



**VAJIRAM & RAVI**  
Institute for IAS Examination

# The Analyst

**CURRENT AFFAIRS** Handout

**9th January 2026**



# US leaves International Solar Alliance



**CONTEXT:** The withdrawal of the US from the ISA is not just about energy; it's a diplomatic signal affecting India's soft power.

## The "Great American Exit!"

### THE PRELUDE IN 2025

The January 2026 order follows a series of withdrawals soon after Trump returned to office.

#### MAJOR EXITS



**Paris Climate Agreement**  
The US exited for a second time on January 20, 2025, Trump's first day back in office.

**World Health Organization (WHO)**  
The US initiated withdrawal in 2025, triggering a one-year exit process.



**UNESCO**  
The US renewed its exit from the UN's cultural and education agency.



Secretary Marco Rubio  
@SecRubio  
X.com

Today, President Trump announced the U.S. is leaving 66 anti-American, useless, or wasteful international organizations. Review of additional international organizations remains ongoing.

These withdrawals keep a key promise President Trump made to Americans - we will stop subsidizing global bureaucrats who act against our interests. The Trump Administration will always put America and Americans first.

- The administration also cut or suspended funding for several UN bodies, including UNRWA.
- Foreign aid through USAID was sharply reduced, forcing UN agencies to scale back programmes in poorer countries.

Network18 creative



**UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**  
Provides the main platform for global climate negotiations.



**Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)**  
Assesses climate science for governments worldwide.



**UN Women**  
Promotes gender equality and women's rights globally.



**United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**  
Focuses on reproductive health and maternal care.



**International Solar Alliance (ISA)**  
Promotes solar energy use, especially in developing countries.



**International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)**  
Supports the global shift to clean energy.



**Global Counterterrorism Forum**  
Enables cooperation on counterterrorism strategies.



**ReCAAP**  
Combats piracy and armed robbery at sea in Asia.



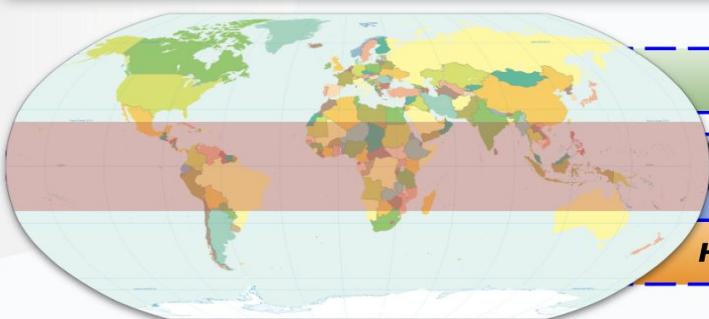
**Science and Technology Center in Ukraine (STCU)**  
Supports nuclear and biological non-proliferation in former Soviet states.

**The Logic:** This follows a review initiated in Jan 2025 to identify groups "contrary to US interests" or the "America First" agenda.

**The Shock:** ISA is the only international treaty-based organization headquartered in India.



### PRELIMS: The International Solar Alliance (ISA)



#### COP21 (Paris Agreement) in 2015

**India** (PM Modi) + **France** (Prez Hollande)

**HQ: Gurugram, Haryana**

**ALL UN Member States (2020)**

#### 'Towards 1000' Strategy ☀

- Over 100 Signatories and 90+ Ratified Members.

- 1,000 GW capacity
- \$1,000 Billion investments
- 1,000 Million people
- 1,000 Million Tonnes

**ONE SUN DECLARATION**  
COP26, 2 November 2021, Glasgow

"...Realizing the vision of One Sun One World One Grid through interconnected green grids can be transformational, enabling all of us to meet the targets of the Paris Agreement to prevent dangerous climate change, to accelerate the clean energy transition, and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. These efforts can stimulate green investments and create millions of good jobs. By sharing the sun's energy, we can help to build a more peaceful and prosperous world..."

Steering Group Member Countries

The One Sun Declaration has been endorsed by International Solar Alliance (ISA) member countries:

isa.org.in | osw.org.in



# US leaves International Solar Alliance



**CONTEXT:** The withdrawal of the US from the ISA is not just about energy; it's a diplomatic signal affecting India's soft power.



## Analysis: Why did the US Leave?



### "CLIMATE CHANGE IS A HOAX"

— Donald Trump



The US' withdrawal from climate bodies comes alongside Trump's strong push for fossil fuels at home.

- Trump has **repeatedly dismissed** **climate** change and criticised renewable energy.
- He has **argued that energy dominance is more important** than international climate commitments.



### "The greatest con job"

- Prioritizes **Thermal/Fossil Fuel power = JOBS**
- **US Data Paradox**
  - **Solar**: 43% of electric sector
  - **Fossil fuels** (22%)

### Other reasons

- **Bureaucratic Roadblocks**
  - Since Jan 2025 = 1 project
  - Interior Secy Burgum
- **Strategic Isolationism**
  - **Global South**



## What has ISA actually done?

### Operations & Partnerships:

#### Policy & regulatory help

- **Power Purchase Agreements**
- **'Ease of Doing Solar'**

#### Mobilising finance & facilities

- **World Bank**
- **Africa Solar Facility**

#### Capacity building & pilots

Energetica India Magazine

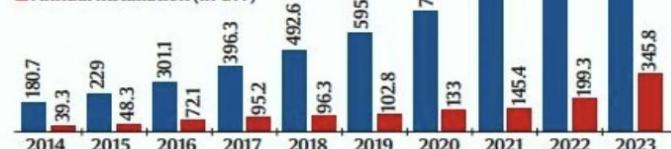
NTPC, ISA Partner with 7 African Nations for Solar Projects

NTPC and the International Solar Alliance (ISA) are set to sign tripartite agreements with seven African countries for the development of large-scale solar...

11 Apr 2025

### TOTAL INSTALLED CAPACITY ANNUAL INSTALLATION (IN GW)

■ Total Installed Capacity (in GW)  
■ Annual installation (in GW)



### COUNTRIES WITH BIGGEST SOLAR FOOTPRINT

Total installed capacity in 2023 (in GW)

China	609.3	India*	72.7
European Union	254.7	Brazil	37.5
United States	137.7	Australia	33.8
Japan	87	Italy	29.7
Germany	81.7	Spain	28.7

\* India's installed capacity reached 90.76 GW by end of September 2024

Source: World Solar Market Report, 2024, ISA

SolarQuarter

#### International Solar Alliance Engages with Ethiopia to Advance Solar Energy Projects

The meeting focused on Ethiopia's ambitious solar energy initiatives, including the development of a 400 MW solar park, a 700 kW solar mini-grid...

13 Aug 2025

# US leaves International Solar Alliance



**CONTEXT:** The withdrawal of the US from the ISA is not just about energy; it's a diplomatic signal affecting India's soft power.



## Critical Assessment: ISA's Performance

### ✓ Achievements

Global Facilitator

Membership Boom

Soft Power & Global South

### ✗ Shortcomings

**Slow Execution:** "preparatory" stages

China's Shadow

**Funding Gap:** \$1,000 Billion

SQ SolarQuarter

Moldova Joins International Solar Alliance as 107th Member, Advancing Sustainable Solar Energy

Moldova joins the International Solar Alliance, marking a milestone in global solar energy collaboration and sustainability efforts.

19 Aug 2025

TH The Hindu

India, ISA ink agreement for solar projects in four Indo-Pacific countries

A Project Implementation Agreement has been signed between the Ministry of External Affairs and the International Solar Alliance (ISA) to...

27 Nov 2024

SE Saur Energy

China to Set Up SCO Platforms, Enable 10 GW Solar and Wind in 5 Years In Member Countries

At the recent SCO summit, chaired by China and attended by nine members, including India, among other leaders, emphasized cooperation in...

2 Sept 2025

DC Deccan Chronicle

COP30: India Delays Climate Pledge, Pressures Rich Nations on Funding

nation can influence others on confronting climate change. Experts say the delay may be a sign of India's displeasure with a lack of...

1 month ago



## The "India Impact": Relief vs. Challenge

**1992 (UNFCCC):** US ensured non-binding on emission cuts initially.

**1997 (Kyoto Protocol):** US signed but **never ratified** (China and India)

**2015 (Paris Agreement):** "Voluntary" NDCs to replace Kyoto.

**2025 (Trump 2.0): "Disassociation"**—mocking climate science and cutting research funding.

### 😊 "Relief": Less Diplomatic Pressure

- The "Hypocrisy Shield":** US historical "bully," pressuring India to phase out coal.
- US loses the moral authority** to preach
- India may face **lower pressure to decarbonize fast.**

### ⚠ Challenges

- Strategic Partnership Broken:** "Strategic Clean Energy Partnership", **Green Hydrogen, Biofuels, and Grid Integration.**
- Investment Crunch:** \$50,000/year; Wall Street
- Technology Transfer:** (like DOE, NASA)
- Global weight**



# US leaves International Solar Alliance



**CONTEXT:** The withdrawal of the US from the ISA is not just about energy; it's a diplomatic signal affecting India's soft power.

## Global Fallout

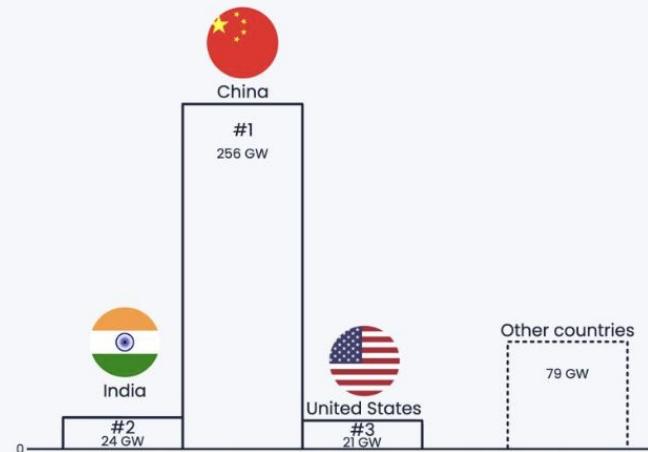
### Rise of China

- US steps back, **China steps in.**
- **Supply Chain Dominance**
  - (panels, batteries, turbines)
- **Geopolitical Leverage**

### Inevitability of Transition

- **Economics Wins**
- **Energy Security**
- **Venezuela & Trump's OIL push**

China installed 12x more solar than the US in the first half of 2025  
Solar capacity additions in first half of 2025



IRENA – International Renewable Energy Agency

91% of New Renewable Projects Now Cheaper Than Fossil Fuels Alternatives

Renewables maintain their cost leadership in global power markets, IRENA's new report on Renewable Power Generation Costs in 2024 confirms.

22 Jul 2025

### Mains Practise Question

**Discuss how the US withdrawal from the global climate regime alters the concept of 'Common But Differentiated Responsibilities'.**

(15 Marks, 250 words)

### WHAT HAPPENED

On January 7, US President Trump signed an executive order directing US departments to end participation in and funding for 66 international organisations as soon as possible.

These include 31 United Nations bodies and 35 non-UN institutions.

- The affected bodies work across climate policy, renewable energy, public health, security, human rights and development.
- This follows earlier US exits from major global agreements and agencies under Trump.



The White House said the decision followed a review of organisations deemed inconsistent with US interests.

**Solar alliance push: India-led ISA to stay course with 125 members after US exit, focus remains on climate goals**

TOI Business Desk / TIMESOFINDIA.COM  
/ Jan 08, 2026, 19:18 IST

Select **TOI** as AA

Network 18 creative



**CONTEXT:** The article critiques a trend where the Supreme Court stops being just a "Judge" and starts acting like a "Manager" or "Policymaker" in Green Governance.



## The Core Issue: Judge or Manager?



### TRADITIONAL ROLE (The Judge)

Task: Review Legality



Action: Checks if the Government followed the law



Outcome: Corrects procedures



### Review legality of executive

It acts after executive makes a decision

### What has changed in the last decade?

- Forward-looking policy directions
- Modified rules
- Continuing mandamus

### From reviewing governance → doing governance

Mondaq

Defining The Aravali: A Doctrinal And Scientific Defence Of The Supreme Court's Approach To Environmental Adjudication

The recent judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in In Re: Issue Relating to Definition of Aravali Hills and Ranges has triggered...

2 days ago

The Hindu

In a majority judgment, Supreme Court recalls verdict striking down retrospective environmental clearances

'Crafty drafting'. The May judgment had held that granting retrospective clearances in any form to regularise illegal constructions was clearly...

1 month ago

Live Law

[Corporate Social Responsibility Must Include Environmental Responsibility, Says Supreme Court In Great...](#)

The Court recalibrated earlier restrictions on power generators in the regions where the Great Indian Bustard birds fly.

3 weeks ago

## Case-by-case explanation

TNIE The New Indian Express

SC order on eco-sensitive zone to hit one lakh Kerala families, 20 towns

The Supreme Court order directing to make one km ecosensitive zone (ESZ) mandatory for all wildlife sanctuaries and national parks has caused concern in the...

5 Jun 2022

◆ 2022 order: Why it sounded good?

◆ 2023 modification

- Court exempted areas where:
  - Environment Ministry had already notified ESZs

● Why?

- States argued: Blanket 1 km rule was unworkable
- Geography varies (hills, cities, coast)

Article's critique

S Swarajyamag

In Relief For Several States, SC Amends 2022 Order On Eco-sensitive Zones Around Protected Forests

In Relief For Several States, SC Amends 2022 Order On Eco-sensitive Zones Around Protected Forests ... The Supreme Court modified its earlier...

27 Apr 2023

BBC

India pollution: Delhi ban on government diesel cars

India's National Green Tribunal has told the government not to buy any more diesel vehicles amid worsening pollution in the capital, Delhi.

11 Dec 2015

WardsAuto

Indian Supreme Court OKs Larger Diesels in Delhi

Domestic automakers and importers estimate they lost Rs75 billion in business since a ban on diesel cars with 2.0 or larger engines was...

17 Aug 2016

ACKO Drive

Supreme Court Halts Age-Based Car Ban; Here's What It Means for You

The Supreme Court has barred authorities from taking action against petrol cars over 15 years old and diesel cars over 10 years old.

13 Aug 2025

Pattern again:

- Broad rule → diluted rule
- Court managing fallout instead of regulator

# SC's green governance



**CONTEXT:** The article critiques a trend where the Supreme Court stops being just a "Judge" and starts acting like a "Manager" or "Policymaker" in Green Governance.

## Case-by-case explanation

### (c) Firecracker bans

- **Court imposed:**
  - Near-total bans in NCR during pollution peaks
- **Later:**
  - Allowed limited "green crackers"
  - Relaxed during festivals

#### Reason cited:

- Enforcement difficulty
- Public order concerns

The New Indian Express

'Firecracker ban has rendered thousands of families jobless', says Fireworks traders body chief

The government and courts never consider the adverse effects of such orders on thousands of families, says Narender Gupta, president of the...

23 Oct 2024

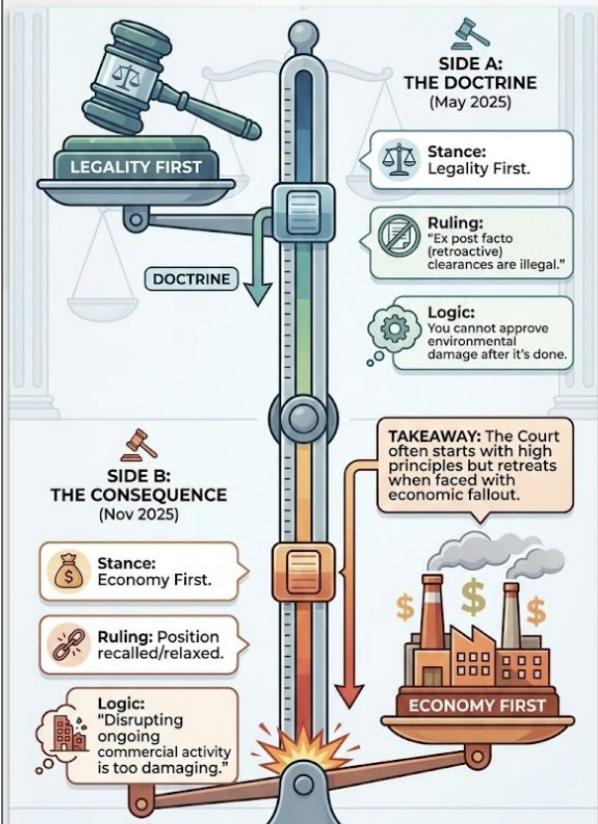
The Leaflet

Bursting of green firecrackers allowed in Delhi-NCR for Diwali but under strict conditions, notes Supreme Court

Invoking the principle of proportionality, the Court said a "balanced approach" was required to reconcile the citizens' right to celebrate...

15 Oct 2025

## Shift from legality to consequences



Moneylife

Supreme Court's U-turn in Review Raises Fundamental Questions about Development and Environmental Governance

When the apex court reviews its own decision: The environmental clearance paradox. On 18 November 2025, the Supreme Court (SC) of India did something...

1 month ago

**Traditionally:** Courts ask: **Is it legal?**

**Now:** Court also asks: **What will happen if we enforce this?**

◆ **Vanashakti case (2025): Ex post facto environmental clearances violate core principles**

### November 2025 (Review)

- Court **recalled** the ruling
- Concern:
  - Disrupting ongoing commercial projects.



# SC's green governance

**CONTEXT:** The article critiques a trend where the Supreme Court stops being just a "Judge" and starts acting like a "Manager" or "Policymaker" in Green Governance.

## Aravalli hills case

Moneylife

Aravalli: Supreme Court Permits Sustainable Mining, Orders Centre To Prepare Plan; No New Mining License Till Then

The Supreme Court on Thursday directed the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEFCC) to prepare a Management Plan for...

1 month ago

- Court adopted **unified definition** of Aravalli hills
- Based on Committee report

Within weeks:

- Order put **in abeyance**
- New committee constituted

Moneylife

Supreme Court Stays Its Recent Verdict on Aravalli, Says Clarification Necessary

The Supreme Court on Monday said that certain clarifications were necessary regarding the definitions it recently approved for the Aravalli Hills,...

1 week ago

## Defining Nature: The Expertise Conflict

What happens when the Court defines geography?



## ✓ Suggested judicial restraint model

### What Court should do

Set **thresholds** for intervention

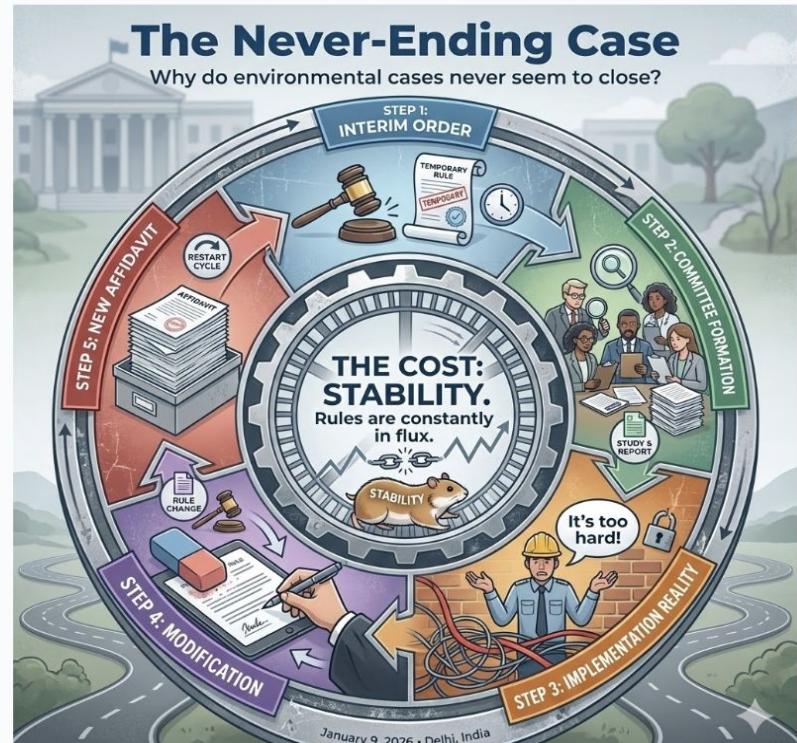
**PARIVESH 2.0** to track clearances

**PMO-led Climate Authority** to coordinate between conflicting ministries

**AI & Satellite Monitoring**

**Avoid sweeping uniform rules**

Clarify **evidence** needed for modification



# SC's green governance



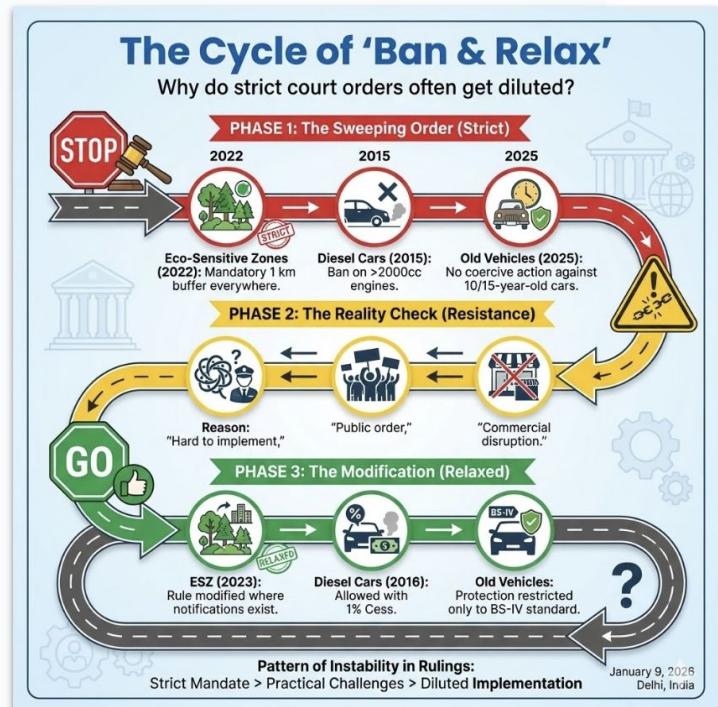
**CONTEXT:** The article critiques a trend where the Supreme Court stops being just a "Judge" and starts acting like a "Manager" or "Policymaker" in Green Governance.

## Mains Practise Question

**While judicial intervention has been essential in environmental protection due to regulatory failure, prolonged managerial governance by courts risks uncertainty, democratic deficit, and erosion of institutional roles.**

**Comment.**

(15 Marks, 250 words)



# Delhi HC on MTP Act



**Syllabus: GS Paper 1: Social Issues – Women**

**Newspaper: The Hindu, Page No. 2**

## Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act

Gestational Period	Permission Required From	Conditions / Grounds (MTP Amendment Act, 2021)
0 to 20 Weeks	1 Registered Medical Practitioner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk to life/mental/physical health of the woman.</li> <li>Substantial risk that the child would be born with serious abnormalities.</li> <li>Failure of Contraception (Now applies to any woman, married or unmarried).</li> </ul>
20 to 24 Weeks	2 Registered Medical Practitioners	<p>Only for <b>"Special Categories"</b> of women (defined in Rules):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survivors of rape/incest.</li> <li>Minors.</li> <li>Change in marital status (Widowhood/Divorce).</li> <li>Women with disabilities.</li> <li>Emergencies/Disasters.</li> </ul>
Beyond 24 Weeks	State Medical Board	Only for <b>Substantial Fetal Abnormalities</b> diagnosed by the Board. (No upper time limit here).

Privacy

Crime to reveal identity of woman (jail)

### MTP Act: The Consent Checklist

Whose permission is actually required?

#### ✗ Husband/Partner?

**NO.** (Irrelevant under MTP Act).



#### ✗ In-Laws?

**NO.**



#### ✓ The Pregnant Woman?

**YES.** (Mandatory).



#### ✓ Medical Practitioner?

**YES.** (Opinion required).

- ✓ 0-20 Weeks: 1 Doctor.
- ✓ 20-24 Weeks: 2 Doctors.



#### ⚠ Medical Board?

**ONLY for >24 weeks**

(in case of foetal abnormalities).

Subject to legal provisions and specific conditions.

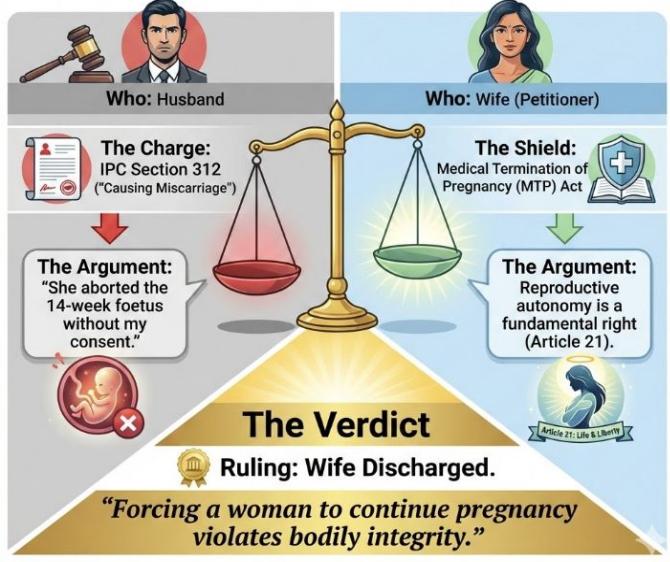


Source: Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, India. Consult a qualified healthcare provider for medical advice. Jan 2026

## The News Decoder

### State vs. Autonomy: The Delhi HC Verdict (Jan 2026)

Can a husband criminally prosecute his wife for abortion?



**Key Takeaways from the Judgment (FOR MAINS)**

**Article 21 = bodily integrity + mental trauma**

**Husband's Consent is Irrelevant**

**Ethical Angle:** women bear physical/mental burden

**"Marital Discord" = Injury to Mental Health**

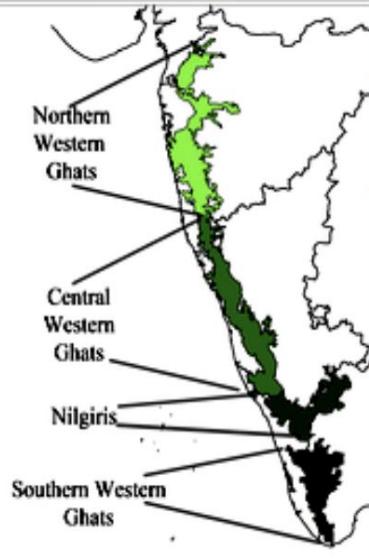
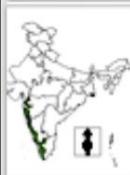
Ground for abortion under MTP

**Section 312 IPC = MTP Act is an exception**

**Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Conservation vs. Development**

**Newspaper: The Hindu, Page No. 16**

## The Western Ghats: Geology & Topography



 <b>Block Mountain Theory</b>
 <b>West-flowing rivers:</b> Periyar, Netravati, Sharavathi, Mandovi, Bharathappuzha
 <b>East-flowing rivers:</b> Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri <b>Tributaries:</b> Tunga, Bhadra, Kabini, Malaprabha, Ghataprabha
 <b>Highest Peak</b> Anamudi (Kerala) – 2,695 m – Highest in Peninsular India

 <b>Length</b>	~1,600 km
 <b>Area Covered</b>	~1.4 lakh km <sup>2</sup>
 <b>States</b>	Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu
 <b>Highest Peak</b>	Anamudi (Kerala) – 2,695 m – Highest in Peninsular India

 <b>Side</b>	 <b>Forest Type</b>	 <b>Major Trees</b>
 <b>Western</b>	Evergreen/Moist broadleaf 	Rosewood, Mahogany, Cedar
 <b>Eastern</b>	Moist & Dry Deciduous 	Teak, Sal, Shisham, Sandalwood

### UPSC PYQ (P) 2023

**Consider the following statements:**

1. Amarkantak Hills are at the confluence of Vindhya and Sahyadri Ranges
2. Biligirirangan Hills constitute the easternmost part of Satpura Range
3. Seshachalam Hills constitute the southernmost part of Western Ghats

**How many of the above statements are correct?**

- a) Only one
- b) Only two
- c) All three
- d) None

### UPSC PYQ (P) 2016

**'Gadgil Committee Report' and 'Kasturirangan Committee Report', sometimes seen in the news, are related to:**

- a) Constitutional reforms
- b) Ganga Action Plan
- c) Linking of rivers
- d) Protection of Western Ghats

### UPSC PYQ (P) 2008

**Which of the following hills are found where the Eastern Ghats and the Western Ghats meet?**

- a) Anaimalai Hills
- b) Cardamom Hills
- c) Nilgiri Hills
- d) Shevoroy Hills



**Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Conservation vs. Development**

**Newspaper: The Hindu, Page No. 16**



## Why are the Western Ghats Important?

### Need for a prescription

The Western Ghats are known as the water tower of peninsular India, with the Cauvery, Godavari, Krishna, Periyar, and Netravathi rivers originating here. The chain

**One of the 8 Hottest Hotspots** of biodiversity in the world.

**Endemism** (like the *Lion-tailed Macaque* or *Nilgiri Tahr*)

UNESCO World Heritage Site.



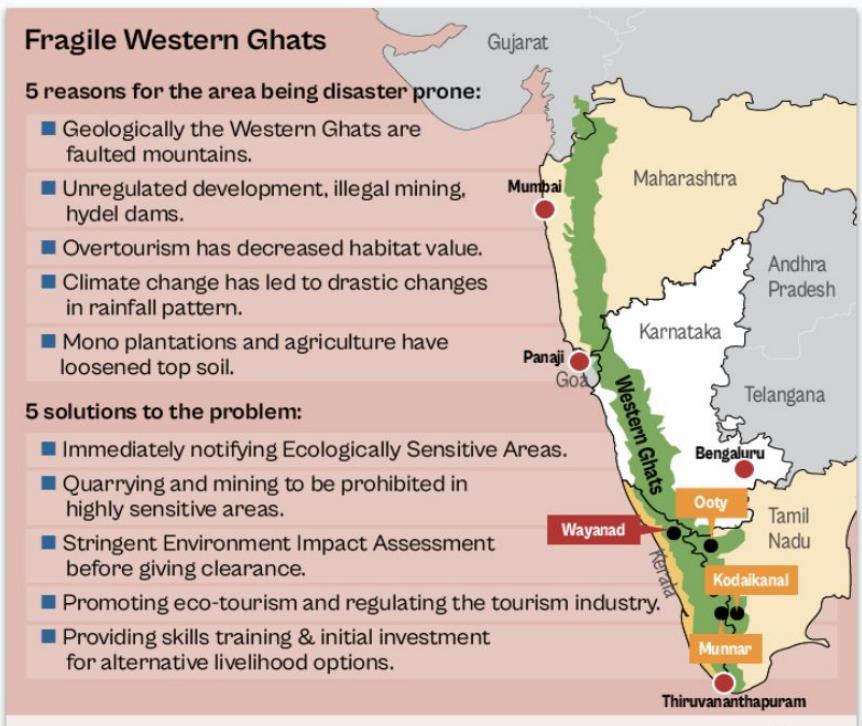
### Fragile Western Ghats

5 reasons for the area being disaster prone:

- Geologically the Western Ghats are faulted mountains.
- Unregulated development, illegal mining, hydel dams.
- Overtourism has decreased habitat value.
- Climate change has led to drastic changes in rainfall pattern.
- Mono plantations and agriculture have loosened top soil.

5 solutions to the problem:

- Immediately notifying Ecologically Sensitive Areas.
- Quarrying and mining to be prohibited in highly sensitive areas.
- Stringent Environment Impact Assessment before giving clearance.
- Promoting eco-tourism and regulating the tourism industry.
- Providing skills training & initial investment for alternative livelihood options.



## The Gadgil Report (2011): The "Green Bible"

### KEY RECOMMENDATIONS Gadgil Report 2011

#### Mining

No new licenses except in ESZ 3 under strict scrutiny

#### Quarry & Sand Mining

No new licenses to be given for quarry and sand mining

#### Water

Catchment area treatment plans for hydroelectric and irrigation projects

Inter-basin diversions of rivers in the Western Ghats should not be allowed

#### Land Use

No SEZs permitted

No new hill stations

No conversion of public lands to private



Bloomberg | Quint

### WG Ecology Expert Panel

- **Entire Ghats** = ESA (1,29,037 sq km)
- **The Zoning System**
  - **ESZ-1:** Highest Priority (Organic farming only)
  - **ESZ-2:** Strict regulation.
  - **ESZ-3:** Transition zone
- Proposed **Western Ghats Ecology Authority**, statutory body u/ EPA, 1986
- **Gram Sabha** Power

**X** No Genetically Modified crops.  
**X** No Special Economic Zones  
**X** Phase out existing mines in ESZ-1 within 5 years.



**Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Conservation vs. Development**

**Newspaper: The Hindu, Page No. 16**



## The "Compromise": Kasturirangan Report (2013)

Feature	Madhav Gadgil Report (WGEEP)	Kasturirangan Report (HLWG)
Philosophy	Environment-centric (Deep Ecology)	Development-centric (Pragmatic)
ESA Area	100% of Western Ghats (1.29 Lakh sq km)	37% of Western Ghats (~60k sq km)
Zoning	3 Graded Zones (ESZ 1, 2, 3)	Just 2 Categories: Cultural vs. Natural
Hydro Power	Ban on large dams in ESZ-1	Allowed with strict clearance
Governance	New Statutory Authority (WGEA)	Existing Framework strengthened
Decision Making	Gram Sabha	Remote Sensing
Outcome	Rejected by Govt	Accepted (in principle) but stuck



## Current Status: The "Draft" Limbo

### Political opposition

The initial report was submitted to Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh in March 2011, and a final version was submitted in August 2011. Gadgil noted in EPW that under Jayanthi Natarajan, who succeeded Ramesh in July 2011, the report was not made public, but was circulated to state governments to seek comments. Gadgil wrote that the report itself made a case for inclusionary development, and they suggested taking it to all Gram Sabhas, to replace "exclusionary development and conservation."

After RTI appeals and a court battle, the Environment Ministry ordered in May 2012 that the report be made public.

The report was strongly opposed, especially by the governments of Kerala and Maharashtra. Several states also opposed the embargo on new hydroelectric projects.

Kerala said that the economy of Idukki and Wayanad districts would be affected if large tracts were demarcated as ESA, as these areas were home to cash crops.

ESAs. Unlike the previous panel, the Kasturirangan panel identified some villages as ESAs and published a list of such villages across states. Based on these recommendations, the Centre has issued the draft notifications demarcating the ESAs six times so far, owing to a lack of finality over the areas that fall under the category. The notification still hangs in the balance, and an expert panel under former Director General of Forests, Sanjay Kumar, is working with states to finalise the matter.

**Even the "softer" Kasturirangan report hasn't been implemented fully.**

**Every time a draft is issued, States object to the inclusion of certain villages.**



# Privatisation of monument conservation



**Syllabus: GS Paper 1: India's Art & Culture Governance**

**Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 9**

## About ASI



Archaeological  
Survey of India

3,696+ monuments

- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act (1958)
- Amendment Act (2010)

"Indian Archaeology: A Review"

Manages 42 UNESCO World Heritage Sites

Runs 44 museums

- Estb: 1861 by Alexander Cunningham
- HQ: New Delhi.
- Ministry: Min of Culture

### Recent Initiatives

- Adopt a Heritage Scheme (Red Fort)
- Digital Archives
- Indian Heritage App

## Breaking the ASI Monopoly

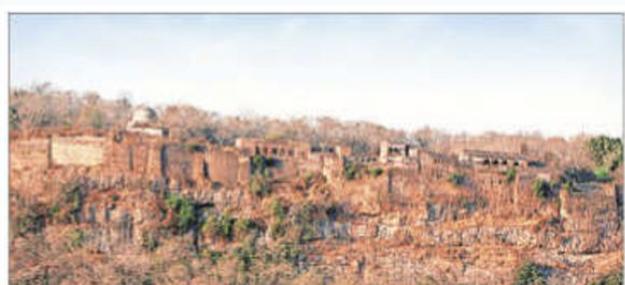
IN LESS than two weeks, the conservation of monuments will open up to private sector, allowing corporate donors to directly engage conservation agencies—a responsibility that so far only rested with the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

The Ministry of Culture is in the process of empanelling conservation architects, and more than 20 private agencies with experience in heritage conservation from across the country have applied to its Request for Proposal (RFP), *The Indian Express* has learnt.

monopoly of ASI. Officials say this is being done with an aim to build capacity in heritage sector, and the work will be carried out by private agencies within a framework set by ASI and will be monitored from time to time.

### How it will work

Among the criteria set for conservation architects is experience in executing conservation or restoration of centrally protected monuments under the ASI, state archaeology departments, Central Public Works Department (CPWD) or state PWD. Experience in heritage projects of PSUs or municipal corporations, private palaces, or buildings will also be counted, provided the structures are at least 100 years old.



Ranthambore Fort is among the monuments for which NCF is seeking private support in conservation and restoration



# Privatisation of monument conservation



**Syllabus: GS Paper 1: India's Art & Culture Governance**

**Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 9**

## National Culture Fund

- Established in **1996** (Trust)
- Allows donors** (Corporates/PSUs)
- Specify** which monument

### Process:

- Donor (CSR):** Selects a monument + empanelled **Private Architect**.
- Private architect prepares a **Detailed Project Report**.
- ASI experts review and approve** the DPR.
- Execution:** Private agency does the work; ASI supervises.



The NCF was set up by the government in 1996 with an **initial corpus** of Rs 20 crore. The idea was to retain the base corpus and use the interest for conservation activities at the monuments. Ever since, Rs 140 crore has come into NCF through corporate and PSU donations, which have been used to fund around 100 conservation projects at protected monuments. While 70 such projects have been completed, around 20 projects are ongoing, as per officials.

## Why the Change?

### ✓ The Arguments For

- ASI manages **3,600+** monuments with **limited staff**
- Lesser-known monuments** are crumbling
- Speed & Efficiency**
- Market for **Heritage Conservationists** in India
- CSR Utilization** (~₹20,000 Cr/year)

### ⚠ The Risks

- "Disneyfication"** vs historical integrity (eg: cement vs lime)
- Accountability**
- ASI **supervision**
- "Famous"** monuments
- Penalties** for irreversible damage

### Global parallels

India is moving towards **PPP models**, allowing private entities to join ASI for fast-tracking conservation, under state supervision. The **UK** has set up the **Churches Conservation Trust**, managing historic buildings with robust private involvement. The **US** also involves **private sector funding** and organisations in protecting cultural and natural heritage. **Germany** and the **Netherlands** have also established various foundations to manage historic buildings, supported by private funding.



# PRAGATI Portal & Power Push



**Syllabus: GS Paper 1: Cooperative Federalism, e-Governance**  
**Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 9**

## Pro-Active Governance And Timely Implementation Portal



### The Tech Stack

**Digital Data Management** (CPGRAMS for grievances)

**Video Conferencing**

**Geo-Spatial Technology** (BHUVAN/ISRO satellite imagery)

### The 3-Tier Structure

PMO

Union Government Secretaries

Chief Secretaries of States

## PRAGATI's Power Push

Parameter	Details
<b>Total Projects Reviewed</b>	53 Projects (Worth ₹4.12 Lakh Crore)
<b>Commissioned</b>	<b>43</b> Projects (Worth ₹3.02 Lakh Crore)
<b>Pending/ Advanced Stage</b>	10 Projects (Worth ~₹1.10 Lakh Crore)
<b>Top Performer</b>	PGCIL (Power Grid Corp) with 20 projects completed.
<b>Runner Up</b>	NTPC with 14 projects completed.
<b>Other Players</b>	NHPC, NEEPCO, THDC, Sterlite (2 projects each).
<b>Sector Breakdown</b>	27 Transmission, 14 Thermal, 9 Hydro, 3 Coal Mines.

### UPSC PYQ (P) 2002

#### Consider the following statements:

1. NTPC is the largest power utility in India.
2. ONGC accounts for half of the LPG production in India.
3. Indian Oil Corporation operates all the oil refineries in India.
4. The Indian Ordnance Factory is the largest departmentally run industrial undertaking in the country.

#### Which of these statements is/are correct?

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

UNDER THE multi-purpose, multi-modal PRAGATI platform, 43 out of the 53 power sector projects worth Rs 3.02 lakh crore reviewed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi have been commissioned as of December 31, 2025, officials said.



**Syllabus: GS Paper 1: Cooperative Federalism, e-Governance**

**Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 9**



## Why do Power Projects Get "Stuck"?

"Right of Way"

Forest Clearance

Local "law and order"

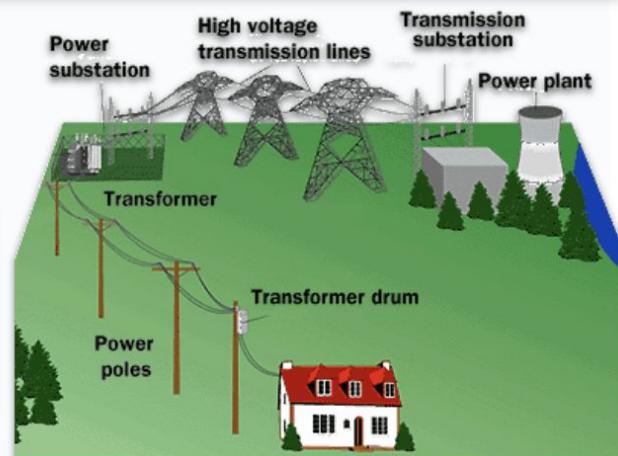
Hydropower projects

 South Asia Network on Dams, Rivers and People

DRP 210725: Moving Joshimath Landslide a threat to Tapovan Vishnugad HEP in UKD?

The total estimated cost was Rs 650 crore, with the tender awarded at Rs 519 crore and an additional Rs 22 crore as a provisional sum. The...

21 Jul 2025



ficial said. Common challenges include land acquisition, environmental and forest clearances, rehabilitation and resettlement (R&R) issues, fuel linkages, equipment supply delays, and contractual disputes.

PRAGATI-led monitoring has helped minimise inter-departmental bottlenecks, significantly improving execution of power projects, the officials said. Several long-stalled generation and transmission projects have moved towards completion following interventions under the platform, leading to enhanced power availability, improved grid reliability, and better utilisation of national resources, they added.



# Tex-RAMPS Scheme



**Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Textile sector**  
**Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 9**

## Why India's textile sector matters?

Projected Growth	Global Standing	Economic Contribution	Export Earnings	
Industry To Reach US\$350 Billion By 2030.	6th Largest Textile Exporter	2% of India's GDP 10% Of Industrial Production	Employment	12% of India's total exports (₹2.8 LCr 2023-24)
			MSME Dominance	45mn+ directly employed (2nd largest after agriculture)
			Market Size	~80% capacity in MSME clusters
			Export share	\$174 Bn
				12% [2023-24 exports: US\$ 34.4 billion]
<b>Structure of the sector – sub-sectors</b>				
	<b>Cotton</b> 🌶		All 4 species	2nd in world; major cotton belt in 9 states
	<b>Technical Tt</b>		India = 5th largest producer; market ≈ \$22 bn;	
	<b>Silk</b> 🎀		2nd largest; Mulberry, Tussar, Muga, Eri	
	<b>Jute</b> 🍂		~75% of world production; strong NE/East clusters.	
	<b>Handicrafts</b>		Major clusters	(Varanasi, Bhagalpur); 100+ countries.
	<b>Wool</b>		9th largest producer	

**Textile Import Decreased**

(US\$10,481 Mn) **15%** (US\$8,946 Mn)

FY 2022-23 FY 2023-24

Value in USD Million

	2022-23	2023-24
India's Export of Textile & Apparel	34,997	34,072
Export of Handicrafts	1,689	1,802
Total Export of T&A including Handicrafts	36,686	35,874
India's overall exports	4,51,070	4,37,072
% Share of T&A Exports (incl. Handicrafts) of overall exports	8.13%	8.21%

## UPSC PYQ (P) 2020

### Consider the following statements:

1. The value of Indo-Sri Lanka trade has consistently increased in the last decade.
2. "Textile and textile articles" constitute an important item of trade between India and Bangladesh.
3. In the last five years, Nepal has been the largest trading partner of India in South Asia.

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

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

## BIGGEST TEXTILE EXPORTER COUNTRIES

SOURCE : TRADEIMEX



# Tex-RAMPS Scheme

**Syllabus:** GS Paper 3: Textile sector  
**Newspaper:** Indian Express, Page No. 9

## Tex-RAMPS

**The Hindu Bureau**  
COIMBATORE

The Ministry of Textiles has signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) with 15 States as part of the

‘Textiles focused Research, Assessment, Monitoring, Planning And Start-Up’ (Tex-RAMPS) scheme.

The MoUs were signed on the first day of the two-day national textile minis-

ters’ conference in Guwahati on the theme ‘India’s Textiles: Weaving Growth, Heritage & Innovation’.

The scheme is designed to improve the coverage, quality, timeliness, and

**Ministry:**  
Ministry of Textiles

**Budget:**  
₹305 Crore (FY 2025-26 to FY 2030-31).

### Why now?!

India aims to grow its textile industry to **\$350 Billion by 2030.**

credibility of textile-related statistical products and research, according to a press release.

The initiative drives integrated planning for key sectors including han-

dlooms, handicrafts, apparel, and technical textiles by focusing efforts directly at the cluster and district levels, the release said.

The Ministry provides an annual grant of ₹12 lakh

to each State or Union Territory. An additional grant of ₹1 lakh a year will be provided for each district, based on the development and execution of specific district action plans.

**Type:**  
Central Sector Scheme

**“Labour-Intensive” to “Data & Tech-Intensive”**

## Tex-RAMPS

### Research & Innovation

Smart Textiles  
Sustainable Materials

### Data, Analytics & Diagnostics

India-Size Study  
Supply Chain Mapping

### Integrated Textiles Statistical System

District → State → Centre  
₹12 Lakh/year to States to hire professionals

### Capacity Development

State Textile Departments

### Start-up & Innovation Support

Incubators and Hackathons Grants (up to ₹1 Crore)

### Introducing Tex-RAMPS

What is the government’s new plan for textiles?



Tex-RAMPS: Textiles Research, Assessment, Monitoring, Planning, and Start-up.

**₹305 Crore**  
BUDGET

TIMELINE  
FY 2025-26 to FY 2030-31

FABRIC COMPOSITION (FUNDING)  
100% Central Sector Scheme  
Funded by Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India

CARE INSTRUCTION (GOAL)

Future-proof the Indian Textile Industry through Innovation & Data.

Date: January 9, 2026 | Location: Delhi, India



# Tex-RAMPS Scheme



**Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Textile sector**  
**Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 9**

## Key Government Schemes

### Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme

Credit-linked capital **subsidy**



### SAMARTH (Scheme for Capacity Building)

**Placement**-oriented skill training  
Directly supports **Skill India**



### National Technical Textiles Mission

#### Industry

Creation of National Technical Textiles Mission

### PLI Scheme for Textiles

### New Push

Textile PLI may offer 11% sop to new entrants

Incentive rate for cos above ₹500-crore turnover likely at 7%

**PLI scheme** aims to create 50-60 world class textile champs

Textile ministry identifies 50 products eligible for scheme

Airbags, sanitary napkins, bandages among 10 technical textiles

Track suits, coats, babies' garments part of 50 man-made fibre prods



Mission to be implemented during FY 2020-21 to 2023-24 with an outlay of ₹1480 crore



Mission to have 4 components: **R&D, Market Development, Export Promotion, Education & Skill Development**



**Focus on usage of technical textiles** in various flagship schemes of the government



Will bring an overall improvement in **cost economy & promote Make in India**

## Key Government Schemes: Trade & Export Promotion

### RoSCTL Scheme

**Rebates** all embedded state and central **taxes** on exports of apparel and made-ups



**Woven in INDIA**  
**Worn in UK**

India-UK FTA opens the gate for

### Free Trade Agreements

**UAE, Australia**, and ongoing talks with **EU**



Bhagalpur silk from Bihar

Baluchari sarees from Murshidabad

Bandhani from Gujarat

Surat's textiles

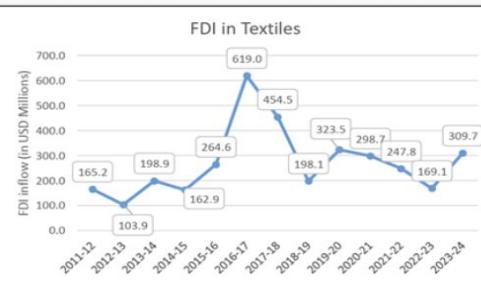
Kanchipuram silk

Tiruppur knitwear

Pashmina shawls from Kashmir



### Quality Control Orders



### Export Promotion Councils

**Showcase** India's **entire value chain**, attract **investment**

### Bharat Tex Expo



**Q1. With reference to the International Solar Alliance (ISA), consider the following statements:**

1. It is a treaty-based intergovernmental organization headquartered in Gurugram, India.
2. Its membership is open only to countries lying between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn.
3. It aims to mobilize more than USD 1 trillion of investments in solar energy by 2030.
4. India and France are the founding members of the Alliance.

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

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

**Answer: a**

**Q2. Regarding the Western Ghats, consider the following statements:**

1. The Western Ghats are older than the Himalayas.
2. They act as a climatic barrier and significantly influence the Indian monsoon system.
3. They are recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site due to their high endemism.
4. The major rivers originating in the Western Ghats mainly flow eastwards into the Bay of Bengal.

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

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

**Answer: d**

**Q3. With reference to the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), consider the following statements:**

1. It functions under the Ministry of Culture.
2. It is responsible for the conservation of centrally protected monuments and archaeological sites.
3. It was established after Independence under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958.
4. It also regulates archaeological excavations in India.

**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**

**Q4. Regarding the Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation (PRAGATI) Portal, consider the following statements:**

1. It is an ICT-based multi-purpose platform for monitoring and reviewing important Government of India programmes and projects.
2. It integrates the data of CPGRAMS, Project Monitoring Group (PMG) and MyGov into a single interface.
3. It is chaired by the Prime Minister and involves direct interaction with Union Secretaries and Chief Secretaries of States.
4. It is managed by the NITI Aayog.

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

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

**Answer: c**

**Q5. With reference to the Tex-RAMPS scheme, consider the following statements:**

1. It is a central sector scheme launched by the Ministry of Textiles.
2. It only aims at providing financial assistance for technology upgradation in textile MSMEs.
3. It focuses on strengthening market access, productivity and sustainability of the textile sector.

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

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

**Answer: c**





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