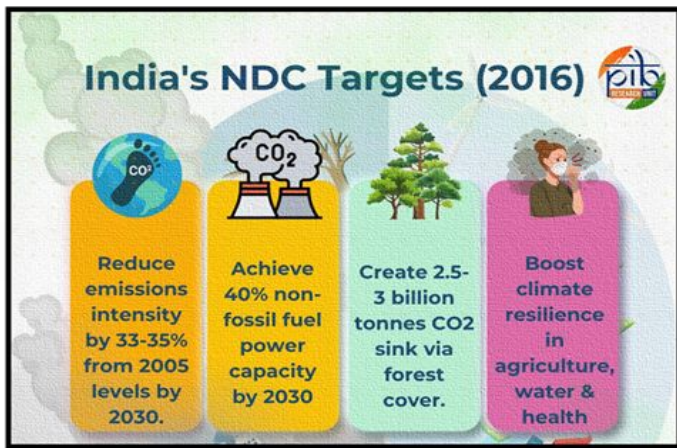
Thermal Power Plants in NCR	Current SO ₂ emissions (Kilotonnes/Year)	% reduction after FGD installation
Dadri TPP	26	19
Guru Hargobind TPS	20	65
Harduaganj TPS	8	38
Indira Gandhi STPP	36	81
Mahatma Gandhi TPS	5	0 (installed)
Panipat TPS	40	83
Rajiv Gandhi TPS	18	67
Rajpura TPP	35	83
Ropar TPS	21	33
Talwandi Sabo TPP	48	83
Yamuna Nagar TPS	13	69
Goindwal Sahib TPP	11	64
Total Emissions	281	67



CONTEXT: India's coal reliance increased to 79% in FY24, despite the government's push for renewables.

Need for Expanding the Renewables

- Emissions Reduction Commitment
- Global Leadership in Renewables
- Sustainable Energy Transition
- Declining Renewable Energy Costs
- Growth of Renewable Energy Industry



CONTEXT: India's coal reliance increased to 79% in FY24, despite the government's push for renewables.

Government Initiatives to Shift towards Renewables

PM MAKES FIVE PLEDGES

- 1 India will increase its non-fossil energy capacity to 500GW by 2030
- 2 India will meet 50% of its energy requirements from renewable energy by 2030
- 3 India will reduce the total projected carbon emissions by one billion tonnes from now to 2030
- 4 By 2030, India will reduce the carbon intensity of its economy by 45% (from a previous target of 35%)
- 5 By 2070, India will achieve the target of net zero

International Solar Alliance : Salient Points

What is International Solar Alliance?
It is an inter-governmental organisation to promote solar energy among member countries. It is headquartered in Gurgaon

How many have joined in?
As of now, 61 nations have joined the alliance while 32 have ratified the Framework Agreement

\$83 bn
India's requirement to meet its 175 GW goal

Who's behind it?
The idea was conceived and articulated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his Wembley Stadium speech at London in 2015

What is the concept?
It is meant to bring together 121 countries that lie either completely or partly between the two tropics so as to harness solar energy and make the technology freely available to all nations

ISA TARGET
1,000 GW
Solar generation capacity globally by 2030
\$1 trillion
Investment required to achieve the 2030 goal

175 Gigawatts (GW) generation from renewable energy is India's target for 2022

20 GW solar power capacity already installed in India, says Modi

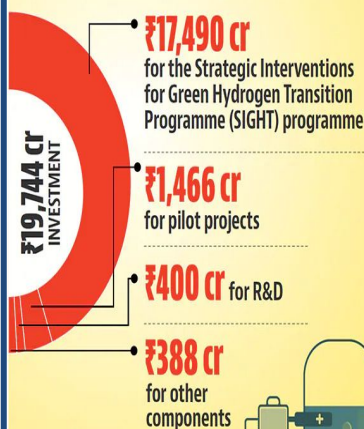
**ONE SUN
ONE WORLD
ONE GRID
THE SUN NEVER SETS**

"I firmly believe that this project can bring transformational benefits for the entire humanity."
- Hon'ble Prime Minister Of India, Shri Narendra Modi.

Centre's push for clean energy

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved ₹19,744 crore to promote the manufacturing of green hydrogen in the country in a bid to cut emissions

KEY COMPONENTS OF THE PACKAGE



EXPECTED OUTCOME OF THE MISSION BY 2030...

- India's green hydrogen production capacity to reach at least **5 million metric tonne per annum**
- Cumulative reduction in fossil fuel imports over **₹1 lakh crore**
- Abatement of nearly **50 million metric tonne** of annual greenhouse gas emissions

₹8 lakh cr
INVESTMENTS
600,000
JOBS



भारत सरकार
MINISTRY OF
PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS

#AatmaNirbharBharatAbhiyan

ETHANOL BLENDED PETROL PROGRAMME

Promoting usage and adoption of biofuels



655 crore litres

ethanol has been supplied to OMCs by sugar mills since 2014-15.

₹ 32,170 crore

OMCs have paid to sugar mills, which in turn helped the sugar mills to pay remuneration to farmers.



f /PetroleumMinIndia t /PetroleumMin



CONTEXT: India's coal reliance increased to 79% in FY24, despite the government's push for renewables.

Government Initiatives to Shift towards Renewables



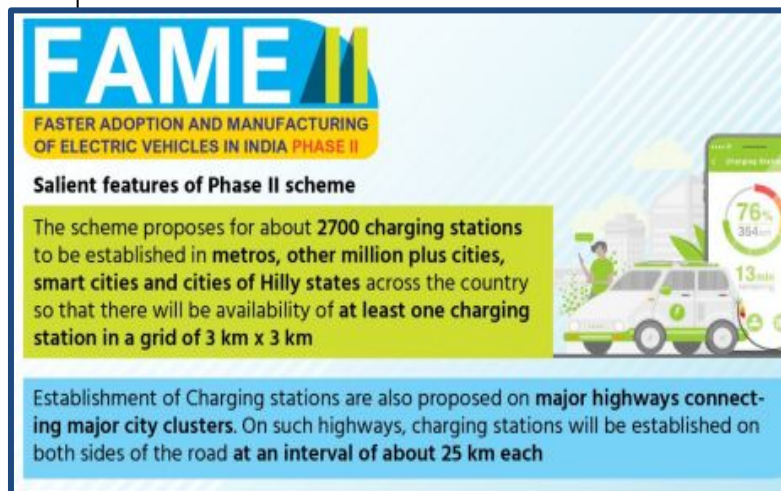
National Solar Mission
making India brighter and smarter

Modi Govt sets target of 1,00,000 MW grid-connected solar power by Dec 2022

- Total grid-connected solar power generation capacity of **31,696 MW** set up
- Projects of capacity **17,998 MW** at various stages of installations
- Tenders for **36,278 MW** capacity projects issued already
- Total funds released by Govt: **8,518 crores** (from 2016- 2019)

*MW: Megawatt

BJP4India | www.bjp.org | Data till: 31st Oct 2019 | Read more: bit.ly/SolarPowerGeneration



FAME II
FASTER ADOPTION AND MANUFACTURING OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES IN INDIA PHASE II

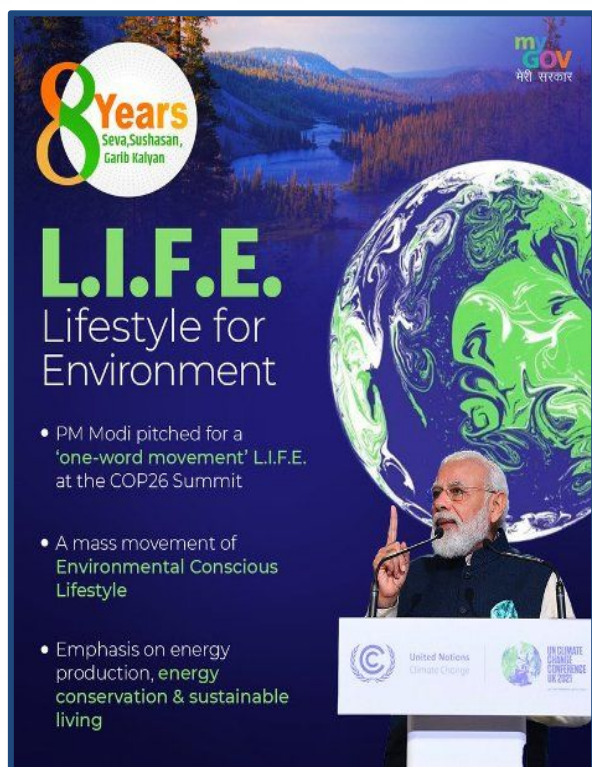
Salient features of Phase II scheme

The scheme proposes for about **2700 charging stations** to be established in **metros, other million plus cities, smart cities and cities of Hilly states** across the country so that there will be availability of **at least one charging station in a grid of 3 km x 3 km**

Establishment of Charging stations are also proposed on **major highways connecting major city clusters**. On such highways, charging stations will be established on both sides of the road at an interval of about **25 km** each

Mains Practice Question

Despite global efforts to reduce carbon emissions, India's reliance on coal remains persistent. Discuss the reasons behind this continued dependence and explain why a shift towards cleaner energy sources is imperative for India's sustainable future. (15 Marks, 250 words)



8 Years
Seva, Sushasan, Garib Kalyan

L.I.F.E.
Lifestyle for Environment

- PM Modi pitched for a 'one-word movement' **L.I.F.E.** at the COP26 Summit
- A mass movement of **Environmental Conscious Lifestyle**
- Emphasis on energy production, energy conservation & sustainable living

United Nations Climate Change | COP26



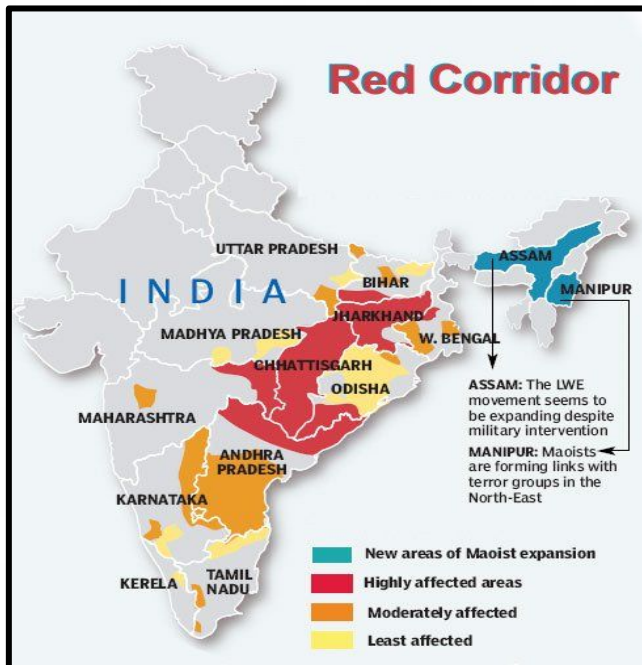
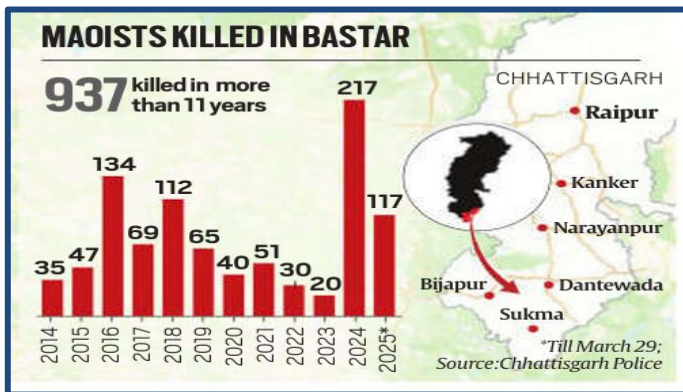
CONTEXT: Seventeen Maoists, including 11 women, were killed, and four security personnel were injured in an anti-Naxal operation in Sukma district, Chhattisgarh.

Background

- Maoists/Naxalites
- Naxalbari village

What they want?

- Overthrow of the government through **armed revolution**

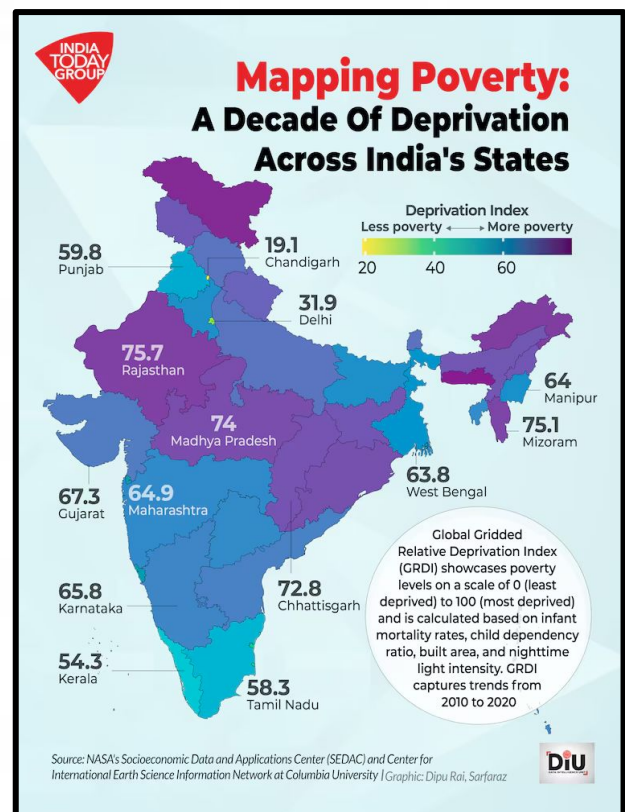


SHRINKING NAXAL VIOLENCE			
YEAR	INCIDENTS	DEATHS	ATTACKS ON ECONOMIC INFRA
2013	1136	397	169
2014	1091	310	100
2015	1089	230	127
2016	1048	278	79
2017	908	263	75
2018	833	240	60
2019	670	202	64
2020	665	183	47
2021	509	147	42
2022	531	98	42

Sources: MHA ; Parliament replies

Causes of Rise in LWE

- **Jal-Jangal-Jameen**
 - Evasion of land ceiling laws
 - Encroachment and occupation of Government and community lands
 - Disruption of the age old tribal-forest relationship
- **Development deficit**
 - Unemployment
 - Poverty
 - Infrastructure deficit
 - Lack of education
 - Poor health facilities
- **Social exclusion**
 - Violation of human rights
 - Abuse of dignity of life
 - Disconnect with mainstream society
 - Discontent against government



India's Maoist Challenge

CONTEXT: Seventeen Maoists, including 11 women, were killed, and four security personnel were injured in an anti-Naxal operation in Sukma district, Chhattisgarh.

- **Governance deficit**

- Incompetent, ill-trained and poorly motivated public personnel
- Mismanagement and corruption
- Poor implementation of laws and schemes

- **Surrender-cum-Rehabilitation policy for Naxalites in affected areas**

- Focusing on infrastructure creation via. **Additional Central Assistance scheme & Road Requirement Plan scheme.**

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC FAULTLINE

The 69 districts account for 17.5 per cent of India's illiterate, 21.12 per cent of the poor and 23.38 per cent of households who don't get two square meals



S Smart Leadership

A Aggressive strategy

M Motivation and training

A Actionable intelligence

D Dashboard based KPIs

H Harness technology

A Action plan for each theatre

N No access to financing

8 Pillars of fighting Maoism

Government Initiatives

- **National Policy and Action Plan 2015:** multi-pronged strategy in the areas of security, development, ensuring rights & entitlement of local communities etc.
- **Scheme for Modernization of Police Forces + Fortification of police stations in affected districts.**
- **Assistance to Central Agencies for LWE management Scheme like CAPFs, Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA), Indian Air Force**

- **Universal Service Obligation Fund:** supported Scheme of Mobile Services to increase mobile connectivity
- Schemes like **Roshni, 'Skill Development, Aspirational to improve governance as well as provide skills**
- **Facilities of residential schools to children** – (e.g. Pota Cabins, Choolo Aasman, Nanhe Parinde, Tamannah)
- Effectively implementing provisions of **PESA, 1996** on priority.



CONTEXT: Seventeen Maoists, including 11 women, were killed, and four security personnel were injured in an anti-Naxal operation in Sukma district, Chhattisgarh.

What Should be Done?

- **Targeted Security Operations:** Use intelligence to target LWE groups, minimizing harm.
- **Rehabilitation and Reintegration:** Support former extremists and bring innocent individuals back.
- **Empowering Local Peace Ambassadors:** Identify and support peacemakers, foster communication, and encourage community involvement.
- **Socio-Economic Development:** Invest in infrastructure, jobs, education, and healthcare.
- **Ecological and Sustainable Development:** Focus on sustainable development and community involvement.
- **Comprehensive Approach:** Combine security, development, and community initiatives.

UPSC Mains PYQ

- Q. The persisting drives of the government for development of large industries in backward areas have resulted in isolating the tribal population and the farmers who face multiple displacements. With Malkangiri and Naxalbari foci, discuss the corrective strategies needed to win the Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) doctrine that affected citizens back into the mainstream of social and economic growth. (2015)

- Q. Article 244 of the Indian Constitution relates to administration of scheduled areas and tribal areas. Analyze the impact of non-implementation of the provisions of the Fifth schedule on the growth of Left-wing extremism. (2018)
- Q. What are the determinants of left-wing extremism in the Eastern part of India? What strategy should the Government of India, civil administration and security forces adopt to counter the threat in the affected areas? (2020)

Mains Practice Question

What are the factors contributing to the persistence of left-wing extremism in India. Suggest comprehensive solutions for its long-term eradication. (10 Marks, 150 words)



Syllabus: GS Paper 2: India and its Neighbourhood, Effect of Policies & Politics of Countries on India's Interests

Newspaper : The Hindu, Page No. 1

Kallol Bhattacharjee

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke with the Senior General of the Myanmar junta, Aung Min Hlaing, on Saturday, assuring him of "humanitarian assistance" from India to deal with the devastating aftermath of Friday's earthquake.

Their conversation was held hours after India started 'Operation Brahma' to assist Myanmar, where over 1,600 people have died, and many are trapped in the debris. The Ministry of External Affairs said that no Indian citizen was among the casualties.

The MEA also emphasised that it is coordinating rescue and relief efforts through the Myanmar government, run by the military junta, though a large chunk of quake-hit areas are under rebel control.

"Spoke with Senior General H.E. Min Aung Hlaing of Myanmar. Conveyed our deep condolences at the loss of lives in the devastating earthquake. As a close friend and neighbor, India stands in solidarity with the people of Myanmar in this difficult hour," Mr. Modi said.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 7



WORLD

India launches 'Operation Brahma', sends 15 tonnes of aid to Myanmar after massive earthquake

INDIA'S SUCCESSFUL S.O.S

DNA

1990
IRAQI INVASION OF KUWAIT
AIRLIFT FROM KUWAIT

Remains the **2nd largest rescue operation** carried out by India

2011
LIBYAN CIVIL WAR
OPERATION SAFE HOMECOMING

Rescued over **15,000** Indians stuck in Libya

2015
YEMEN CIVIL WAR
OPERATION RAAHAT

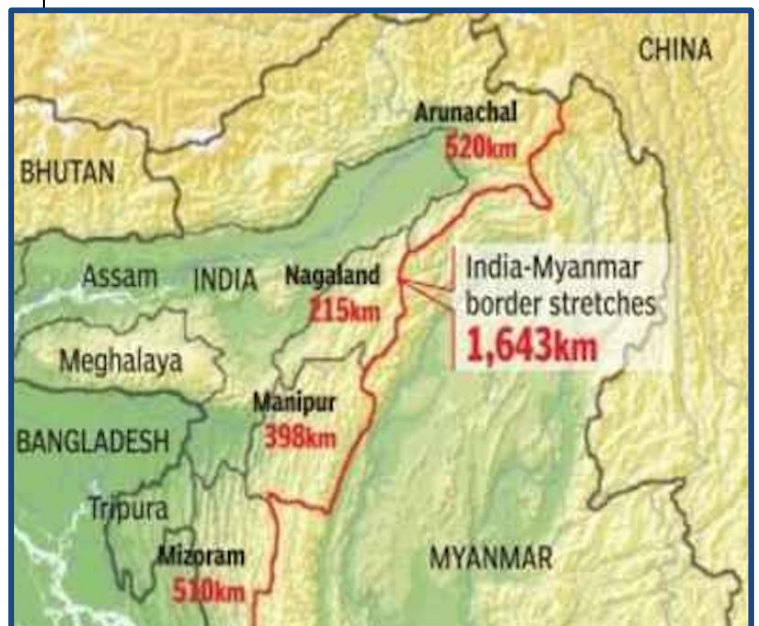
Government of India evacuated over **4,600** Indians

2020
COVID-19 PANDEMIC
VANDE BHARAT MISSION

Largest evacuation operation in India

2022
RUSSIAN INVASION OF UKRAINE
OPERATION GANCA

While continuous work is in progress, **1000s of Indian students** are being brought back



Syllabus: GS Paper 2: Structure, organization and functioning of the Judiciary
Newspaper : The Hindu, Page 12

The story so far:

On March 28, the Union government notified the repatriation of Justice Yashwant Varma to his parent High Court in Allahabad, where he had previously served as a judge. The decision comes amid allegations that charred currency notes were recovered from his residence after a fire. His transfer was proposed after Delhi High Court Chief Justice D.K. Upadhyaya sought an in-house inquiry into the matter. However, Justice Varma has denied the allegations, calling them a "conspiracy to malign" him.

How are High Court judges transferred?

Article 222(1) of the Constitution empowers the President, in consultation with the Chief Justice of India (CJI), to transfer a judge from one High Court to another. This provision has been the subject of extensive judicial interpretation, particularly through three rulings known as the First, Second, and Third Judges cases.

In *S.P. Gupta versus President of India* (1981), commonly referred to as the First Judges case, the Supreme Court held that consultation with the CJI did not necessitate concurrence, thereby affirming the executive's primacy in judicial appointments and transfers. However, this position was overturned in *Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association versus Union of India* (1993), or the Second Judges case, where the Court institutionalised the collegium system. The ruling established that in the event of a disagreement between the President and the CJI, the latter's opinion would prevail. More importantly, the Court underscored that judicial

transfers must serve public interest and improve the administration of justice. Justice J.S. Verma, who authored the judgment, further clarified that the CJI must consult the Chief Justice of the concerned High Court, relevant Supreme Court judges, and at least one senior High Court judge or any other individual whose views are deemed significant, including senior members of the Bar, where appropriate. The Court further reasoned that involving multiple judges in the decision-making process serves as an inherent safeguard against arbitrariness. Consequently, it limited judicial review of transfer decisions, asserting that such matters should remain insulated from "legislative debates".

Notably, the Court clarified that a judge's consent is not a prerequisite for either an initial or subsequent transfer. In the Third Judges case (1998), it further refined the collegium system, mandating that transfer recommendations be made by the CJI in consultation with the four seniormost judges. It required inputs from Supreme Court judges who had previously served in the High Court from which the judge was being transferred. Following the collegium's recommendation, the Law Minister reviews it and advises the Prime Minister, who then forwards the recommendation to the President. Once approved, the transfer is formalised through a gazette notification, and the judge assumes office in the new High Court.

What are the criticisms?

A recent report by the Geneva-based International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) raises serious concerns about judicial independence in India, citing growing executive interference, opacity in appointments, and weak accountability mechanisms. It highlighted that judicial transfers, carried out without the affected judge's consent, are often justified on ambiguous grounds such as "public interest" and the "better administration of justice." This, the report noted, makes it difficult to distinguish legitimate transfers from punitive or retaliatory actions. To mitigate these concerns, the ICJ recommended that Parliament establish a "Judicial Council" to oversee appointments and transfers based on transparent, objective, and predetermined criteria.

What happened to the National Judicial Appointments Commission Act?

To address concerns over the collegium system's opacity, the Narendra Modi government in 2014 proposed sweeping reforms to judicial appointments. In August, Parliament enacted the Constitution (99th Amendment) Act, 2014, and the National Judicial Appointments

Commission (NJAC) Act, 2014, establishing an independent body to replace the collegium system for appointing judges to the Supreme Court and High Courts. The NJAC was to be chaired by the CJI and include the two senior-most Supreme Court judges, the Union Law Minister, and two eminent civil society members. One would be nominated by a panel comprising the CJI, Prime Minister, and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, while the other had to belong to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, or be a woman. The amendment witnessed rare political unanimity, passing in Parliament with near-complete consensus – with the sole dissent from veteran jurist Ram Jethmalani – and was subsequently ratified by 16 State legislatures.

- **Article 124(2):** The Judges of the Supreme Court are appointed by the President. She should consult such a number of the Judges of the Supreme Court and of the High Courts in the States as she may deem necessary for the purpose.
- **Article 217:** The Judge of a High Court shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the Chief Justice of India and the Governor of the State. The Chief Justice of the High Court should also be consulted except in case of his/her own appointment.

→ **First Judges Case (1981):** The SC said that consultation under **Article 124** doesn't mean concurrence. The President is not bound by CJI's advice.

→ **Second Judges Case (1993):** The SC overruled its previous decision and said CJI's advice was binding. The CJI is required to formulate its advice based on a collegium of judges consisting of **CJI and two senior-most SC judges**.

→ **Third Judges Case (1998):** The SC expanded the collegium **to a five-member body** to include the CJI and the four senior-most judges of the court after the CJI.



Is a revamped GST 2.0 on the cards?

Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Growth & Development
Newspaper : The Hindu, Page 12

The story so far:

In a report to Parliament, its Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has sought a comprehensive review of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) framework to eliminate "unnecessary procedures and requirements" that can complicate compliance. It called for a "revamped GST 2.0" to be considered after consultations with all stakeholders.

What has it observed about GST compensation to States?

The PAC observed that the absence of the mandatory CAG audit of the Compensation Fund Account for more than six years has "adversely affected" release of compensation to States. For context, GST's introduction back in 2017 had instilled fears among States about loss of fiscal autonomy and centralisation of all collections to the Union, particularly those housing heavy manufacturing units as Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, among others. The GST (Compensation to States) Act, 2017 was

What are some of the other problems?

There are issues regarding the taxation process, which is either delaying the inflow to the government, or tax refunds to businesses requiring working capital. The audit came across instances of incomplete tax refund (to businesses) owing to confusion over tax jurisdictions. The other significant part of the problem relates to cancellation of registrations. The GST Act provides that registrations cannot be cancelled without issuing a 'show cause notice' to the concerned entity and providing it "reasonable opportunity" to argue its defence. The committee noted that of the 14,998 cases where cancellations were done suo motu, notices were not issued in 6,353 cases. The

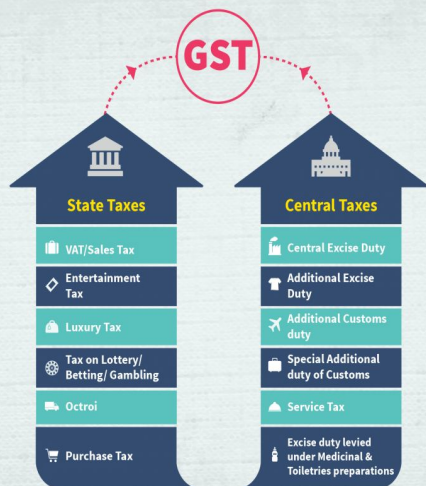
Who gets affected by such glitches?

The reported impact on micro, medium and small enterprises (MSMEs) and exporters is noteworthy. The committee expressed concerns about ensuing issues relating to exporters' cash flow requirements and MSMEs due to "complexity" of GST norms. Delays in processing of refund claims for ITC and complexities with export-related documentation requirements can potentially create cash flow constraints. The committee thus underlined a need to simplify the overall regime, pointing out that ITC claims be processed within a specified timeframe at priority. The committee said a total of 19,730 cases entailing tax implications of about ₹1.45 lakh crore were pending for investigation as of March 2022. Mr. Kothary observed that most of these cases were pending for more than two years. "The government must expedite the handling of appeals and establishment of the GST Appellate Tribunal so as to reduce pendency of cases," he stated.

What about filing and refunds?

With respect to filing and refunds, the committee said existing mechanisms are "inadequate", pointing at prolonged waiting periods for refunds which could result in potential cash flow challenges to businesses. The Ministry, as per the report, indicated that efforts were being made to streamline the refund process. The committee has sought the refund processing system provide clearer timelines for processing claims and regular updates on their status. At the centre of all GST functions, such as filing, registrations and cancellations or tracking, is the quality of reference data to ease scrutiny. The committee highlighted concerns about manual records not being maintained and a poor documentation rigour. The Finance Ministry said that the 'Antarang portal' would help in streamlining the procedure.

TAXES REPLACED UNDER



Q. What is/are the most likely advantages of implementing 'Goods and Services Tax (GST)'?

- It will replace multiple taxes collected by multiple authorities and will thus create a single market in India.
- It will drastically reduce the 'Current Account Deficit' of India and will enable it to increase its foreign exchange reserves.
- It will enormously increase the growth and size of economy of India and will enable it to overtake China in the near future.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

- GST Bill introduced in 2014**
- The Constitution (101st Amendment) Act, 2016.
 - Central GST-**
 - State GST:**
 - Integrated GST :** to cover inter-state trade.
- GST Council**
 - Article 279A**
 - Chairman -** FM of India
 - Members-** nominated by the state governments
 - Centre will have **1/3rd voting power, States have 2/3rd.**
 - Decisions are taken by **3/4th majority.**



Gold Monetization Scheme

Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Banking Sector & NBFCs, Fiscal Policy
Newspaper : Indian Express , Page No. 13

AFTER SOVEREIGN gold bonds, the Centre has drawn the curtains on another gold-related scheme – the Gold Monetisation Scheme (GMS) – amid a spike in gold prices. The Ministry of Finance in a release issued on Tuesday said that it will discontinue medium- and long-term deposits under the Gold Monetisation Scheme from March 26.

The Ministry cited evolving market conditions and performance of the scheme while announcing the discontinuation. However, short-term bank deposits, which are under the ambit of banks in the scheme, will continue at the discretion of individual banks based on the commercial viability as assessed by them, it said.

What was the scheme about?

The Gold Monetisation Scheme was launched in November 2015 to make idle gold productive. It let consumers to either sell their gold or store it with banks, so it could merge into the formal economy and reduce the country's gold imports and thus, reduce the current account deficit. Idle gold held by households, trusts and various institutions in India was deposited under this scheme. GMS was a revamped version of an older Gold Deposit Scheme.

It consisted of three components:

- Short-term bank deposit (1-3 years)
- Medium-term government deposit (5-7 years)
- Long-term government deposit (12-15 years).

The minimum deposited

is borne by the banks. For medium- and long-term deposits, the rate of interest was decided by the government, in consultation with the RBI and borne by the Central government. Gold Monetisation Scheme interest rate was fixed at 2.25 per cent for medium-term bonds and at 2.5 per cent for the long-term bonds.

What government, RBI are saying

The ministry on Tuesday said it has decided to discontinue the Gold Monetisation Scheme, except for short-term deposits that are rendered by the banks and not the government. "Based on

the examination of the performance of the Gold Monetisation Scheme (GMS) and evolving market conditions, it has been decided to discontinue the Medium Term and Long Term Government Deposit (MLTGD) components of the GMS w.e.f. March 26, 2025," the statement said.

Any gold deposits tendered at the designated collection and purity testing centre or GMS mobilisation, collection & testing agent (GMCTA) or the designated bank branches will not be accepted with effect from March 26, the Ministry said. However, the existing deposits will continue till redemption. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will issue detailed guidelines on this issue, the Ministry said. The RBI has not separately issued a release so far

DETAILS OF GOLD MOBILISED UNDER GMS

Deposit Types	Gold Deposited*
Cumulative quantity of gold (in Kg)	31,164
a. Short-term gold deposit	7,509
b. Medium-term gold deposit	9,728
c. Long-term gold deposit	1,3926
Number of participating banks	10
Number of depositors	5,693

*Gold in kg as on November 30, 2024

Source: Ministry of Finance

SOVEREIGN GOLD BONDS

INTEREST PAYMENTS
2.5% p.a paid semi-annually

PRICE
Simple average closing price of 999 purity gold for last 3 days

PREMATURE WITHDRAWALS
Allowed, subject to change in taxes.

INVESTMENT LIMITS
Min. 1 gram, Max. 4 kg for individuals & HUFs, 20Kg for trusts

MATURITY
8 years. Exit option after 5 years

TAXATION
Capital Gains exempted after 5 years. Interest is taxable

Aimed at mobilising idle gold held by households and institutions, provide a fillip to the gems and jewellery sector and reduce reliance on import of gold over time to meet the domestic demand

Gold Monetisation Scheme

- 👉 A person or entity can earn **interest in either cash or gold units**, by depositing the precious metal with the banks
- 👉 Interest payable **after 30/60 days** of opening of the account
- 👉 Threshold limit for deposit-**30 gms**
- 👉 Interest earned on it exempted from income tax and capital gains tax
- 👉 A person or institution holding surplus gold can get it valued from BIS-approved hallmarking centres
- 👉 Minimum period for Gold Savings Account -**One year**



India imports as much as 800-1000 tonnes of gold each year

Though stocks of gold in India are estimated to be over 20,000 tonnes, mostly this gold is neither traded, nor monetised



Syllabus: GS Paper 2: Government Policies & Interventions
Newspaper : The Hindu , Page No. 8

Krishnadas Rajagopal

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has admitted a petition questioning whether employment to public services can be “auctioned off” through the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) portal in violation of the Constitution.

A Bench of Justices P.S. Narasimha and Joymalya Bagchi issued notice to the Union government on the special leave petition filed by the Dakshin Railway Employees’ Union, concerning the termination of 152 housekeeping assistants or sanitary workers. They had been appointed by the Railway Recruitment Cell according to statutory rules and then

served in the frontlines of the pandemic, only to be replaced by outsourced labour hired through the GeM portal.

‘Bypassing quota rules’

“They fulfil the statutory criteria of age, qualification and their appointment is in consonance with the reservation policy for regular recruitment. Yet, the Southern Railway terminated their services on the basis that they were contract employees. Pertinently, their services were replaced not by regular permanent staff but other employees engaged through outsourcing without fulfilling any of the statutory criteria of age, qualification or reservation

policy,” the petition submitted.

The top court directed the Southern Railway to use the services of the housekeeping assistants, including the petitioners, “wherever their employment is needed” in the future during the pendency of the petition.

‘Ultra vires’

“Policy of the government to engage persons through a tender process, ie, the Government e-Marketplace portal is ultra vires the Constitution... Posts governed by Rules under Article 309 [public services] of the Constitution cannot be outsourced through GeM policy,” said the employees union.

The Government e Marketplace is an online platform for public procurement in India. The initiative was launched on August 9, 2016, by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India with the objective to create an open and transparent procurement platform for government buyers.

Government e-Marketplace (GeM) is the National Public Procurement Portal; an end-to-end online Marketplace for:

- Central and State Government Ministries / Departments,
- Central & State Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs & SPSUs),
- Autonomous institutions and Local bodies, for procurement of common use goods & services.

The portal is owned and managed by GeM SPV which is a Section 8 (Non-Profit) Company registered under the Companies Act, 2013.

GeM SPV operates, monitors and supervises all the business transactions on the portal through the Managed Service Provider as per roles and responsibilities defined in the Legal Framework Document available on GeM portal.

GeM is a contactless, paperless and cashless online marketplace that replaced the Directorate General of Supplies and Disposals (DGS&D) in 2016. Since its inception, GeM has brought in the visibility and transparency in public procurement.

Government e Marketplace is a 100 percent Government owned Section 8 company setup under the aegis of Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Key Features of Government e-Marketplace



Q1. Regarding India's climate commitments, consider the following statements:

1. India has pledged to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.
2. India aims to reduce the emissions intensity of its GDP by 45% by 2030, compared to 2005.
3. India aims to achieve 50% of its cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030.

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: b

Q2. Regarding Left Wing Extremism (LWE) in India, consider the following statements:

1. The term "Red Corridor" refers to regions in India affected by Maoist insurgency.
2. The central government raised the Greyhounds, an elite commando force, to combat LWE.
3. 'SAMADHAN' strategy is a comprehensive policy adopted by the Government of India to counter LWE.

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

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

Answer: b

Q3. Consider the following statements regarding 'Operation Brahma':

1. It was launched by India to provide humanitarian assistance to Myanmar following a devastating earthquake in 2025.
2. Under this operation, India deployed naval ships, airlifted medical personnel, and sent relief materials to Myanmar.

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

Q4. Consider the following statements regarding the Government e-Marketplace (GeM):

1. GeM is an online platform for the procurement of goods and services by both Central and State Governments.
2. It functions under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
3. Private businesses and individuals can also purchase goods from GeM.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: a

Q5. Regarding the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in India, consider the following statements:

1. GST is a destination-based tax levied at the point of consumption.
2. The GST Council is a constitutional body chaired by the Prime Minister of India.
3. Alcohol for human consumption is included under the purview of GST.

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

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

Answer: a





VAJIRAM & RAVI

Institute for IAS Examination

A unit of Vajiram & Ravi IAS Study Centre LLP

9-B, Bada Bazar Marg, Old Rajinder Nagar,
New Delhi - 110060 • Ph.: 41007400, 41007500

New No. 62, P Block, 6th Avenue, Anna Nagar,
Chennai - 600040 • Ph.: 044-4330-2121

Visit us at : www.vajiramandravi.com