



**VAJIRAM & RAVI**  
Institute for IAS Examination

# The Analyst

**CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout**

**22nd March 2026**



# "Arbitrary Ceiling" on Disability Limits



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

## Mains Heading 1 : Who are "Disabled" people?

**UNCRPD :**  
"Invisible Minority"

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

### Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016

1.3 Billion globally

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

80% : Developing countries

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

21 categories

### Types of Disabilities :

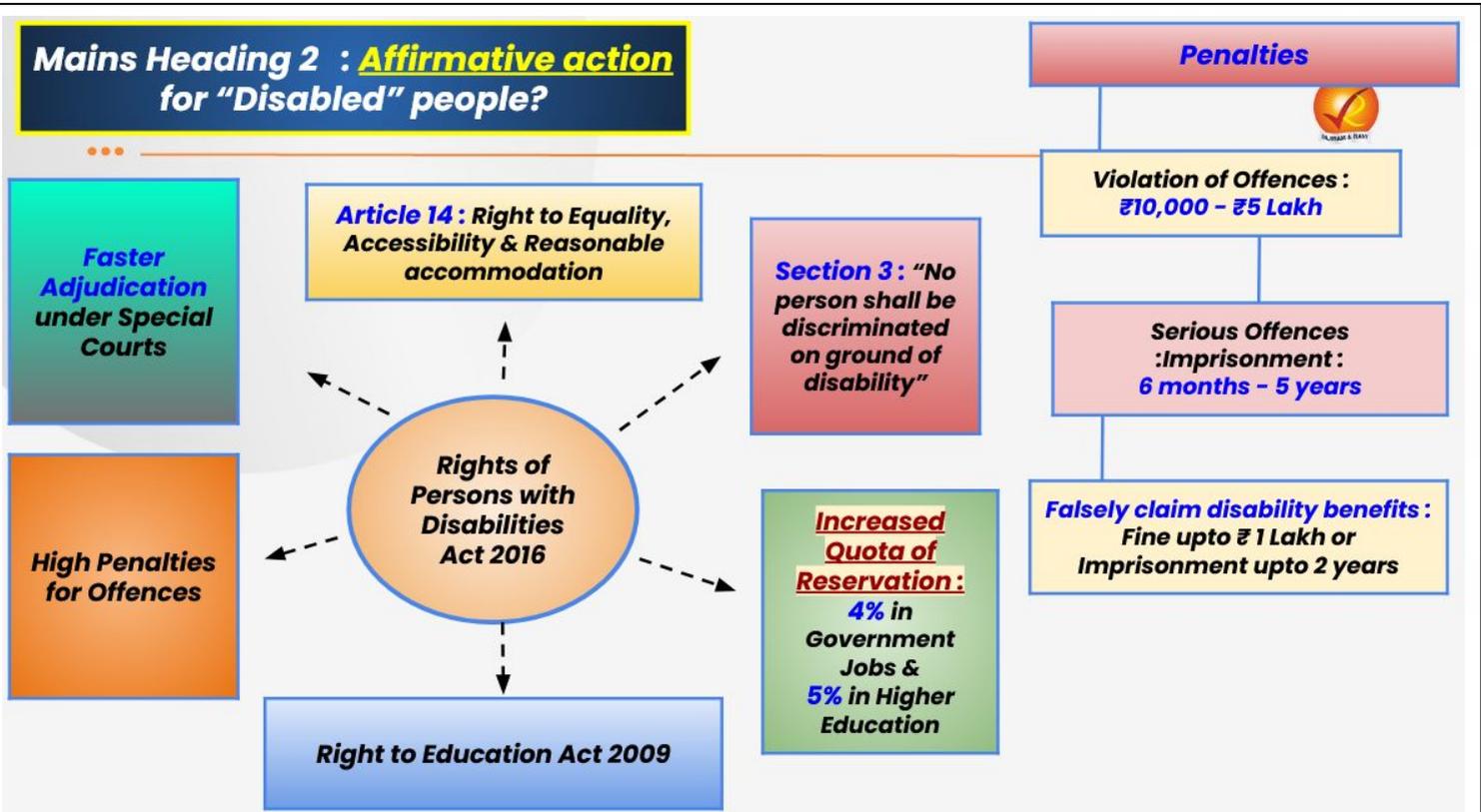
- Blindness
- Leprosy cured person
- **Locomotor disability**
- Dwarfism
- Intellectual disability
- Mental illness
- Specific learning disability
- Hearing Impairment
- Muscular dystrophy
- **Acid attack victims**
- Parkinson's disease
- Thalassemia
- Hemophilia
- **Sickle cell disease**
- Autism spectrum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



# “Arbitrary Ceiling” on Disability Limits

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## Mains Heading 2 : Affirmative action for “Disabled” people?



### Reflection on Ground?

#### Falling short

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

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



#### Group-wise representation (2022)

**Group A:** Lowest share

**Group B:** 1.53%

**Group C (non-Safai Karmachari):** 1.1%

**Group C (Safai Karmachari):** 1.93%



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## UPSC 2025 Results :

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

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

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

## Mains Heading 2 : Affirmative action for "Disabled" people?

**SC : State can NOT impose arbitrary "Upper Limits" of disability to exclude candidates**

### Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016

**Benchmark Disability : 40%**

- 500 Hz
- 1000 Hz
- 2000 Hz
- 4000 Hz

Average Hearing Loss (Better Ear)	Disability %	Category
26-40 dB	< 40%	Mild (Not benchmark)
41-60 dB	≥ 40%	Moderate (Benchmark disability starts)
61-70 dB	≥ 60%	Severe
71-90 dB	≥ 80%	Profound
> 90 dB	100%	Total Deafness

**Case Study : Advocate of HP rejected On ground of >60% disability**

**RPWD Act 2016 : Only defines "base threshold" for Reservation**

**Reasonable Accommodation Principle Invoked by the Apex Court**

**Adjustment to be made to enable disable person effectively counter barriers**



# "Arbitrary Ceiling" on Disability Limits

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

## Mains Heading 3: What are the issues faced by Disabled people?

### "No data based Policy making"

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

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

### "Discriminatory Tax Barriers"

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

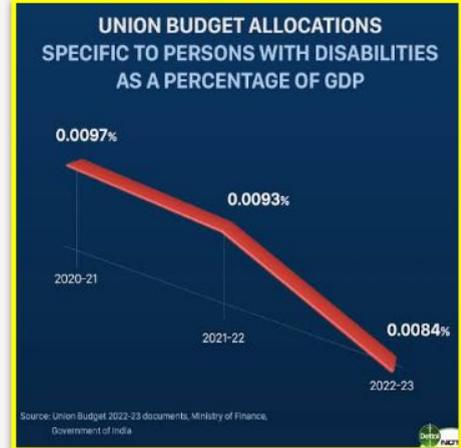
- "Policy Paralysis"
- High OOPEx
- WHO: OOPEx accounted for >50% health expenditure

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

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

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

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



### RPWD Rules 2023

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

### Shortcomings:

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

## Mains Heading 3: What are the issues faced by Disabled people?

### Non - Accessible India:

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



# "Arbitrary Ceiling" on Disability Limits



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## Mains Heading 3: What are the issues faced by Disabled people?

**Social Stigma:** Limited awareness in larger section of Society

**MoSJ: Total Literate: 55%**

**Indian Express 2025:** 60% remain unemployed

**Digital Divide: Internet Penetration = 47% in 2022**

**Over 80 per cent of disabled people lack health insurance in India: Survey**

42 per cent have not even heard of the central government's flagship programme, Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY).

**Accessibility for disabled persons is a human and a fundamental right: SC judgment**

The court asked the government to enable the creation of public and private spaces, services and products of an 'universal design' which could be accessed by everyone, regardless of their ability, age, or status

**Violation of Fundamental Rights**

**Gendered Vulnerabilities**

## Mains Heading 4: What are the steps taken?

**Accessible India Campaign**

**SPARK Project by ILO & IFAD**

**GLAD Network of UNESCO**

**Niramay Initiative by Chhattisgarh Government**

**Steps Taken Across India**

**Adoption of UNCRPD in 2006**



# “Arbitrary Ceiling” on Disability Limits

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



**Accessible India Campaign**

## SUGAMYA BHARAT ABHIYAN

Key Achievements So Far

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

## Mains Practise Question

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



# Spark to Slow Down : EV Ecosystem



**CONTEXT:** The article highlights the issue of "Safety concerns" related to Electric Vehicle usages resulting in slow adoption of EV in India

## Mains Heading 1: The need of Electric Vehicles?

"Unlocking a **200 Billion Dollar Opportunity** : EV in India" by NITI Aayog

**Vehicular Emission** : Major source of **Pollution & Carbon Emission** in country

To achieve **Panchamrit Target** : **Net Zero Emission** country by 2070

**Reduce Import Dependence** : Transport sector accounts for **18%** of total energy consumption

**PIB (2025)** : **\$646 million** for purchase of Oil For Strategic Petroleum Reserves

**Employment Opportunities** : EV Industry to create **5 crore jobs** by 2030

### Energy Security

Reduce import dependency on Crude Oil

Diversification of Energy Basket

Enhance BOP & FOREX Reserves

Security cover from Geo - Political Disturbances in West

Save from Imported Inflation & Reduce Logistic Cost

## Mains Heading 2: How much Successful EVs has been in India?

Likewise, traditional litres per 100km (L/100km) to measure fuel consumption for ICE vehicles is instead kilowatt-hours per 100km (kWh/100km) to understand the energy consumption for EVs.

### EV Penetration in India :

#### India Charging Report 2025

Overcoming range anxiety & price barrier, electric vehicle (EV) adoption in India is **steadily rising** with 50% owners making trips covering over 500 kms

**EV penetration rate** : 0.23% in 2016 to **7.6%** in 2024.

**84% EVs** used as primary vehicles

Running 1600 km/month covering 95% roads

Public chargers grown fourfold to **24,000+**

**91% National Highways** having coverage within 50 kms

ICE MODEL	EV MODEL	DIFFERENCE
HONDA CIVIC VTI LX 6.3L/100KM	MG 4 ESSENCE 64 1.6L/100KM*	75%
MERCEDES-BENZ C200 6.9L/100KM	TESLA MODEL 3 RWD 1.3L/100KM*	81%
HYUNDAI PALISADE (DIESEL) 7.8L/100KM	KIA EV5 GT-LINE AWD 2.3L/100KM*	71%



# Spark to Slow Down : EV Ecosystem



**CONTEXT:** The article highlights the issue of "Safety concerns" related to Electric Vehicle usages resulting in slow adoption of EV in India

## Mains Heading 2 : How much Successful EVs has been in India?

### Status of EV in India :

#### Contribution to Economic Landscape

- **2024 : World's 3rd largest Automobile market in terms of sale**
- **Industry Valuation : \$100 Billion**
- **8% of India's Exports**
- **7% of Country's GDP**

#### Status of EV Industry in Automobile Sector

- **7% of Total Vehicle sold in 2024**
- **\$200 Billion investment by 2030**
- **NITI Aayog's Target by 2030 :**
  - **30% Penetration in Private Cars**
  - **70% in Commercial Vehicles**
  - **80% in 2-3 Wheelers**

## India's EV Growth Expected to Focus on 2W and 3W Markets

Projected BEV penetration rates for passenger vehicles in India, by vehicle class (in percent)



\* excludes smaller rickshaws (L3), includes larger cargo three-wheelers (L5)  
Source: Bain & Company



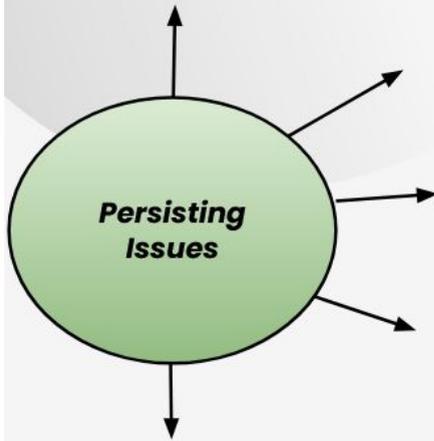
# Spark to Slow Down : EV Ecosystem



**CONTEXT:** The article highlights the issue of "Safety concerns" related to Electric Vehicle usages resulting in slow adoption of EV in India

## No fresh subsidy required for India's EV ecosystem, says Piyush Goyal

**"Price sensitive market of India": High Upfront cost & customer safety**



**Range Anxiety**  
Tata Nexon EV : 300-400 kms

**Poor State of Charging Infrastructure**

**Import Dependency for Critical Minerals**

**Policy Paralysis: Reduction in Subsidy**

### Tata Nexon vs Tata Nexon EV comparison



Tata Nexon	Tata Nexon EV
Fearless Plus PS Da	Empowered Plus 45
₹15.60 Lakh	₹17.19 Lakh



### Mains Heading 3 : The Persisting challenges in adoption of EV :

Today's Article : Why EV Batteries catch fire?

EV Charging point blast killed 8 people in Indore

**"Thermal Runaway"**: Overheating of one cell creates chain reaction outpacing cooling system

Release **"Toxic cocktail"**: Gases, Hydrogen fluoride & flammable vapour

Poor Road Infrastructure, Third - Party repairing & Over - Charging due to range anxiety

**Thermal stress** due to Global Warming

### Global Critical Minerals Outlook 2024 report

Lithium demand rose by 30% in 2023

82% Import dependency for Lithium

China process 87% of Rare earth elements & 58% of world's lithium refining

India imports 75% of Lithium ion batteries from China

GTRI : "Overwhelming dominance gives Beijing potential leverage against India turning supply chains into a tool of pressure in times of political tension"



# Spark to Slow Down : EV Ecosystem



**CONTEXT:** The article highlights the issue of "Safety concerns" related to Electric Vehicle usages resulting in slow adoption of EV in India

## Mains Heading 4 : Pragmatic Steps Taken by GOI?

### Steps Taken :

<b>National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP)</b>	<b>PLI Scheme for Advanced Chemistry Cell Batteries</b>	<b>Create Dense &amp; Accessible Charging Infrastructure like China Model</b>
<b>PM E-Bus Sewa Payment Security Mechanism Scheme 2024</b>	<b>State EV Policies: Exemptions from road tax + lower toll fee + Zero parking fee</b>	<b>UK Model : Ban on Sales of New Petrol or Diesel Vehicle by 2035</b>

## Big Boost to Electric Cars

Scheme for FAME India Phase II Approved

-  Encourage Faster adoption of Electric and hybrid vehicle by offering upfront **Incentive on purchase of Electric vehicles**
-  To support **10 Lakhs e2-Wheelers, 5 Lakhs e3-Wheelers, 55000 4-Wheelers s and 7000 Buses**
-  About **2700 charging stations** will be established in a grid of 3 km x 3 km
-  Outlay of **Rs. 10,000 crores** over three years



# Spark to Slow Down : EV Ecosystem



**CONTEXT:** The article highlights the issue of “Safety concerns” related to Electric Vehicle usages resulting in slow adoption of EV in India

## Mains Practise Question

**Practise Question :** “Electric Vehicle (EV) adoption is crucial for India’s transition towards sustainable mobility, yet its penetration remains uneven”. Critically Analyse.  
(10 Marks, 150 words)



# Cross Voting in RS Polls

**SYLLABUS: Prelims: Polity : Functioning of Parliament**  
**Newspaper : The Indian Express, Page No : 6**

## Cross Voting in RS Polls

### Context of News :

THE BIJU Janata Dal (BJD) on Saturday suspended six MLAs who cross-voted in the recently concluded Rajya Sabha polls.

Cross-voting by eight BJD MLAs, along with three Congress legislators, helped hotelier and former Union minister Dilip Ray win the fourth seat.

**Anti - Defection Law**  
 Under 10th Schedule (52nd CA 1985)

If member "voluntary" gives up membership : Not limited to formal resignation

Publicly oppose party ideology or abstain against party direction

Vote against Whip directive

**Kuldip Nayar v. UOI 2006 :**  
 Elections to RS are NOT proceedings of House & governed by RPA 1951

### Importance of Election?

Equal Status	Unequal Status	Special Powers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction &amp; passage of <b>Ordinary &amp; Constitutional amendment bills</b></li> <li>Amendment or passage of <b>Financial Bills (Article 117 (3))</b></li> <li>Election &amp; impeachment of <b>President</b></li> <li>Removal of <b>CJI, Judges of SC/ HC &amp; CEC</b></li> <li>Approval of <b>Ordinances</b> issued by President (Article 123)</li> <li>Approval of <b>Proclamation of all 3 types of Emergencies</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Money Bill (Article 110)</b> can be introduced only in LS</li> <li>RS can <b>not amend or reject a Money Bill</b></li> <li>Whether a Bill is money bill or not? <b>Speaker of LS</b></li> <li>RS can only discuss the Budget but can <b>not vote on Demand for Grants</b></li> <li>Resolution for discontinuation of National Emergency can be passed only by Lok Sabha</li> <li><b>Can not pass NCM</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Article 67 :</b> RS alone can initiate the removal of VP</li> <li><b>Article 249 :</b> Authorise Parliament to make law on State List</li> <li><b>Article 312 :</b> Authorise Parliament to create new AIS</li> <li>Can Approve all type of Emergency if LS has been dissolved</li> </ul>

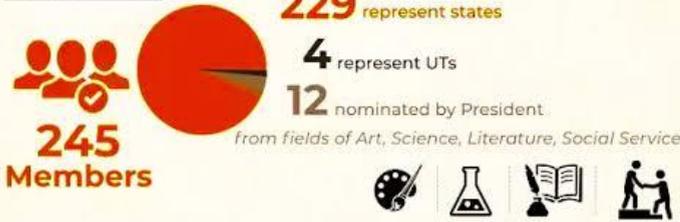
22nd March 2026

**SYLLABUS: Prelims: Polity : Functioning of Parliament Newspaper : The Indian Express, Page No : 6**

### 4th Schedule & Article 80 :

**250 Seats** - 238 representatives of States and UTs elected indirectly, 12 nominated by President

**AT PRESENT**



**245 Members**



Allocation of Rajya Sabha seats depends on the **population of the state/UT**

Rajya Sabha, the permanent house, never gets dissolved completely.

Every 2 years, **1/3<sup>rd</sup> members** retire after completing their respective 6 year term

Elected members of respective state assemblies elect the RS members... **but HOW?**

### PRELIMS 2020 :

2. Rajya Sabha has equal powers with Lok Sabha in
- the matter of creating new All India Services
  - amending the Constitution
  - the removal of the government
  - making cut motions

Members → Indirectly elected by **ELECTED** member of LA/UT

Single Transferable Vote

System of Proportional Representation

TEO → 100 members in legislative Assembly

3 seats in RS

Party A → 70 seats

Party B → 30 seats

5 candidates

2 candidate from A

1 candi from B

Preferential voting

A	26 <sub>A</sub>				
B	26 <sub>A</sub>				
C	26 <sub>B</sub>				
D					
E					

$$\text{FORMULA} = \frac{\text{Number of votes polled}}{\text{Total no of seats available}} + (1) \times (100) + (1)$$



**SYLLABUS: Prelims: Polity : Functioning of Parliament**  
**Newspaper : The Indian Express, Page No : 6**



HOW ARE  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
MEMBERS ELECTED? 

**Proportional Representation through Single Transferable Vote**

Candidates fielded by political parties should be proposed by:

at least 10 members of State Assembly **OR** 10% of party strength in the House

To fill X no. of vacant seats, the candidate needs a **Quota** of votes or support from a particular number of its existing MLAs to win

**HERE'S HOW IT'S CALCULATED**

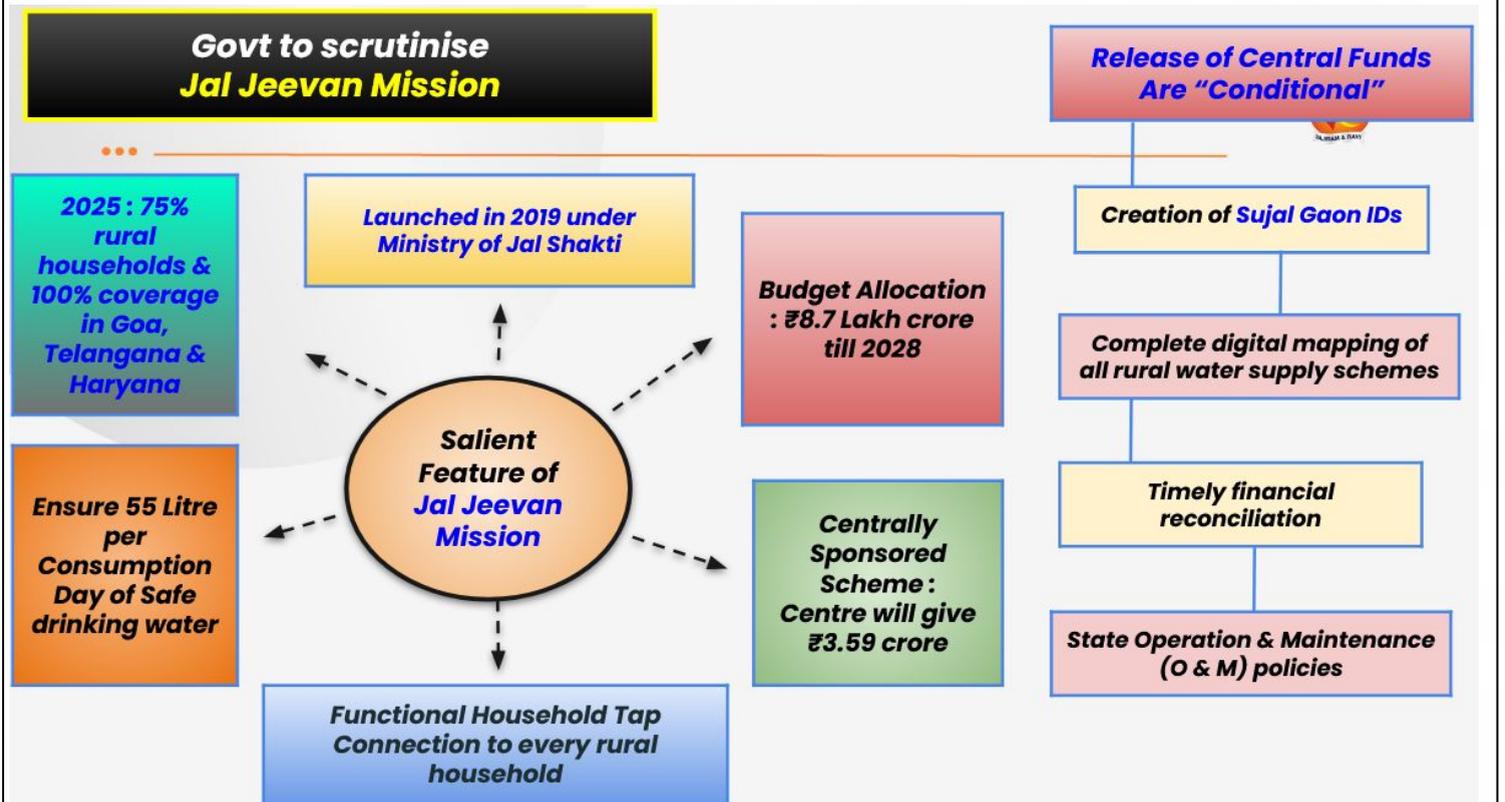
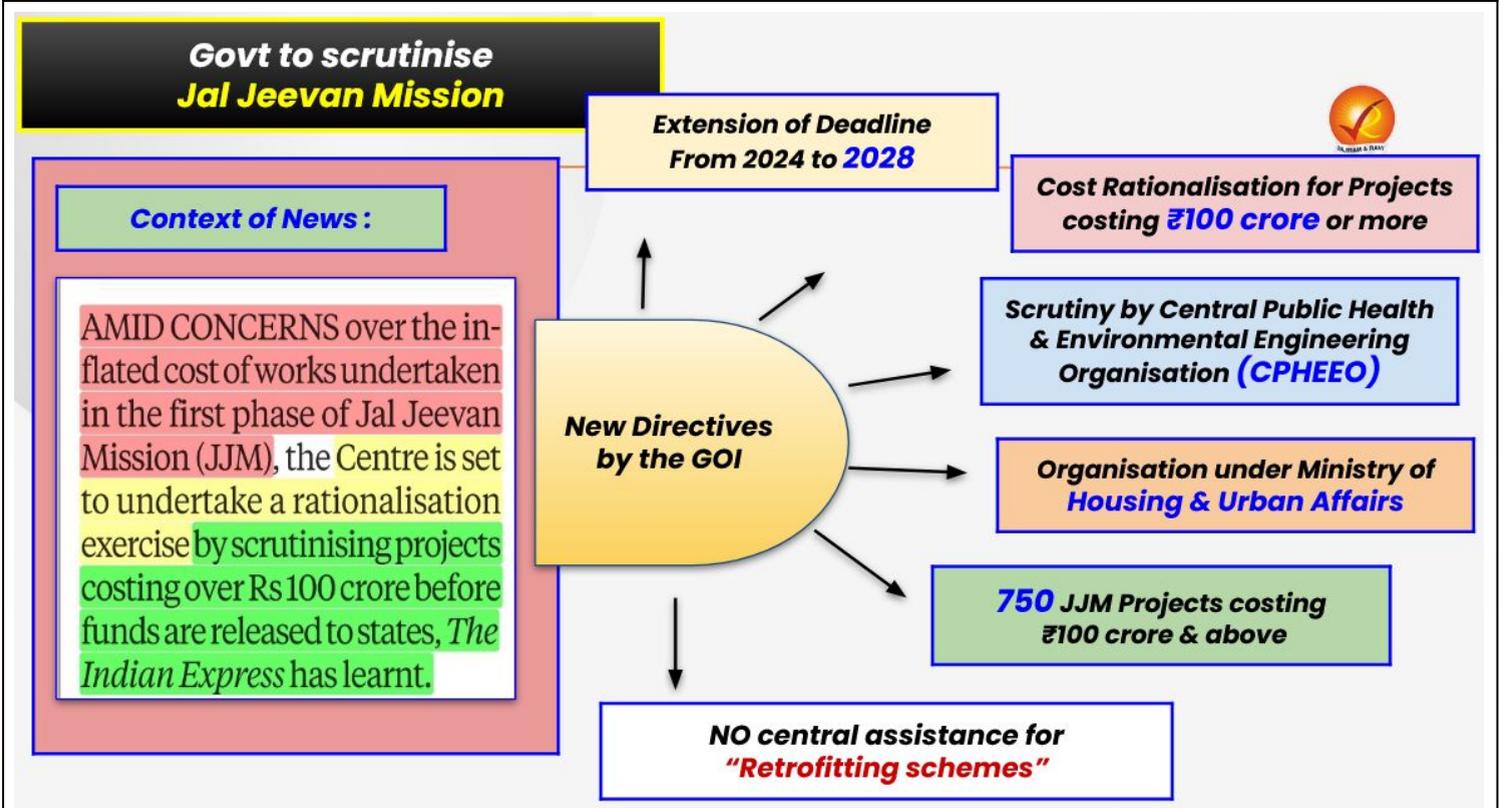
Value of Vote = No. of MLAs x 100

$$\text{Quota To Win} = \frac{\text{Value of Vote}}{(\text{Vacancies} + 1)} + 1 / 100$$


# Govt to scrutinise Jal Jeevan Mission



**SYLLABUS: Prelims: Government Schemes & Policies**  
**Newspaper : The Indian Express, Page No : 1**



# Govt to scrutinise Jal Jeevan Mission



**SYLLABUS: Prelims: Government Schemes & Policies**  
**Newspaper : The Indian Express, Page No : 1**

<b>World Water Day : 22nd March</b>	<b>FACT Sheet for Prelims 2026</b>	<b>Quick facts</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>71%</b> Earth's surface covered with water : <b>3%</b> is freshwater</li><li>• <b>69%</b> frozen in Ice Caps &amp; <b>29%</b> Underground water</li><li>• <b>1.2%</b> : Lakes, Rivers &amp; Swamps</li><li>• <b>MoJS = 24,24,540</b> water bodies in India (<b>97%</b> in rural areas)</li><li>• <b>Freshwater : Ponds (59%)</b> &gt; Tanks (15%) &gt; Reservoirs (12%) &gt; Water Conservation Schemes (9%) &gt; Lakes (0.9%)</li><li>• <b>Irrigation = 90%</b> Freshwater withdrawals</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>2030 = Total water demand &gt; Renewable water supply in every state</b></li><li>• <b>31%</b> India's water resources originate in neighbouring countries</li><li>• <b>India is <u>LARGEST</u> Net exporter of "Virtual water"</b></li><li>• <b>46%</b> of river streams in India are polluted</li><li>• <b>35%</b> wetlands lost in last 4 decades (1980-2020)</li></ul>	<p><b>Largest Lake (Overall)</b></p> <p>→ Vembanad Lake, Kerala – The largest lake in India, covering around 2,033 sq. km.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Largest Freshwater Lake</b></p> <p>→ Wular Lake, Jammu &amp; Kashmir – One of the biggest freshwater lakes in South Asia.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Deepest Lake</b></p> <p>→ Manasbal Lake, Jammu &amp; Kashmir – With a depth of around 13 metres, it is considered India's deepest freshwater lake.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Largest Brackish Water Lake</b></p> <p>→ Chilika Lake, Odisha – Asia's largest brackish water lagoon, famous for migratory birds.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Highest Lake</b></p> <p>→ Tso Lhamo Lake, Sikkim – Located at about 5,330 meters above sea level, making it one of the highest lakes in the world.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Saline Lake</b></p> <p>→ Sambhar Lake, Rajasthan – The largest inland saltwater lake in India, known for salt production.</p>



# Stealth Frigate "Taragiri"

**SYLLABUS: Prelims: Current Events of National & International Importance**  
**Newspaper : The Hindu, Page No : 9**

## Context of News :

Indigenous stealth frigate *Taragiri*, equipped with cutting-edge weapons, including supersonic missiles, will be commissioned into the Indian Navy on April 3, the Defence Ministry said in a press release on Saturday. The ceremony will be presided over by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in Visakhapatnam, and "will serve as a powerful testament to the nation's journey toward becoming a completely self-reliant naval power".

## PROJECT 17A

The ships are being  
**constructed**  
by two major  
shipbuilding  
companies:  
**GRSE and MDL**



**Project-17 Alpha**  
frigates (P-17A) was  
cleared by the govt in  
2015 to construct warships  
and frigates for the Indian  
Navy. It involves the  
**development of**  
**seven advanced guided-**  
**missile frigates**



# Stealth Frigate "Taragiri"

**SYLLABUS: Prelims: Current Events of National & International Importance**  
**Newspaper : The Hindu, Page No : 9**



The ship will be fitted with a **supersonic surface-to-surface missile system**

**Two 30 mm** rapid-fire guns will provide the ship with close-in-defence capability while an SRGM gun will enable her to provide **effective naval gunfire support**

## TARAGIRI



The ship's **air defence capability**, designed to counter the threat of enemy aircraft and anti-ship cruise missiles will revolve around the vertical launch and long-range **surface-to-air missile system**

**Triple tube light** weight torpedo launchers and rocket launchers will add punch to its **anti-submarine capability**

Powered by **Combined Diesel or Gas (CODOG)** propulsion plants using diesel engines and gas turbines & managed through an **Integrated Platform Management System (IPMS)**

Operating in "Blue water environment"

Integrated construction philosophy

Anti - Surface, Anti- Air & Anti - Submarine warfare

LRSAM, Brahmos Supersonic Cruise missiles, Anti - Submarine Torpedo

Barak 8 Anti - Aircraft Missile & Shakti Electronic Warfare suite



## INDIAN NAVY





India's Coastline **11,098 kms**  
(As per Ministry of Ports)

**Boundary Length** (Descending Order)

Bangladesh > Sri Lanka

Pakistan

Myanmar

Indonesia

Thailand

Maldives

'Sham No Varunah' (शं नो वरुणः :)

"May the Lord of the Oceans be auspicious unto us"



Supreme Commander  
President of India



Indian Navy Day  
4<sup>th</sup> December

Operation **Trident 1971**  
Attack on Karachi Harbour





**SYLLABUS: Prelims: Current Events of National & International Importance**  
**Newspaper : The Hindu, Page No : 9**

## PROJECT 15B

### Visakhapatnam-Class Destroyers



Follow-on program of Project 15A (Kolkata-class) to build **stealth guided-missile destroyers** for the Indian Navy.

#### KEY FEATURES

-  **Class Name:** Visakhapatnam-class
-  **Shipyard:** Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (📍 Mumbai)
-  **Number of Ships:** 4
-  **Displacement:** ~7,400 tonnes
-  **Stealth Features:**
  - Reduced radar cross-section
  - Infrared and acoustic signature management
-  **Propulsion:** Combined Gas and Gas (COGAG) system

#### STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE

-  Enhances blue-water naval capability
-  Provides multi-layered air defence **shield**
-  Strengthens maritime strike and deterrence power
-  Boosts indigenisation under Atmanirbhar Bharat.

#### WEAPON SYSTEMS & CAPABILITIES

-  **BrahMos Supersonic Cruise Missiles** (surface-to-surface strike)
-  **Barak-8 Long Range Surface-to-Air Missiles (LRSAM)** (area air defence)®
-  **76 mm Naval Gun & CIWS** (close-in defence)
-  **Advanced Radar Systems:** MF-STAR (Multi-Function Surveillance and Threat Alert Radar)
-  **Electronic Warfare Suite** (indigenous systems)
-  **Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW):**
  - Torpedoes
  - Rocket launchers (RBU-6000)
  - Helicopter operations (e.g, MH-60R)



# Who built the Great Wall?

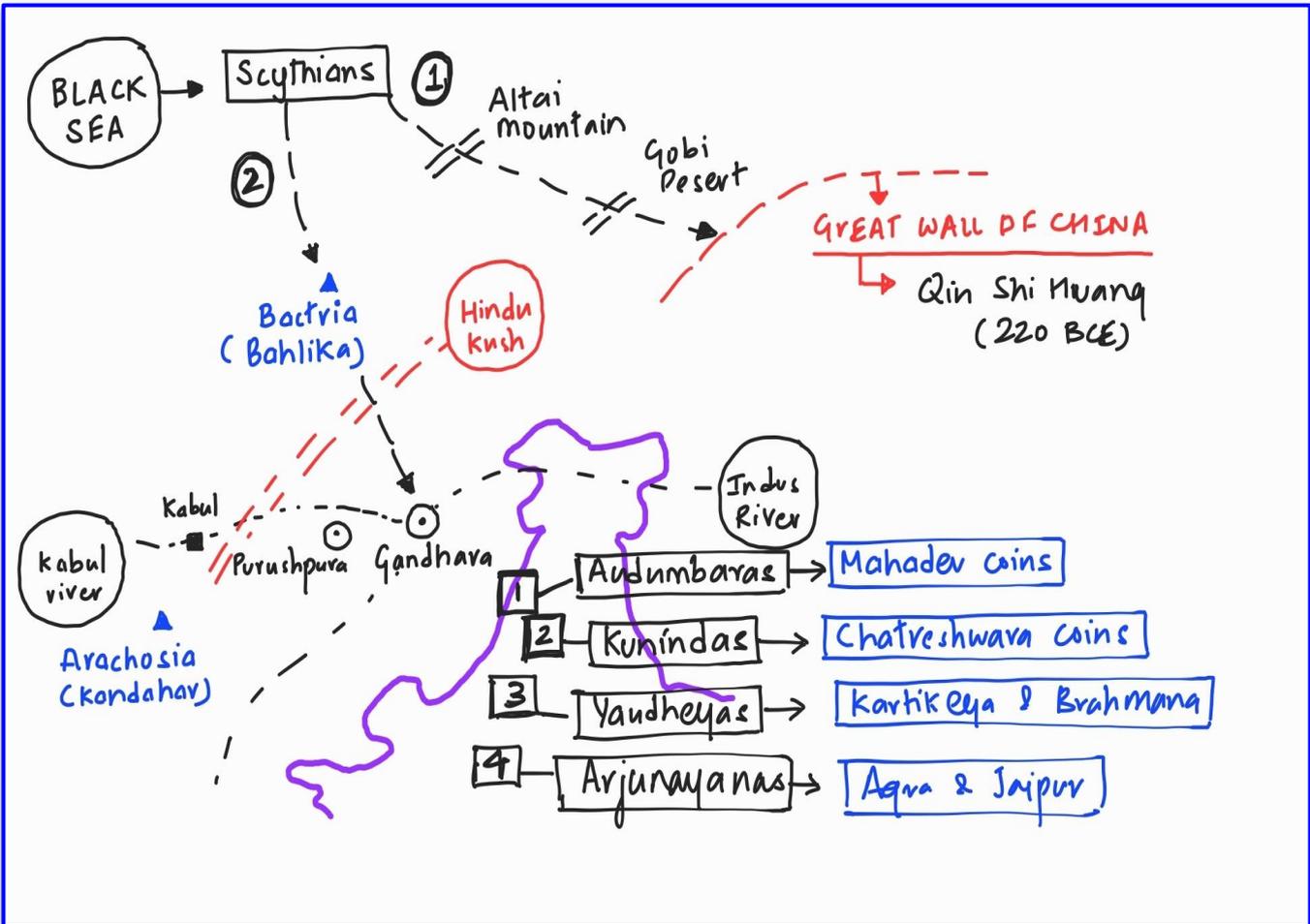
**SYLLABUS: Prelims: Ancient History**  
**Newspaper: The Indian Express, Page No: SPOTLIGHT**

## Context of News:

### Breaking the Biggest Myth

One of the most common claims about the Great Wall of China is that it is the only man-made structure visible from space with the naked eye. This idea has appeared in textbooks and popular trivia for decades.

In reality, it is a myth. Astronauts have confirmed that the Great Wall is extremely difficult to see from space because it is relatively narrow and blends into the natural landscape around it. From hundreds of kilometres above Earth, it is far less visible than large cities, highways, or airports.



# Who built the Great Wall?



**SYLLABUS: Prelims: Ancient History**

**Newspaper : The Indian Express, Page No : SPOTLIGHT**

## Fact Sheet for Prelims 2026 :

<b>Indo - Greeks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Greek King who invaded Gandhara : <b>Demetrius</b></li> <li>• First Bilingual Coins in Greek &amp; Brahmi : <b>Agathocles (190-180 BCE)</b></li> <li>• First Indo - Greek King : <b>Appolodotus (180- 175 CE)</b></li> </ul>
<b>Shakas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>King Vikramaditya</b> defeated Shaka King Azes 1 in 58 BCE</li> <li>• <b>Rajuvula</b> defeated last Indo - Greek King Strato 2 in 10 CE</li> <li>• Kardamaka king <b>Rudraman I</b> issued Girnar Inscription</li> </ul>
<b>Parthians or Pahlavas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Ruler : <b>Mithrodates</b></li> <li>• <b>Takht i Bahi Inscription</b> : Gondophares (20-46 CE)</li> <li>• 1st Christian Missionary : <b>St. Thomas</b></li> </ul>
<b>Kushans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Kujula Kadphises (25-80 CE) &amp; Vima Kadphises (113-127 CE)</b></li> <li>• <b>Kanishka (127-150 CE)</b> : Rabatak &amp; Hunza Inscription</li> </ul>

### Great Wall of China : 21,000 Kilometres

Spring & Autumn period (770-476 BCE) & Warring States (475-221 BCE)

**First Emperor of China : Qin Shi Huang in 221 BCE**

**Han Dynasty (206 BCE - 220 CE) :**  
Reached to Gobi desert & connected to Silk Route

Largely built by Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 CE)

Use of Bricks, stone slabs, lime mortar with garrisons & fortified passes



**SYLLABUS: Prelims: Ancient History**

**Newspaper : The Indian Express, Page No : SPOTLIGHT**

**First bilingual and multi-religion monetary system**

See also: [Post-Mauryan coinage of Gandhara](#)



The coinage of [Agathocles](#) (circa 180 BC) incorporated the [Brahmi script](#) and several deities from India, which have been variously interpreted as [Vishnu](#), [Shiva](#), [Vasudeva](#), [Balarama](#) or the [Buddha](#).<sup>[97]</sup>



Depictions of the "[Shakyamuni Buddha](#)" (with legend [PAKAMANO BOΔΔO](#) "[Shakamano Boddo](#)") in [Kanishka's coinage](#).



# Nilgiri Tahrs Thrives



**SYLLABUS: Prelims: Flora & Fauna**  
**Newspaper : The Hindu, Page No : 5**

**Context of News :**

In 2024, the Chokramudi hills under Bison Valley panchayat near Munnar in Idukki, Kerala, were known primarily as a hub of encroachers. However, just two years later, the landscape has been transformed into a thriving natural habitat for the endangered Nilgiri tahrs.

**Nilgiri Tahr**

Endemic to Western Ghats

Ungulate & ONLY species in Genus Nilgiri Tragus

State animal of TN & listed as Endangered on IUCN

Largest Population : Eravikulam NP

High altitude grasslands Shola (Tropical Montane) forests

**Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve**

India's FIRST & Largest protected Forest area

Mudumalai, Mukurthi & Sathyamangalam in TN

Nagarhole & Bandipur in Karnataka

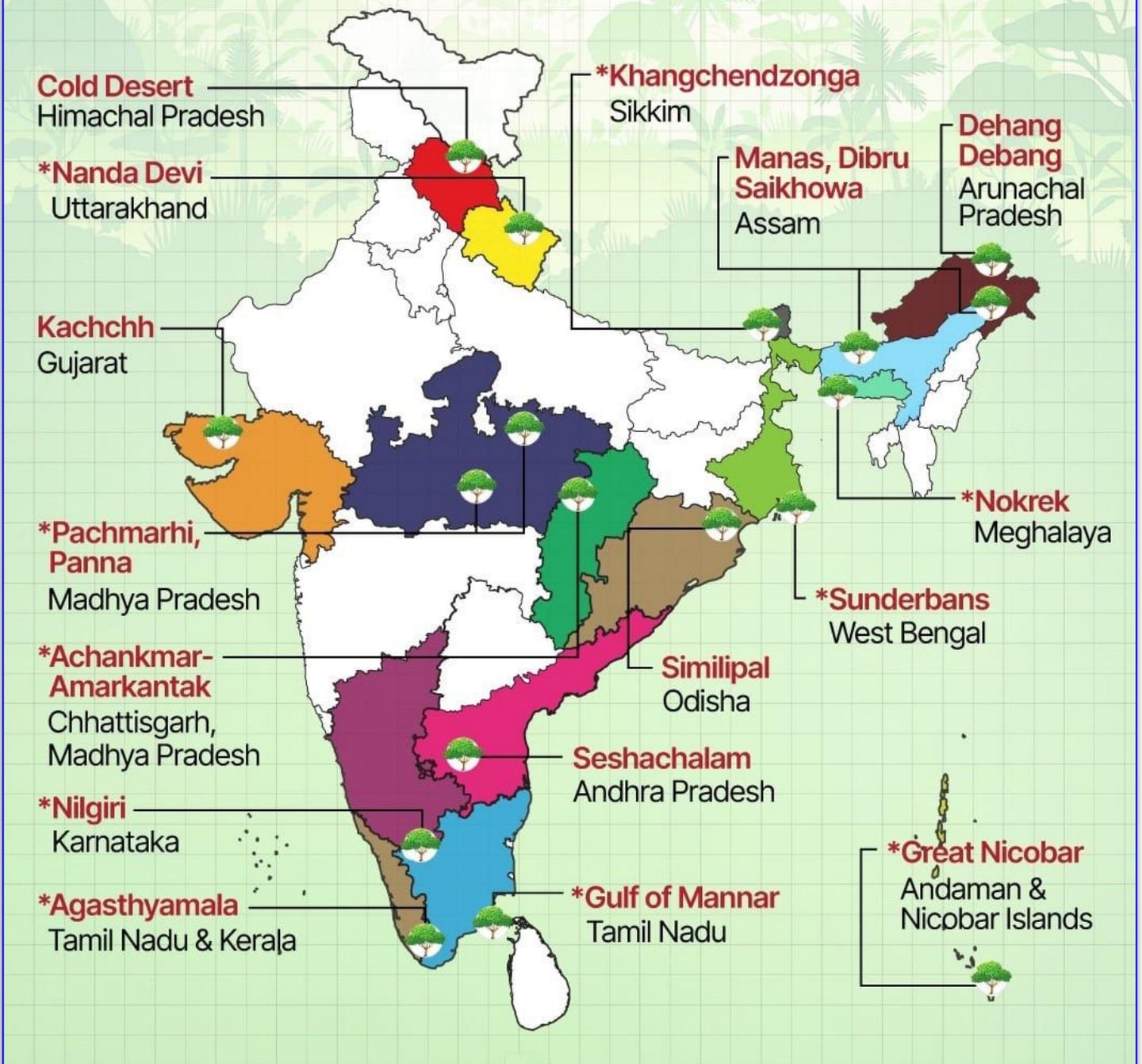
Silent Valley, Aralam WS, Wayanad & Karimpuzha in Kerala

Largest population of Asian elephants & Lion Tailed Macaque



**SYLLABUS: Prelims: Flora & Fauna**  
**Newspaper : The Hindu, Page No : 5**

## Biosphere Reserves in India



**Q1. Match the following Lakes with their features:**

Lake	Feature
1. Vembanad Lake	A. Largest inland saltwater lake in India
2. Manasbal Lake	B. India's deepest freshwater lake
3. Chilika Lake	C. Asia's largest brackish water lagoon
4. Sambhar Lake	D. Largest lake in India

**Select the correct answer using the codes given below.**

- a) 1-D, 2-B, 3-C, 4-A
- b) 1-A, 2-B, 3-C, 4-D
- c) 1-D, 2-C, 3-B, 4-A
- d) 1-C, 2-B, 3-D, 4-A

**Answer: a**

**Q2. With reference to the special powers of the Rajya Sabha, consider the following statements:**

1. Under Article 67, only the Rajya Sabha can initiate the removal of the Vice-President.
2. Under Article 249, the Rajya Sabha can authorise Parliament to make laws on subjects in the State List.
3. Under Article 312, the Rajya Sabha can authorise the creation of new All India Services.

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

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

**Answer: d**

**Q3. With reference to Taragiri, consider the following statements:**

1. It is an indigenous stealth frigate of India.
2. It will be fitted with a supersonic surface-to-surface missile system.

**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. Match the following regarding Indo-Greek Kings:**

King	Feature/Contribution
1. Demetrius	A. First Indo-Greek King
2. Agathocles	B. First bilingual coins (Greek & Brahmi)
3. Apollodotus	C. First Greek King who invaded Gandhara

**Select the correct answer using the codes given below.**

- a) 1-A, 2-B, 3-C
- b) 1-C, 2-B, 3-A
- c) 1-C, 2-A, 3-B
- d) 1-B, 2-C, 3-A

**Answer: b**

**Q5. With reference to Nilgiri Tahr, consider the following statements:**

1. It is endemic to the Western Ghats.
2. It is the State animal of Tamil Nadu.
3. It is listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List.

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

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

**Answer: b**





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