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FOR UPSC CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION

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1. PM Reflects on Fulfilment of Shyamji Krishna Varma's Legacy – Key Highlights

- **Historical Context:** Shyamji Krishna Varma (1857–1930) was a revolutionary freedom fighter, political thinker, and founder of the **India House** in London (1905), which became a hub for Indian nationalists abroad. He wished that his ashes return to a free India.
- **Repatriation of Ashes (2003):** This long-standing wish was fulfilled when then Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi initiated the effort to bring his ashes back from Geneva, Switzerland, in August 2003, symbolizing respect for India's freedom movement.
- **Prime Minister's Statement (2025):** PM Narendra Modi highlighted this as a deeply satisfying national effort and urged Indian youth to study the life and ideals of Shyamji Krishna Varma, who epitomized courage, justice, and commitment to independence.
- **Symbolic Significance:** The act of repatriating ashes represents **national honour** and a reaffirmation of India's respect for freedom fighters. It also underscores India's ongoing efforts to preserve the legacy of the freedom struggle.
- **Inspiration for Youth:** The PM emphasized that young Indians should draw inspiration from Varma's life — especially his fearless pursuit of justice, intellectual contributions, and unwavering patriotism.
- **Relevance to Indian Heritage:** This move reflects how India values its historical and cultural heritage, aligning with constitutional ideals of **patriotism (Article 51A – Fundamental Duties)** and preservation of national heritage.



Key Terms / Definitions

- **Shyamji Krishna Varma:** Indian revolutionary and political activist who established India House in London; supported freedom fighters like Veer Savarkar and Madam Cama.
- **India House:** A student residence and political hub in London for Indian nationalists in the early 20th century.
- **Repatriation:** The return of someone or something (such as human remains or cultural property) to their own country.
- **Maa Bharti:** A cultural and emotional term used to refer to the Motherland, India.

Constitutional & Legal Context

- **Article 51A (Fundamental Duties):** Citizens are expected to cherish and follow the noble ideals that inspired the national struggle for freedom.
- **Cultural Heritage Protection:** Though not directly codified in a single statute, acts like **The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958** and various government initiatives reflect India's commitment to preserving heritage, including the legacy of freedom fighters.

Conclusion

The repatriation of Shyamji Krishna Varma's ashes symbolizes India's moral obligation to honour its heroes and serves as a bridge between past sacrifices and present aspirations. It is a reminder that the values of courage, justice, and patriotism remain central to India's national character.



UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper I (History):** Modern Indian history, revolutionary movements, role of Indian nationalists abroad.
- **GS Paper II (Polity):** Fundamental Duties (Article 51A), state's role in preserving national heritage.
- **GS Paper IV (Ethics):** Inspiration from leaders' lives, moral obligations of the state and citizens.
- **Essay / Interview:** Can be used as a contemporary example of honouring freedom fighters and linking it to youth inspiration and national pride.

2. Completion of Adi Sewa Parv – Adoption of Tribal Village Vision 2030

Key Highlights

- **Historic Adoption (2nd October 2025):** Special Gram Sabhas in tribal-dominated villages and tolas across India formally passed the **Tribal Village Vision 2030 Declaration**, empowering local communities to chart their development priorities for the next decade aligned with **Viksit Bharat@2047**.
- **World's Largest Tribal Grassroots Leadership Mission:** Under the **Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan** launched by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 11.5 crore tribal citizens across 1 lakh villages and tolas in 30 States/UTs are being empowered to actively participate in governance and service delivery.
- **Establishment of Adi Sewa Kendras:** One lakh **Adi Sewa Kendras** (single-window citizen service centres) are being set up; villagers will contribute one hour per week as **Adi Sewa Samay** for voluntary service.
- **Participatory Development Model:** Villagers identified their needs and priorities through **Transect Walks, Focused Group Discussions (FGDs), and Gap Analysis**, focusing on education, health, livelihoods, social/financial inclusion, and infrastructure.
- **Technology-Enabled Governance:** The **AI-powered Adi Vaani App** connects government officers with tribal communities in native languages to ensure last-mile delivery, real-time communication, and grievance redressal.
- **Capacity Building:** Since July 2025, 20 lakh senior officers, SHG women, and tribal youth trained as **Adi Karmayogis** through Governance Process Labs to ensure scheme convergence and participatory governance.

Definitions / Key Terms

- **Tribal Village Vision 2030:** A community-driven declaration enabling tribal villages to design and implement development goals for 2025–2035, aligning with India's national vision.
- **Adi Sewa Kendra:** Single-window centre for citizens in tribal villages providing integrated government services and grievance redressal.
- **Adi Vaani App:** AI-enabled application facilitating communication between government and tribal communities in local languages.





- **Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan:** The world's largest tribal grassroots leadership mission aimed at empowering citizens and training change-makers for governance at the local level.

Constitutional & Legal Context

- **Article 40:** Directive Principle to organise village panchayats and enable self-governance.
- **Article 243–243O (73rd Amendment):** Constitutional provisions for Panchayati Raj institutions empowering local governance.
- **Fifth Schedule (Article 244):** Administration and control of Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes.
- **PESA Act 1996:** Provides self-governance for people in Scheduled Areas through Gram Sabhas; participatory decision-making is a key element.
- **Forest Rights Act 2006:** Strengthens rights of tribal communities over land and forest resources.

Conclusion

The **Tribal Village Vision 2030** represents a transformative milestone in India's tribal governance. By blending traditional community-led decision-making with modern technology and capacity building, it ensures that development is by the people and for the people. This model enhances transparency, accountability, and inclusiveness, creating a replicable framework for grassroots governance nationwide.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper I (Indian Society):** Tribal communities, their empowerment, and participatory development models.
- **GS Paper II (Governance):** PESA Act, 73rd Amendment, local self-governance in Scheduled Areas, and technology-enabled governance.
- **GS Paper III (Development):** Inclusive growth, rural development programmes, and convergence of schemes.
- **GS Paper IV (Ethics):** Citizen-centric governance, participatory leadership, and community-driven development.
- **Essay / Interview:** Example of bottom-up planning aligning local aspirations with national goals like **Viksit Bharat@2047**.

3. Ministry of Minority Affairs launches Special Campaign 5.0 following 'Swachhata Hi Seva 2025'

Key Highlights

- **Launch of Special Campaign 5.0 (3rd October 2025):** Ministry of Minority Affairs launched **Special Campaign 5.0** after the successful conclusion of the nationwide **Swachhata Hi Seva 2025 (SHS 2025)** drive held from 17th September to 2nd October 2025. The campaign was inaugurated by Dr. Chandra Shekhar Kumar, Secretary, Ministry of Minority Affairs.
- **Campaign Objectives:** Focus on cleanliness, reducing pendency of files, institutionalising Swachhata, strengthening internal monitoring, training officers in record management, digitising records, and promoting sustainability through tree plantation drives.



- **Two-Phase Approach:** A preparatory phase (16th–30th September 2025) identified pending references, space management, and campaign sites, followed by an implementation phase (2nd–31st October 2025) to execute activities.
- **Nodal Officer & Central Monitoring:** A dedicated Nodal Officer was appointed to oversee campaign implementation, collect daily data, and feed information into the **SCDPM 5.0 Portal** designed by DARPG for central monitoring.
- **Focus on E-Waste Management:** Special emphasis on disposal of e-waste generated in Government offices in line with **E-Waste Management Rules 2022** issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- **Key Activities under SHS 2025:** Cleanliness drives in Ministry premises, distribution of safai kits, Safai Mitra Suraksha Shivar, health check-ups, yoga and nutrition sessions, inspections by senior officers, and felicitation of Safai Mitras to promote the dignity of labour and continuous Swachhata practices.



Definitions / Key Terms

- **Special Campaign 5.0:** A government-wide campaign focusing on cleanliness, record management, reducing pendency, and institutionalising Swachhata in Ministries/Departments.
- **Swachhata Hi Seva (SHS):** A nationwide cleanliness drive aligned with **Swachh Bharat Mission** to mobilise citizens and government bodies for sustained hygiene and sanitation practices.
- **E-Waste Management Rules 2022:** Legal framework for safe collection, recycling, and disposal of electronic waste, ensuring environmental sustainability.
- **Safai Mitras:** Frontline sanitation workers ensuring cleanliness and hygiene in public spaces.

Constitutional & Legal Context

- **Article 47 (Directive Principles):** State's duty to improve public health and sanitation.
- **Article 51A(g) (Fundamental Duties):** Citizens' duty to protect and improve the natural environment.
- **Swachh Bharat Mission (2014):** Flagship programme for nationwide cleanliness and sanitation.
- **Right to a Clean Environment:** Recognised under Article 21 (Right to Life) by Supreme Court judgments, linking cleanliness to fundamental rights.

Conclusion

Special Campaign 5.0 institutionalises cleanliness and record management in government offices, making it a sustained administrative practice rather than a one-time event. By integrating e-waste disposal, tree plantation, and citizen participation, the Ministry of Minority Affairs strengthens the culture of Swachhata, efficiency, and accountability within governance.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II (Governance):** Administrative reforms, record digitisation, reducing pendency, internal monitoring, citizen-centric governance.
- **GS Paper III (Environment):** E-waste management, sustainability practices in government institutions.

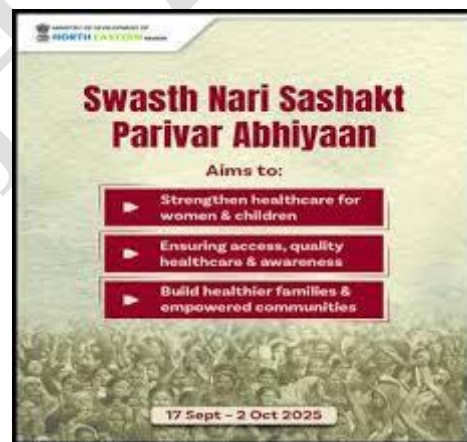


- **GS Paper IV (Ethics):** Promoting dignity of labour (Safai Mitras), civic responsibility, and institutionalising cleanliness as a value.
- **Essay / Interview:** Example of linking administrative efficiency with Swachhata and environmental sustainability.

4. “Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar” Abhiyaan – Largest Health Outreach for Women & Families

Key Highlights

- **Massive Health Outreach (17th Sept–2nd Oct 2025):** The “Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar” Abhiyaan, jointly led by the **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW)** and **Ministry of Women & Child Development (MoWCD)**, concluded with over **18 lakh health camps**, reaching nearly **10 crore citizens** nationwide and benefitting more than **6.5 crore women**.
- **Screening Achievements:** 1.78 crore citizens screened for **hypertension**, 1.72 crore for **diabetes**, over 37 lakh women for **breast cancer**, 19 lakh for **cervical cancer**, and over 96 lakh for **oral cancer**.
- **Maternal & Child Health:** 62.60 lakh antenatal check-ups conducted; 1.43 crore children received **life-saving vaccines**; 1.51 crore screened for **anaemia**; nutrition counselling reached 1.16 crore citizens.
- **Communicable Diseases & Blood Donation:** 85 lakh citizens screened for **tuberculosis**, 10.23 lakh for **sickle cell disease**, 2.68 lakh **Ni-kshay Mitras** registered, over 4.30 lakh blood donors enlisted, and 10.69 lakh **Ayushman/PM-JAY cards** issued.
- **Multi-Institutional Support:** NHM health camps, **AIIMS**, Institutes of National Importance (INIs), tertiary hospitals, Ayushman Arogya Mandirs, and private institutions organised thousands of speciality camps, complementing state government and community-level health workers.
- **Women-Centric Preventive Care:** Focus on screening, early detection, and treatment linkages for **non-communicable diseases**, anaemia, TB, and sickle cell disease while promoting maternal, child, and adolescent health, nutrition, menstrual hygiene, lifestyle, and mental health awareness.



Definitions / Key Terms

- **Ni-kshay Mitra:** Individuals/organisations supporting TB patients by providing nutritional or diagnostic support under the **Pradhan Mantri TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan**.
- **Ayushman/PM-JAY Card:** Health insurance card under **Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana**, providing free secondary and tertiary care to eligible beneficiaries.
- **Ayushman Arogya Mandirs:** Health and wellness centres under Ayushman Bharat delivering comprehensive primary healthcare services.
- **Sickle Cell Disease Screening:** Part of the **National Sickle Cell Elimination Mission** launched to eradicate the disease by 2047.

Constitutional & Legal Context



- **Article 47 (Directive Principles):** State's duty to improve public health, nutrition, and living standards.
- **Article 21 (Right to Life):** Judicial interpretation includes the **right to health** and access to medical care as a fundamental right.
- **National Health Mission (NHM):** Flagship programme for universal access to equitable, affordable, and quality healthcare.
- **Poshan Abhiyaan:** For improving nutrition and reducing anaemia in women and children.

Conclusion

The "Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar" Abhiyaan marks a landmark in India's public health outreach, integrating **preventive, promotive, and curative health services** at the community level. By focusing on women and children and leveraging multi-institutional participation, it strengthens India's path toward **universal health coverage**, early disease detection, and improved health indicators.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II (Governance):** Health service delivery, convergence of ministries for welfare schemes.
- **GS Paper II & III (Social Justice & Development):** Government interventions in health and nutrition for vulnerable groups.
- **GS Paper III (Science & Tech):** Screening and early detection technologies for non-communicable and communicable diseases.
- **Essay / Interview:** Model initiative showing inter-ministerial coordination, women-centric public health programmes, and progress toward SDGs (Good Health & Wellbeing).

5. Satellite Internet in India – The Future of Internet Above Us

Key Highlights

- India has over **1,002.85 million internet subscribers** (Apr–Jun 2025), but rural penetration is still low at **46 per 100 persons**, indicating the need for satellite internet to bridge the **digital divide**.
- Space Sector Reforms (2020) and **Indian Space Policy 2023** have opened the space ecosystem to private players and allowed up to **100% FDI** in satellite services.
- India is transitioning from **Geostationary (GEO)** satellites to **Low Earth Orbit (LEO)** and **Medium Earth Orbit (MEO)** satellite systems for faster and low-latency internet.
- More than **10 operators**, including **Starlink, Jio Satellite Communications** and **OneWeb**, have received/ applied for licences to provide satellite broadband.
- Government initiatives like **Digital Bharat Nidhi, NBM 2.0, BharatNet, PM-WANI**, and **CTDP for Islands & North-East** are leveraging satellite bandwidth to extend connectivity to remote and border areas.



Definition and Importance



- **Satellite Internet:** Internet service delivered via satellites in **Geostationary Orbits (GSO)** or **Non-Geostationary Orbits (NGSO)**.
- **Digital Divide:** The gap between populations having access to modern information and communications technology (ICT) and those without it.
- **Importance:** Enables broadband access to hilly terrains, border areas, islands, disaster zones, and economically unviable regions for terrestrial networks.

Regulatory & Institutional Framework

- **Department of Telecommunications (DoT):** Grants authorisations for satellite-based services under the **Unified Licence Regime**; empowered by the **Telecommunications Act, 2023** to assign spectrum and regulate satellite services.
- **TRAI (Telecom Regulatory Authority of India):** In May 2025 issued recommendations on satellite spectrum allocation – five-year assignment with an extension of two years.
- **IN-SPaCe (Indian National Space Promotion & Authorisation Centre):** Authorises and supervises non-governmental entities' space activities and acts as an interface between ISRO and private players.
- **NSIL (New Space India Ltd.):** Commercial arm of ISRO operating 15 communication satellites; runs **demand-driven missions** like GSAT-24 (DTH), GSAT-20 (broadband) and proposed GSAT-N3 for S-Band services.

Technological & Policy Shifts

- **LEO Satellites (400–2,000 km):** Provide low-latency, high-speed services.
- **MEO Satellites (8,000–20,000 km):** Cover larger regions with moderate latency.
- **High Throughput Satellites (HTS)** such as GSAT-19, GSAT-29, GSAT-11, GSAT-N2 use spot-beam technology for higher capacity.
- Government has liberalised FDI norms and encouraged private participation to achieve **Viksit Bharat 2047** vision.

Government Initiatives

- **Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN):** Former USOF; funds broadband expansion including 4G saturation project.
- **Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan (CTDP):** Augments satellite bandwidth for islands and NE regions (e.g., A&N capacity raised from 2 Gbps to 4 Gbps).
- **National Broadband Mission 2.0 (NBM 2.0):** Extending broadband to remaining 1.7 lakh villages, funded by DBN, aligned with BharatNet and PM-WANI.
- **PM-WANI:** Over 3.73 lakh public Wi-Fi hotspots established by Sept 2025.
- **GIS-based DSS by MoES:** Uses internet connectivity and satellite data to deliver early warnings for extreme weather events.

Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Telecommunications Act, 2023:** Legal basis for spectrum assignment, security conditions and regulation of satellite-based services.



- **Space Policy 2023:** Provides a level playing field for non-government entities; aligns with Article 19(1)(g) (freedom to practice trade/profession) and promotes public-private collaboration for national development.
- Satellite communication supports **Article 21 (Right to Life)** by enabling disaster response and access to essential services like education and healthcare.

Conclusion

Satellite Internet is emerging as a **critical enabler of Digital India**, bridging the urban-rural connectivity gap and ensuring strategic autonomy in space-based communication. By combining government initiatives, private participation and next-gen technology (LEO/MEO), India is steadily advancing towards **Viksit Bharat 2047**, delivering affordable, high-speed, and resilient internet access nationwide.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-2 (Governance & Infrastructure):** Policies on digital connectivity, public-private partnerships, regulatory bodies (DoT, TRAI, IN-SPACe).
- **GS-3 (Science & Technology):** Space sector reforms, satellite communication technology, disaster management applications.
- **Current Affairs:** Licensing of Starlink & other private operators, Indian Space Policy 2023, Telecommunication Act 2023.
- **Key Concepts:** Digital divide, Satcom ecosystem, LEO/MEO satellites, High Throughput Satellites (HTS).

6. Nations Must Prepare to Deal with Stablecoins – Key Takeaways for UPSC

Key Highlights

- Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman at the **Kautilya Economic Conclave** stressed that nations must “**prepare to engage**” with stablecoins, even if they are reluctant, due to the systemic change they bring to monetary and capital flows.
- Innovations like **stablecoins** are transforming the global financial architecture and may force countries to **adapt to new monetary systems or risk exclusion**.
- India has **not legalised private cryptocurrencies** (Virtual Digital Assets), though it imposes **taxes on transactions** involving them.
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** continues to lobby for a ban on private cryptocurrencies while piloting its own **Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)**.
- The Finance Minister underlined India’s **resilience to external shocks** and highlighted evolving **economic leverage** amid global strategic rivalries.

What is a stablecoin?

A stablecoin is a crypto asset that aims to maintain a stable value relative to a specified asset, or a pool of assets

■ These assets could be a monetary unit of account such as the dollar or euro, a currency basket, a commodity such as gold, or unbacked crypto assets

■ This stability can also be achieved only if a centralised institution is in charge of issuing (minting) and redeeming (burning) these crypto assets



SOURCE: IMF

Definitions



- **Stablecoins:** A category of cryptocurrency designed to maintain a stable value by being pegged to an underlying asset such as fiat currencies, a basket of currencies, or commodities like gold. They aim to reduce the volatility typical of other cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin.
- **Cryptocurrency:** A digital or virtual currency secured by cryptography, usually operating on decentralised networks using blockchain technology.
- **CBDC (Central Bank Digital Currency):** A digital form of a sovereign currency issued and backed by a country's central bank with the same legal status as physical currency.
- **Virtual Digital Assets (VDA):** A term used in Indian law for crypto assets or NFTs on which transactions are taxed under the **Finance Act, 2022**.

Constitutional & Legal Provisions in India

- **Legal Status:** India does not grant legal tender status to private cryptocurrencies but taxes their transactions (30% tax on gains, 1% TDS on transactions).
- **RBI Act, 1934 & Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007** empower the RBI to regulate monetary policy and payments systems.
- **Finance Act, 2022:** Introduced taxation of Virtual Digital Assets.
- **CBDC Legal Backing:** CBDCs, issued by the RBI, have the same legal backing as the official currency (rupee) under the **Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934**.
- **International Context:** India's stance aligns with global calls for coordinated regulation of stablecoins under forums like the **G20** and **Financial Stability Board (FSB)**.

Implications for India's Financial System

- Stablecoins, if widely adopted, may impact **monetary sovereignty, capital controls, and financial stability** by enabling cross-border flows outside the traditional banking system.
- Need for a **balanced regulatory approach** to harness innovation while preventing risks such as money laundering, terror financing, and market volatility.
- CBDC initiatives can act as a **state-backed alternative** to private stablecoins to maintain control over monetary policy and ensure trust in the financial system.

Conclusion

Stablecoins represent a **paradigm shift** in the global monetary system, blurring lines between traditional finance and digital assets. India, while cautious, recognises the inevitability of these changes and is preparing by **taxing VDAs, piloting CBDCs, and participating in global regulatory discussions**. A calibrated approach will be crucial to protect monetary stability while fostering innovation.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-3 (Economy):** Issues related to money and banking, cryptocurrencies, CBDC, financial stability.
- **GS-2 (Governance):** Policy and regulatory frameworks, India's stance in international forums (G20, FSB).
- **Current Affairs:** Ongoing debates on crypto regulation, taxation of VDAs, launch of RBI's Digital Rupee pilots.



- **Key Concepts:** Stablecoins, CBDC, monetary sovereignty, virtual digital assets, systemic financial risk.

7. Marginalised Groups under Attack in Pakistan and Bangladesh – India’s Stand

Key Highlights

- India criticised **Pakistan** for its “oppressive approach” and **systemic plundering of resources** in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), holding it responsible for **serious human rights violations**.
- The remarks followed **reports of police crackdowns, internet shutdowns and civilian deaths** during protests in PoK.
- Protests led by the **Awami Action Committee** in Muzaffarabad demanded **political reforms, subsidised food, lower electricity bills, free education and health facilities**.
- India also rejected claims by a **Bangladesh interim government adviser** alleging Indian support to protesters in the **Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT)**.
- The External Affairs Ministry accused Dhaka of **failing to maintain law and order** and “shifting blame” to India.

Definitions

- **Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK):** The portion of the erstwhile princely state of Jammu & Kashmir under Pakistan’s control since 1947. India considers it its **integral part** as per **Article 1 and Schedule 1 of the Indian Constitution**.
- **Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT):** A hilly, ethnically diverse region in southeastern Bangladesh with a history of insurgency and demands for greater autonomy.
- **Human Rights Violations:** Breaches of basic rights guaranteed under the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)** and international conventions like the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)**.



Constitutional & Legal Provisions / India’s Position

- **PoK as Indian Territory:** According to the **1994 unanimous Parliamentary Resolution**, the entire J&K, including PoK, is an integral part of India.
- **UN Principles:** India maintains Pakistan’s presence in PoK is **illegal** and that it must **vacate all occupied territories** under the **UNCIP resolutions of 1948–49**.
- **Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord (1997):** Signed between Bangladesh Government and Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS) to ensure peace and rights of indigenous groups; India stresses on full implementation.
- **Human Rights Council:** India’s statement highlights its role in raising concerns of minorities and marginalised communities at international forums.

Additional Key Points



- Crackdowns and internet shutdowns in PoK show **systemic suppression of civil rights**, similar to patterns seen globally where governance deficits exist in disputed regions.
- India's rejection of Bangladesh's allegations indicates **New Delhi's sensitivity to cross-border accusations** while reinforcing its **non-interference principle**.
- This episode underscores the use of **information warfare** and **narrative shifting** by governments facing internal unrest.

Conclusion

India's strong remarks at Pakistan and Bangladesh underline its **consistent diplomatic stance on human rights, territorial sovereignty and regional stability**. By highlighting violations in PoK and CHT, India seeks to draw international attention to the plight of marginalised groups and reinforce its legal claim over PoK.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-2 (International Relations)**: India–Pakistan relations; India–Bangladesh relations; human rights issues; international organisations.
- **GS-1 (Society)**: Marginalised groups and their vulnerabilities.
- **GS-3 (Security)**: Internal security challenges in neighbouring countries and their spillover effects on India.
- **Key Concepts for Prelims/Mains**: PoK status under Indian Constitution, Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord, human rights instruments (UDHR, ICCPR), cross-border insurgency, India's Parliamentary Resolution of 1994.

8. CAQM's New Directive on Stubble Burning – Strengthening Action Against Officials

Key Highlights

- The **Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM)** in the National Capital Region and adjoining areas has issued a new directive (October 1) to curb **stubble burning**, a major contributor to Delhi's winter air pollution.
- **District Collectors, District Magistrates, and Deputy Commissioners** in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and Delhi have been empowered to directly file complaints before **judicial magistrates** against officials found negligent in enforcing anti-pollution measures.
- Nodal officers, supervisory officers, and even **Station House Officers (SHOs)** can be held **personally accountable** for failure to implement preventive actions.
- The directive builds on a **similar order issued last year** and follows the **Supreme Court's recent urging** for a tougher stance on stubble burning.
- According to **Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI)** data, Punjab has reported **95 incidents of stubble burning so far this harvest season** compared to 179 during the same period last year — the lowest in six years.





- Stubble burning peaks in **October–November**, coinciding with **low wind speeds and falling temperatures** that worsen air quality in Delhi-NCR.

Definitions / Concepts

- **Stubble Burning:** The deliberate setting of fire to leftover crop residue after harvesting, mainly paddy. It is a cost-effective but environmentally damaging practice.
- **CAQM:** A statutory body under the **Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas Act, 2021**, empowered to coordinate, monitor and enforce measures to improve air quality in the NCR and adjoining States.
- **Judicial Magistrate:** A judicial officer of the lower judiciary empowered under the **Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), 1973** to take cognizance of offences and complaints.

Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 48-A (Directive Principles of State Policy):** The State shall protect and improve the environment.
- **Article 51-A(g) (Fundamental Duties):** It is the duty of every citizen to protect and improve the natural environment.
- **Environment Protection Act, 1986:** Provides the central legal framework for addressing environmental issues, under which the CAQM derives its enforcement powers.
- **Supreme Court's Role:** The Court has repeatedly directed State governments to take stronger measures against stubble burning under its **powers to enforce Fundamental Rights (Article 32)**.

Additional Key Points

- Stubble burning contributes to **PM2.5 and PM10** levels, which aggravate respiratory and cardiovascular diseases.
- The directive reflects a **shift from merely targeting farmers** to holding **administrative machinery accountable** for enforcement.
- **IARI satellite monitoring** is key to tracking real-time incidents of stubble burning.
- The policy aims to **balance agricultural practices and environmental protection** through stricter administrative action.

Conclusion

The CAQM's new directive represents a significant step in strengthening accountability of State and district-level officials in curbing stubble burning. By empowering senior district heads to directly approach courts, the measure complements judicial pressure and scientific monitoring to address Delhi-NCR's recurring winter pollution crisis.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-3 (Environment):** Pollution control measures, environmental governance, statutory bodies.
- **GS-2 (Governance):** Federal structure, accountability of State and district officials, Centre-State coordination.
- **Prelims Key Facts:** CAQM Act, 2021; Article 48-A & 51-A(g); Supreme Court's directions on stubble burning; IARI satellite data monitoring.



- **Mains Linkage:** Evaluate the effectiveness of administrative measures in controlling stubble burning vis-à-vis incentives for alternative practices (GS-3).

9. Season's First Snowfall in Kashmir – Meteorological & Strategic Significance

Key Highlights

- The **higher reaches of Kashmir** (including **Afarwat in Gulmarg, Baramulla and Sinthan Top in Anantnag**) received the **season's first snowfall** on Friday.
- **Light rainfall** was also recorded in parts of the plains, including **Srinagar city** and its adjoining areas.
- According to the **Meteorological Department**, an **active western disturbance** is likely to affect **Jammu & Kashmir and adjoining areas from Sunday**, bringing more snowfall and rain.
- Snowfall at this time of the year is **normal** but also **critical for water resources, agriculture, and tourism** in the region.

Definitions / Concepts

- **Western Disturbance:** A low-pressure system originating in the Mediterranean region that brings sudden winter rain and snow to northwestern parts of the Indian subcontinent.
- **Afarwat Peak (Gulmarg):** A famous ski destination in Baramulla district of north Kashmir, important for **tourism and local economy**.
- **Sinthan Top:** A high mountain pass connecting Anantnag district to Kishtwar in Jammu region; significant for **connectivity and security**.



Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 370 (abrogated in 2019)** earlier provided special status to J&K; currently, J&K functions as a **Union Territory** under the **Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019**.
- **Disaster Management Act, 2005** and **Indian Meteorological Department (IMD)** protocols guide early warning and mitigation measures for extreme weather events.
- **Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956** and water treaties (like **Indus Waters Treaty, 1960**) indirectly make snowfall levels significant for **river flows** into Punjab and Pakistan.

Additional Key Points

- Early snowfall replenishes **glaciers and rivers**, ensuring **water availability** in the summer months.
- It also affects **transportation**, leading to temporary closures of mountain passes, which can impact **security forces' movement** along sensitive border areas.
- Snowfall is vital for **Kashmir's winter tourism economy**, particularly skiing and related activities in Gulmarg.
- Western disturbances also influence **rabi crop sowing** patterns in north India, indirectly affecting food security.



Conclusion

The season's first snowfall in Kashmir is not just a meteorological event but has far-reaching implications for **water resources, agriculture, tourism, and security**. Effective forecasting and preparedness are essential for harnessing its benefits while minimizing disruptions.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-1 (Geography):** Climatic phenomena like Western Disturbances; Himalayan ecology.
- **GS-3 (Environment):** Impact of snowfall on rivers, agriculture, and disaster management.
- **Prelims Key Facts:** Location of Afarwat (Gulmarg) & Sinthan Top; definition of Western Disturbance; importance of snowfall for Indus river system.
- **Mains Linkage:** Discuss the role of Western Disturbances in India's winter rainfall and their socio-economic significance.

10. Maritime Signalling after Operation Sindoor – Emerging Naval Dynamics between India and Pakistan

Key Highlights

- Post-Operation Sindoor (May 2025), the India–Pakistan confrontation has **shifted from the air domain to the maritime theatre**, with both navies recalibrating posture and signalling readiness for escalation.
- Defence Minister's warning on October 2 cited the 1965 war and cautioned Pakistan of a **“resounding response” in Sir Creek** — where Pakistan has expanded military infrastructure since 2023.
- India's Navy has adopted a **forward deterrent posture**: induction of the first indigenously designed diving support vessel **INS Nistar**, joint patrols with the **Philippines in the South China Sea**, and an increased focus on the Indo-Pacific strategy.
- Pakistan has **dispersed assets from Karachi to Gwadar**, launched the Chinese-built **Hangor-class submarine PNS Mangro**, and showcased the domestically developed **P282 ship-launched ballistic missile**, besides conducting overlapping missile tests and live-fire drills in the Arabian Sea.
- These developments highlight a **potential shift in the India-Pakistan deterrence equation at sea**, complicating assumptions of uncontested Indian dominance in the Indian Ocean region.



Definitions / Concepts

- **Operation Sindoor:** A post-May 2025 Indian naval operation signalling readiness for forward deterrence and a more active maritime role.
- **Sir Creek Dispute:** A long-standing boundary dispute between India and Pakistan in the marshlands of the Rann of Kutch; strategically significant for **fishing rights and maritime boundaries**.
- **Deterrence-by-Denial (A2/AD):** A military strategy to deny an adversary freedom of action in a specific area, seen in Pakistan's naval build-up and Gwadar's development.



- **Gwadar & Karachi:** Pakistan's major ports; Gwadar developed under the **China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)**, raising the stakes of Chinese involvement.

Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 297 of the Constitution:** Vests control of India's territorial waters, continental shelf, and resources in the Union government.
- **Maritime Zones of India Act, 1976:** Defines India's territorial waters (12 nautical miles), contiguous zone (24 nm), and Exclusive Economic Zone (200 nm).
- **UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982):** Governs maritime boundaries, freedom of navigation, and dispute resolution; both India and Pakistan are parties.
- **Sir Creek Tribunal (Permanent Court of Arbitration):** Although unresolved, international law principles under UNCLOS are relevant to this dispute.

Additional Key Points

- Naval engagements carry **higher escalation risks** than aerial skirmishes due to proximity, duration of deployments, and potential for miscalculation.
- Pakistan's focus on anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) and Chinese PLAN presence at Gwadar erode India's assumed maritime dominance.
- External actors like **China (PLAN)** and **Türkiye (naval supplies and training)** add layers of uncertainty, increasing the complexity of crisis management.
- India's naval fleet, though numerically and geographically advantageous, faces **modernisation challenges**, while Pakistan steadily expands its fleet with advanced submarines and corvettes.
- Both sides may be shaping a future "conflict-template" at sea, testing each other's tactics, doctrines, and thresholds of escalation.

Conclusion

Operation Sindoor marks a **new phase of maritime competition between India and Pakistan**, where signalling and posture in the Arabian Sea have become central to deterrence. While this can increase risks of miscalculation, it also fosters greater mutual awareness of capabilities. India's challenge will be deciding whether to use the maritime domain for **early signalling or retain it as a reserve domain for escalation**, especially amid rising Chinese involvement.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-1 (Geography):** Strategic importance of Indian Ocean & Sir Creek area.
- **GS-2 (International Relations):** India–Pakistan relations, UNCLOS, China–Pakistan nexus under CPEC.
- **GS-3 (Security & Defence):** Maritime security, deterrence doctrines, naval modernisation.
- **Prelims Key Facts:** Sir Creek location, INS Nistar, Hangor-class submarine, P282 missile, definitions of A2/AD and EEZ.
- **Mains Linkage:** "Discuss how the shifting focus to the maritime domain alters the deterrence equation between India and Pakistan. What are the implications for India's Indo-Pacific strategy?"



11. Clean Energy Rise and the Need for Expanded Climate Finance

Key Highlights

- Global clean energy investments have risen sharply, driven by the **energy transition** and commitments under the **Paris Agreement (2015)**, but developing countries face financing gaps to achieve Net Zero targets.
- **Climate finance** refers to funds provided by developed countries to support mitigation and adaptation in developing countries, as mandated under **UNFCCC Articles 4 & 9**.
- Renewable energy deployment, including **solar, wind, and green hydrogen**, is growing, yet financial flows are insufficient for scaling projects in **low-income countries**.
- International mechanisms like the **Green Climate Fund (GCF)**, **Global Environment Facility (GEF)**, and **Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs)** play a pivotal role in mobilising climate finance.
- Challenges include **high upfront costs**, currency risks, and lack of local technical capacity, which hinder adoption of clean energy technologies in vulnerable regions.
- Developed nations have pledged **\$100 billion per year by 2020**, but commitments remain only partially fulfilled, highlighting a trust and compliance gap in the global climate regime.



Definitions / Concepts

- **Clean Energy:** Energy derived from renewable sources that produce low or zero greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Climate Finance:** Financial resources mobilized to support climate mitigation (reducing emissions) and adaptation (building resilience to climate impacts).
- **Energy Transition:** Shift from fossil fuel-based energy systems to sustainable, low-carbon energy systems.
- **Net Zero:** Achieving a balance between greenhouse gas emissions produced and removed from the atmosphere.

Constitutional & Legal Provisions / International Frameworks

- **Article 21 of the Indian Constitution:** Right to life includes a clean and healthy environment.
- **UNFCCC (1992):** Framework convention for global climate action; provides the basis for climate finance obligations.
- **Paris Agreement (2015):** Global pact to limit global warming below 2°C, with emphasis on finance, technology transfer, and capacity building.
- **National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC), India:** Implements renewable energy, energy efficiency, and adaptation projects domestically, leveraging both domestic and international finance.

Additional Key Points



- Public finance alone is insufficient; mobilization of **private sector investments** is critical for scaling renewable energy.
- Innovations like **green bonds, carbon markets, and blended finance** can unlock new funds for clean energy projects.
- Climate finance also underpins **energy access, poverty reduction, and economic development** in climate-vulnerable regions.
- Effective governance, **transparent fund allocation**, and monitoring mechanisms are necessary to ensure equitable distribution of climate finance.

Conclusion

The clean energy surge worldwide requires **substantial expansion of climate finance**, particularly to support developing countries in their energy transition and climate adaptation efforts. Bridging the finance gap is essential not only for environmental sustainability but also for global economic stability and climate justice.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS-1 (Environment & Geography):** Renewable energy, climate change, and environmental protection.
- **GS-2 (International Relations):** UNFCCC, Paris Agreement, climate finance obligations.
- **GS-3 (Economy & Infrastructure):** Green financing mechanisms, MDBs, energy transition investments.
- **Prelims Key Facts:** Green Climate Fund, Global Environment Facility, Net Zero, NAPCC pillars.
- **Mains Linkage:** “Discuss the role of climate finance in promoting clean energy transitions in developing countries and its relevance for India’s sustainable development goals.”

12. Operation Sindoor: Strategic Air Strikes by India

Key Highlights

- **Operation Sindoor** involved precision air strikes by the Indian Air Force (IAF) against Pakistan, targeting radars, command-and-control centres, hangars, runways, and fighter jets, including **F-16s and JF-17s**.
- Air Chief Marshal **Amar Preet Singh** confirmed extensive damage to Pakistan’s air capabilities while dismissing Pakistani claims of Indian losses as false.
- Intelligence reports indicate destruction of **one C-130 aircraft, five high-tech fighter jets**, and likely a **long-range AEW&C or SIGINT aircraft**.
- India’s **Sudarshan Chakra air defence system** is being developed to protect critical civilian and military infrastructure and provide rapid response to threats.
- Emphasis on **manned aircraft and indigenous platforms** like **Tejas Mk1A**, while acknowledging drones as complementary tools, not replacements, in modern warfare.

Definitions / Concepts



- **AEW&C (Airborne Early Warning & Control):** Aircraft equipped with radar and surveillance systems to detect and track aerial threats over long distances.
- **SIGINT (Signals Intelligence) Aircraft:** Platform used to intercept, analyze, and monitor electronic signals for intelligence purposes.
- **Sudarshan Chakra Air Defence System:** India's upcoming multi-layered air defence system to shield critical assets against aerial threats.
- **JF-17 Thunder:** Lightweight, multi-role combat aircraft developed by China and Pakistan.
- **F-16 Fighting Falcon:** Multirole US-made fighter jet used widely in global air forces.

Constitutional & Legal / Strategic Framework

- **Article 51 of the Indian Constitution:** Promotes national security and international peace, supporting India's right to defend itself against aggression.
- **Indian Air Force Act, 1950:** Governs the organization, training, and operational deployment of the IAF.
- **Doctrine of Retaliation / Air Defence Doctrine:** India maintains a credible response capability to deter attacks and ensure strategic stability.
- **Roadmap 2047:** Vision to modernize the IAF by 2047 with advanced fighter aircraft, air defence systems, and indigenous technologies.

Additional Key Points

- Operation Sindoor reflects India's **strategic deterrence posture** and capability to conduct precision strikes beyond the border.
- Reinforces **India-Pakistan air power dynamics** and highlights the evolving **aerial theatre of conflict** in South Asia.
- Indigenous platforms like **Tejas Mk1A** strengthen self-reliance under **Atmanirbhar Bharat** in defence manufacturing.
- The operation underscores **intelligence-led precision strikes** as a key component of modern warfare.

Conclusion

Operation Sindoor demonstrates India's **air superiority, preparedness, and strategic deterrence capability**. Modernization efforts, indigenous aircraft induction, and layered air defence systems like Sudarshan Chakra enhance India's operational readiness while reinforcing its position in regional security dynamics.





UPSC Relevance

- **GS-3 (Defence & Security):** IAF operations, Air Defence Systems, indigenous defence production, India-Pakistan conflict management.
 - **Prelims Key Facts:** F-16, JF-17, Tejas Mk1A, AEW&C, SIGINT aircraft, Sudarshan Chakra.
 - **Mains Linkage:** “Discuss the role of precision air strikes and indigenous defence capabilities in strengthening India’s strategic deterrence and regional security posture.”
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