

APPSC

Prelims Cum Mains Based
News Summary

Current
Affairs

MARCH - 2026

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APPSC News Summary

CM Naidu Seeks National Judicial Academy for Amaravati

Source: [Deccan Chronicle](#)

Relevance: **GS Paper II - Governance, Judiciary, Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), Judicial Reforms.**

Important Keywords for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims

- National Judicial Academy, Amaravati Justice City, Andhra Pradesh State Legal Services Authority, Chief Justice of India Justice Surya Kant, Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), Mediation Conference Amaravati 2026, Viksit Bharat-2047 Vision

For Mains

- Judicial Infrastructure Development, Mediation as Pillar of Justice, Court Pendency Crisis, Access to Justice, Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanisms, Enforceability of Mediated Settlements, Judicial Training and Capacity Building, Speedy Justice and Economic Development, Blue-Green Field Capital Development Model, Justice City Concept.

Why in News?

- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu urged the Supreme Court to establish the **National Judicial Academy (NJA)** in Amaravati.

- The request was made during a state-level mediation conference organised by the Andhra Pradesh State Legal Services Authority.
- The Chief Justice of India, Justice Surya Kant, attended the event as chief guest.

Background of the Proposal

The Chief Minister proposed that Amaravati be developed as a **Model Judicial City** with integrated judicial institutions.

The state government has offered:

- Land allocation
- Full administrative support
- Institutional cooperation



Justice Surya Kant described mediation as a pillar of justice, not merely an alternative mechanism. Mediation in India had moved beyond court halls and urban centres and was reaching villages, streets and households, he said. (Image By Arrangement)

Amaravati as a "Justice City"

The Chief Minister described Amaravati as:

- A futuristic blue-green field capital



- Aligned with the Viksit Bharat-2047 vision

The proposed Justice City would integrate:

- National Judicial Academy
- Legal Services Authority
- Mediation Centre
- International Law University
- Bar Council of India

Amaravati has been built through voluntary land pooling of nearly 33,000 acres by about 30,000 farmers.

Importance of Mediation in Judicial Reform

Justice Surya Kant emphasised:

- Mediation is a pillar of justice, not merely an alternative mechanism.
- Court pendency is rising.
- A significant portion of disputes involve family and interpersonal conflicts.

Benefits of mediation:

- Speedy justice
- Preservation of relationships
- Non-adversarial settlement
- Business continuity

He noted that mediation is expanding beyond courts to villages and communities.

Measures Announced

To promote mediation, the Chief Minister announced:

- ₹10,000 honorarium for successful mediation
- ₹3,000 honorarium even for unsuccessful attempts

Objective: Encourage alternative dispute resolution culture.

Judicial Reform and Capacity Building

The CJI stressed:

- Need for rigorous mediator training

- Transparent selection process
- Confidence in enforceability of mediated settlements

Legal infrastructure must keep pace with emerging global cities like Amaravati and Visakhapatnam.

Broader Significance

1. Judicial Infrastructure

- Establishing NJA in Amaravati would strengthen regional judicial training.

2. Reducing Pendency

- Mediation can reduce burden on courts.

3. Economic Development

- Swift dispute resolution supports investment and business growth.

4. Governance Reform

- Aligns with modern justice delivery systems under Viksit Bharat-2047 vision.

Way Forward

- Institutionalise mediation at grassroots level
- Strengthen ADR mechanisms nationwide
- Expand judicial training capacity
- Integrate technology and digital mediation tools
- Promote legal awareness among citizens

Conclusion

The proposal to establish the National Judicial Academy in Amaravati reflects Andhra Pradesh's ambition to develop a comprehensive Justice City.

By strengthening mediation and judicial infrastructure, India can move towards faster dispute resolution, reduced court pendency, and improved access to justice – essential components of a developed nation by 2047.

Andhra Pradesh Reports 4.4% Drop in Crimes Against Women

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: GS Paper II - Governance, Social Justice, Women Empowerment, Law & Order

Why in News?

The Home Minister of Andhra Pradesh stated that crimes against women in the State have decreased by 4.4%. The announcement was made during the **Women's Safety Week** rally held in Vijayawada, where the government highlighted measures taken to improve women's safety and awareness.

- The Minister also unveiled the '**Shakti Team**' brochure, emphasising preventive policing and community awareness.



Home Minister Vangalapudi Anita, along with Women Commission chairperson Rayapati Sallaja, CP S.V. Rajashekar Babu and others, taking part in a Women Safety Week rally at BRTS road in Vijayawada on Monday. | Photo Credit: K.V.S. GIRI

Background and Context

Crimes against women remain a major governance and social justice issue in India. These crimes include:

- Domestic violence
- Sexual harassment
- Assault and rape
- Dowry-related offences
- Cyber-crimes targeting women

Ensuring women's safety is linked to:

- Gender equality
- Social stability
- Constitutional guarantees of dignity and equality

In Andhra Pradesh, special initiatives have been introduced to strengthen monitoring and enforcement mechanisms.

Key Developments

- Reported **4.4% decline in crimes against women** in Andhra Pradesh.
- Conduct of **Women's Safety Week awareness rally** in Vijayawada.
- Launch of the **Shakti Team brochure**.
- Decision to open a **sexual offender sheet** against repeat offenders.
- Emphasis on equal upbringing and gender sensitisation.

Core Issues Involved

- Persistent gender-based violence.
- Social discrimination against women.
- Under-reporting of crimes.
- Need for preventive policing and awareness.
- Ensuring effective enforcement of laws.

Causes / Reasons Behind Improvement

- Strengthening of police surveillance.
- Community awareness programmes.
- Monitoring of repeat offenders.
- Focus on preventive measures rather than reactive action.
- Institutional support from Women's Commission and district administration.

Implications

Political

- Strengthens government's credibility on women's safety.
- Promotes gender-sensitive governance.

Economic



- Safer environment encourages female workforce participation.
- Improves investment climate.

Social

- Enhances confidence among women and families.
- Promotes gender equality within households.

Legal / Institutional

- Reinforces strict action against offenders.
- Encourages use of preventive policing tools.

Institutional / Constitutional background

- **Article 14** – Equality before law
- **Article 15(3)** – Special provisions for women
- **Article 21** – Right to life and dignity
- Role of **State Women's Commission**
- Criminal law provisions under IPC and related Acts

Government Response / Policy Measures

- Launch of **Shakti Teams** for women's safety.
- Monitoring habitual offenders.
- Public awareness campaigns.
- Gender sensitisation initiatives.
- Community policing strategies.

Challenges / Concerns

- Possible under-reporting of crimes.
- Need for long-term behavioural change.
- Ensuring consistent implementation across districts.
- Cyber-crimes against women rising nationwide.
- Social stigma affecting reporting.

Way Forward

- Strengthen **fast-track courts** for crimes against women.
- Expand **Shakti Teams** across all districts.
- Improve cyber-crime monitoring units.
- Promote gender education in schools.
- Encourage community-based vigilance systems.
- Strengthen data transparency and periodic reporting.

Conclusion

The reported decline in crimes against women in Andhra Pradesh is a positive indicator of improved governance and enforcement. However, sustainable progress requires a combination of strict law enforcement, social reform, gender sensitisation, and institutional accountability. Ensuring women's safety is essential for achieving constitutional goals of equality, dignity, and social justice.

Andhra Pradesh Legislative Reforms 2026

Source: [The Hindu-1](#), [The Hindu-2](#), [The Hindu 3](#)

Relevance: **Governance, Disaster Management**

Why in News:

Recently, the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly passed three important Bills during its legislative session on March 4, 2026. These Bills introduce

major changes to state governance, public employment, and safety regulations.

Andhra Pradesh (Regulation of Appointments to Public Services and Rationalisation of Staff Pattern and Pay Structure) (2nd Amendment) Bill, 2025



The Bill was introduced to provide a government job (Junior Assistant) on compassionate grounds to the son of Thota Chandraiah, a victim of political violence in Palnadu district. Under the original **1994 Act**, all public service appointments in Andhra Pradesh must follow a strict process:

- Recruitment through the **State Public Service Commission**.
- Selection via a formal **Selection Committee**.
- Nomination through the **Employment Exchange**.

Since the 1994 Act did not have a provision for "compassionate appointment due to political violence," the government introduced this amendment to create a legal bypass for such specific cases.

Key Legal and Constitutional Aspects

A. Amendment to Section 4(2)

Section 4 of the 1994 Act regulates how people are recruited into public services. The **Second Amendment Bill, 2025**, specifically modifies subsection (2) to allow the government to make appointments based on a **special resolution of the Council of Ministers**, bypassing the competitive exam/employment exchange route.

B. Article 200 of the Constitution

As mentioned in the report, the Bill will be sent to the **Governor** for assent under **Article 200**. The Governor has four options:

1. Give assent to the Bill.
2. Withhold assent.
3. Return the Bill (if it is not a Money Bill) for reconsideration.
4. Reserve the Bill for the consideration of the President.

C. Compassionate Appointment vs. Article 16

Article 16 of the Constitution guarantees equality of opportunity in matters of public employment. However, the Supreme Court has ruled in various cases that "compassionate appointments" are a valid exception to the general rule of merit, provided they are intended to help a family overcome sudden financial crisis due to the death of a breadwinner.

Merits and Concerns

Feature	Details
Social Justice	Provides immediate financial security to families affected by "extreme political violence."
Deterrence	The government argues that supporting victims helps delegitimize factional violence and protects society.
Executive Discretion	Critics often argue that such amendments give the Council of Ministers significant power to bypass standard recruitment rules, which could potentially lead to favouritism if not strictly regulated.
Administrative Efficiency	While it helps the individual, frequent amendments to the 1994 Act (which was originally designed to curb irregular appointments) may affect the "rationalisation of staff pattern" mentioned in the Act's title.



Andhra Pradesh Fire Service (Amendment) Bill, 2026

The Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly passed this Bill on March 4, 2026, to modernize the 26-year-old Fire Service Act. The primary goal is to align state laws with the **Central Government's 'Model Bill to Provide for Maintenance of a Fire & Emergency Service, 2019'**.

- It transitions the fire department from a mere "regulatory body" to a proactive "**Emergency Service**" capable of handling rapid urbanization, especially in the capital region of Amaravati.

Key Provisions of the Bill

A. Shift from NOC to FSC

- The traditional **No Objection Certificate (NOC)** is replaced by the **Fire Safety Certificate (FSC)**.
- **Significance:** This streamlines the approval process for buildings, making it more user-friendly and consistent with national standards.

B. Redefining High-Rise Buildings

- The Bill adopts the definition of high-rise buildings as per local municipal laws.
- It introduces safety mechanisms specifically for "**Super High-Rise Buildings**" currently under construction in Amaravati.
- All safety standards must now comply with the **National Building Code (NBC) of 2025**.

C. Appointment of Fire Safety Supervisors

- In line with the Model Fire Force Bill, the post of **Fire Safety Supervisor** has been created.
- **Role:** They are responsible for the regular maintenance and quality control of fire

safety installations (like sprinklers and alarms) within buildings.

D. Increased Penalties and Enforcement

The Bill drastically increases fines to act as a stronger deterrent against safety violations:

- **Standard Fines:** Increased from ₹500 to ₹10,000.
- **Daily Default Fines:** Increased from ₹100 per day to ₹1,000 per day.
- **Extreme Measures:** The government now has the statutory power to **seize buildings** that blatantly violate fire safety norms.

What is the Jan Vishwas Bill?

The **A.P. Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2026**, is a landmark legislative reform aimed at **decriminalizing minor offences**. Inspired by the Central Government's Jan Vishwas Act of 2023, this State Bill seeks to replace imprisonment with monetary penalties for technical and procedural defaults across multiple state laws.

- The core philosophy behind this Bill is "**Minimum Government, Maximum Governance**" and promoting a culture of trust between the state and its citizens.

Key Objectives of the Bill

The primary reasons for introducing this amendment include:

- **Ease of Doing Business:** Reducing the "fear of imprisonment" for small business owners and investors over minor regulatory lapses.
- **Reducing Judicial Burden:** By converting criminal offences into compoundable civil wrongs, the Bill aims to reduce the massive backlog of cases in lower courts.
- **Rationalizing Penalties:** Updating fines to reflect modern economic realities while



ensuring they are "graded" (scaled) based on the severity of the default.

- **Cleaning the Statute Book:** Repealing obsolete laws that are no longer relevant to current administrative needs.

Core Features of the Reform

The Bill introduces several modern legal mechanisms to handle defaults:

- **Decriminalization:** Substituting jail terms with financial penalties for "technical" violations (e.g., filing a report late).
- **Administrative Adjudication:** Setting up internal department mechanisms to decide on penalties instead of dragging every matter to a criminal court.
- **Compounding of Offences:** Allowing an accused person to pay a fine and settle the matter without a full trial, saving time and resources.
- **Repeal of Obsolete Laws:** Specifically targets the removal of outdated drainage cess acts from 1985 and 1986.

Scope: Affected Acts

The Bill amends over **12 different State enactments** to ensure uniformity in how minor offences are treated. Key areas include:

1. **Urban Governance:** A.P. Municipalities Act, CRDA Act, and Metropolitan Region Development Acts.
2. **Social & Economic:** A.P. Excise Act, A.P. Prohibition Act, and Land Reforms Act.
3. **Industrial & Agriculture:** A.P. Industrial Corridor Development Act and various Dairy/Bovine breeding acts.
4. **Safety:** A.P. Fire Service Act (complementing the 2026 Fire Service Amendment).

Conclusion

Together, these three Bills represent a major shift in state governance. The government is moving towards a "trust-based" model. By helping victims of violence, upgrading emergency safety standards, and treating minor business mistakes as civil errors rather than crimes, the state aims to improve the overall ease of living for its citizens.

Andhra Pradesh's New Population Management Policy (2026)

Source: [Indian Express](#)

Relevance: **Governance**

Important Keywords for Prelims and Mains

Prelims:

- Population Management Policy (2026), Total Fertility Rate (TFR), Replacement Level Fertility (2.1), Ageing Population, Delimitation of Lok Sabha Seats, Two-Child Norm (Local Elections), ₹25,000 Birth

Incentive, Poshana-Shiksha-Suraksha Package

Mains:

- Declining Fertility Rate, Ageing Society, Shrinking Workforce, Demographic Dividend, Human Capital Development, Women's Labour Force Participation, Political Representation and Delimitation, Fiscal Burden on State Finances, Childcare and Social Support Infrastructure

Why in News?

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has introduced a draft **Population Management Policy**, the first of its kind in India. Shifting dramatically from earlier state policies that actively promoted family planning, the new draft policy aims to incentivize families to have more children. The policy, which is currently open for a one-month public consultation, is slated for implementation starting **April 1, 2026**.

What is the New Population Management Policy?

- The core objective of the new policy is to raise the state's **Total Fertility Rate (TFR)** from the current **1.5** back to the optimal replacement level of **2.1**. It proposes a complete reversal of the previous approach (which penalized large families) by introducing direct financial and structural incentives to encourage couples to have a second or third child.



Need for the Population Management Policy

1. Declining Fertility Rate

- The **Total Fertility Rate (TFR)** in Andhra Pradesh has declined significantly.
- It fell from **3.0 in 1993 to around 1.5 today**.

- A stable population requires a **replacement fertility level of about 2.1**.
- A lower fertility rate means fewer children are being born, leading to long-term population decline.

2. Risk of an Ageing Population

- If the current trend continues, a large share of the population will become elderly.
- Estimates suggest that **about 23% of the population may be above 60 years by 2047**.
- An ageing society increases pressure on **healthcare systems, pensions, and social welfare schemes**.

3. Shrinking Workforce

- Fewer births today will result in a **smaller working-age population in the future**.
- This may reduce **industrial productivity and economic growth**.
- Countries such as **Japan and South Korea** already face similar problems due to very low birth rates.

4. Political Representation Concerns

- In India, **Lok Sabha seats are distributed based on population**.
- After the next **Census and delimitation**, states with slower population growth may lose seats.
- Southern states fear a **reduction in their representation in Parliament** compared to northern states with faster population growth.

Key Features of the Policy

1. Financial Incentives for Childbirth

The government proposes direct financial support to encourage families to have more children.

- ₹25,000 one-time incentive** at the birth of a **second or third child**.



- The aim is to reduce financial concerns associated with raising children.

2. “Poshana-Shiksha-Suraksha” Support Package

Families with a **third child** will receive additional benefits.

- **₹1,000 monthly financial assistance** for the first five years.
- **Free education up to the age of 18 years.**
- Focus on **nutrition, education, and social security** for children.

3. Removal of Election Restrictions

- Earlier rules **disqualified individuals with more than two children** from contesting **local body elections.**
- The government proposes to **remove these restrictions.**
- This change aims to eliminate social pressure against larger families.

4. Workplace and Parental Support

To help parents balance family and employment, the policy proposes:

- **12 months of maternity leave** for the birth of a third child.
- **2 months of paternity leave.**
- Development of **working women’s hostels.**
- Establishment of more **childcare centres and crèches.**

These measures are intended to support **working parents**, especially women.

Expected Benefits of the Policy

1. Stable Workforce for Economic Growth

- A balanced fertility rate ensures a **steady supply of young workers.**
- This supports **industrial growth and long-term economic development.**

2. Increase in Female Labour Participation

- Better childcare and maternity support may encourage more women to work.
- The state aims to increase **female labour force participation from about 31% to nearly 59%.**
- Higher participation can significantly increase **state economic output.**

3. Strengthening the Demographic Dividend

- A higher proportion of working-age people creates a **demographic dividend.**
- This can increase **productivity, income levels, and economic growth.**

4. Maintaining Political Representation

- A stable population size helps the state **retain adequate representation in Parliament.**
- This is important for maintaining **political influence in national decision-making.**

Challenges and Concerns

1. Financial Burden on the Government

- Cash incentives, monthly support, and free education for many children require **large financial resources.**
- The policy may place **long-term pressure on the state budget.**

2. Difficulty in Changing Social Behaviour

- As societies become more educated and urbanised, families usually prefer **fewer children.**
- Financial incentives alone may not easily change these **social preferences.**

3. Pressure on Public Infrastructure

- Higher birth rates may require rapid expansion of:
 - **Hospitals and pediatric healthcare**



- Schools and teachers
- Childcare facilities
- Without adequate planning, public services may become **overburdened**.

Conclusion

Andhra Pradesh's Population Management Policy marks a historic paradigm shift in Indian

demographic planning. Recognizing that "population is the strongest economic resource," the state is moving proactively to prevent a future human resource crisis. However, the true success of the policy will depend on whether the state can sustain the massive financial incentives and create a genuinely supportive environment for working mothers.

Andhra Pradesh's Draft Population Policy: Shift from Population Control to Population Management

Source: [The Indian Express](#)

Relevance: **GS Paper I - Indian Society - Population and Demographic Issues**

Important Keywords for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims

- Total Fertility Rate (TFR), Replacement Level Fertility (2.1), Demographic Dividend, Population Ageing, Delimitation, Cash Incentives for Birth, In-vitro Fertilisation (IVF), C-section Births.

For Mains

- Population Management Policy, Declining Fertility Rates, Demographic Transition, Ageing Population Challenge, Workforce Participation, Human Capital Development.

Why in News

- The Government of Andhra Pradesh introduced a **Draft Population Management Policy** in the State Legislative Assembly aimed at addressing the **declining fertility rate** in the state.
- The policy proposes incentives for families to have **two or three children**, along with

measures to improve **maternal health, elderly care, workforce participation and healthcare systems**.

- This marks a shift from the traditional "population control" approach to a "population management" strategy.

Background and Context

Population policies in India have historically focused on **reducing population growth**. However, many regions are now experiencing **rapid fertility decline**, leading to concerns about an **ageing population and shrinking workforce**.

Fertility Trends

- **Replacement Level Fertility:** 2.1 children per woman
- **Andhra Pradesh TFR:** 1.5
- **India TFR:** 1.9

Long-Term Trend

Year	Andhra Pradesh TFR
2003	2.2
2023	1.5

Southern states generally have **lower fertility rates** due to better **education, healthcare, urbanisation and income levels**.

For example:

- Tamil Nadu - 1.3



- Karnataka – 1.5
- Kerala – 1.5

In contrast, northern states such as **Bihar (2.8)** and **Uttar Pradesh (2.6)** still have higher fertility rates.

Key Features of Andhra Pradesh Draft Population Policy

The policy includes **five major components**:

1. Matrutva

- Focus on **maternal health and well-being**.

2. Shakti

- Encouraging **greater participation of women in the workforce**.

3. Kshema

- Providing better **elderly care services**.

4. Naipunyam

- Enhancing **skills and workforce capacity**, including healthcare workers.

5. Sanjeevani

- Strengthening **digital public health systems**.

Incentives and Welfare Measures

The policy proposes several incentives:

- **₹25,000 cash incentive** for birth of the second or third child.
- **₹1,000 per month for five years** for the third child to support nutrition.
- **Free education till 18 years** for second and third children in government institutions.
- **Subsidised IVF treatment** for infertile couples through PPP models.

Additional healthcare measures include:

- Reducing **C-section births** from **67.5% to below 40%**.
- Reducing **teenage pregnancies**.
- Reducing **male sterilisation dependency**.
- Training **10,000 healthcare assistants annually**.

Causes of Declining Fertility Rate

Several factors contribute to the decline in fertility:

- Higher **female education levels**
- Improved **healthcare systems**
- Increasing **urbanisation**
- Rising **income levels**
- Growth of **nuclear families**
- Changing **lifestyle preferences**

These trends are commonly associated with **economic development**.

Implications of Low Fertility

Economic Implications

- Shrinking **working-age population**
- Reduced **economic productivity**
- Increased **dependency ratio**

Social Implications

- Rapid **population ageing**
- Higher demand for **elderly care services**

Fiscal Implications

- Greater pressure on **government welfare systems**

In Andhra Pradesh:

- **Median age:** 32.5 years (India: 28.4 years)
- **Population above 60 years:** about 10%, expected to rise to **23% by 2047**

Political Dimension: Delimitation Debate

Declining population growth in southern states could affect their **parliamentary representation**.

- Since **delimitation is based on population**, states with slower population growth could lose seats relative to high-growth states such as **Uttar Pradesh and Bihar**.
- The **freeze on delimitation** for the last 50 years has prevented this issue, but the debate may intensify once the freeze ends.



Policy Significance

The Andhra Pradesh policy reflects a **major shift in demographic policy thinking**.

Instead of controlling population growth, the focus is now on:

- **Managing demographic transition**
- Supporting **healthy population growth**
- Preparing for **ageing populations**

It also integrates **healthcare, workforce development and social security policies**.

Challenges / Concerns

- Incentives may have **limited impact on fertility behaviour**.
- Fiscal burden of long-term welfare incentives.
- Risk of **uneven demographic trends across states**.
- Cultural and social factors influencing family size may persist.

Way Forward

- Promote **women's education and workforce participation**.
- Strengthen **public healthcare systems**.
- Develop **elderly care infrastructure**.
- Encourage **balanced regional population policies**.
- Focus on **human capital development** rather than only fertility incentives.

Conclusion

Andhra Pradesh's draft population policy marks a significant shift from **population control to population management**, recognising the challenges posed by declining fertility and ageing populations. By integrating incentives, healthcare reforms and workforce development, the policy aims to maintain demographic balance and sustain long-term economic growth.

World's First Autonomous Maritime Shipbuilding Centre in Andhra Pradesh

Source: [Deccan Chronicle](#)

Relevance: **GS Paper III - Science & Technology, Defence Technology, Infrastructure - Autonomous Systems, Maritime Technology, Indigenous Defence Manufacturing, Blue Economy.**

Important Keywords for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims

- Autonomous Maritime Shipbuilding Centre, Unmanned Surface Vessels (USVs), Autonomous Underwater Vehicles (AUVs),

Maritime Robotics, Digital Twin Technology, Maritime AI.

For Mains

- Indigenous Defence Manufacturing, Maritime Security, Autonomous Naval Systems, Blue Economy Infrastructure, Atmanirbhar Bharat in Defence Technology.

Why in News

The **world's first Autonomous Maritime Shipbuilding and Systems Centre** will be established near **Juvvaladinne fishing harbour in Sri Potti Sriramulu Nellore district, Andhra Pradesh**.

- The project is being developed by **Sagar Defence Engineering with support from the Andhra Pradesh government** to strengthen India's capabilities in **autonomous maritime technology, shipbuilding and unmanned naval systems**.

Background

With increasing importance of **maritime security, coastal surveillance and technological innovation**, countries are investing in **autonomous maritime systems** such as unmanned vessels and underwater drones.

- India aims to enhance indigenous maritime technologies as part of its **Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative** and to strengthen its position as a **leading maritime power**.



Juvvaladinne fishing harbour.(File Photo)

About the Autonomous Maritime Shipbuilding Centre

The facility will be located in **Bogole mandal near the Bay of Bengal**, close to important maritime routes on the eastern coast.

Project Details

- Phase I area: **29.58 acres**
- Location: **Near Juvvaladinne fishing harbour, Nellore district**
- Developed by: **Sagar Defence Engineering**

The centre will integrate multiple functions within a single campus, including:

- Autonomous shipbuilding facilities
- Research and development laboratories
- Testing infrastructure
- Ship maintenance and repair facility (MRO)
- Training and skill development centre

Key Functions of the Centre

The facility will focus on developing next-generation autonomous maritime systems.

Main Objectives

- Design and manufacture **autonomous vessels**
- Develop **maritime robotics and AI systems**
- Conduct **real-sea testing of unmanned vessels**

Types of Vessels Developed

1. Unmanned Surface Vessels (USVs) Used for:

- Maritime surveillance
- Coastal security
- Logistics operations
- Environmental monitoring

2. Autonomous Underwater Vehicles (AUVs)

Used for:

- Underwater reconnaissance
- Seabed mapping
- Scientific research

Advanced Technologies Used

The centre will incorporate several advanced technologies, including:

- Artificial Intelligence (AI)** for navigation and decision-making
- Robotics-based manufacturing**
- Digital Twin technology** for simulation and testing
- 3D printing** for marine components



- Smart shipyard management systems
- Automated docking and navigation systems

Real-sea trials will test capabilities such as:

- Autonomous navigation
- Obstacle detection and avoidance
- Remote-controlled operations

Strategic Importance

The project has significant defence and maritime security implications.

Key Strategic Benefits

- Strengthens coastal surveillance systems
- Enhances maritime reconnaissance capabilities
- Supports mine detection and underwater monitoring
- Improves defence logistics and naval operations

The centre will contribute to India's maritime security architecture.

Benefits for Fishermen

The project will also support the local fishing community through technological assistance.

Key benefits include:

- Real-time fish location mapping
- Satellite-based weather alerts
- Fleet coordination systems
- Detection of illegal fishing activities
- Distress signal detection and rescue support

Additionally, the facility's maintenance and repair services will reduce vessel downtime and improve safety.

Economic and Employment Impact

The project is expected to stimulate regional economic growth.

Employment Generation

- Direct employment: 300+ jobs
- Indirect employment in:
 - Logistics
 - Harbour services
 - Marine engineering
 - Ancillary industries

The centre will employ:

- Engineers
- Naval architects
- Technicians
- Skilled workers

Significance for India's Maritime Sector

The project supports several national priorities:

1. Atmanirbhar Bharat

- Promotes indigenous defence manufacturing and reduces reliance on imported maritime technologies.

2. Blue Economy Development

- Strengthens maritime infrastructure and innovation.

3. Technological Leadership

- Positions India as a leader in autonomous maritime technologies.

4. Defence Modernisation

- Supports development of unmanned naval platforms and maritime robotics.

Way Forward

To fully leverage the benefits of this project:

- Strengthen collaboration between industry, academia and defence institutions.
- Expand investment in maritime robotics and AI research.
- Promote skill development programmes for maritime technologies.
- Integrate autonomous systems into coastal security frameworks.

Conclusion

The establishment of the world's first autonomous maritime shipbuilding centre in Andhra Pradesh represents a major step in India's technological and maritime advancement. By combining autonomous vessel development, artificial intelligence and advanced shipbuilding technologies, the facility will strengthen India's maritime security, promote indigenous innovation and contribute to economic growth.

CISF Raising Day Celebrated at Visakhapatnam Steel Plant

Source: Deccan Chronicle

Relevance: GS Paper III - Internal Security; Security Forces and Agencies

Important Keywords for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims

- Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL), Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, Ukkunagaram, CISF Fire Wing, CISF Dog Squad.

For Mains

- Industrial Security, Critical Infrastructure Protection, Role of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), Security of Public Sector Undertakings.

Why in News

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) unit at Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, operated by Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL), celebrated its Raising Day at Ukkunagaram in Visakhapatnam.

- The event highlighted the force's contribution to industrial security and safety of critical infrastructure.

About CISF

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) is one of India's Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) responsible for protecting critical infrastructure and public sector undertakings.

Key Features

- Established in 1969 under the CISF Act, 1968.
- Functions under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).
- Initially created to protect Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).
- Now also secures airports, metro networks, seaports, nuclear installations, space establishments, and government buildings.



CISF personnel stage parade during Raising Day at Visakhapatnam. (Image: X)

Major Functions

- Security of industrial units and critical infrastructure
- Disaster management and fire protection services
- VIP security (in selected cases)
- Aviation security at major airports



- Protection of heritage monuments and important government facilities

CISF Raising Day Celebrations at Visakhapatnam Steel Plant

The CISF unit of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant organised Raising Day celebrations at Ukkunagaram in Visakhapatnam.

Participants

- **Manish Raj Gupta**, Chairman and Managing Director of RINL
- Directors of RINL
- Deputy Commandants and personnel of CISF

Key Highlights of the Event

- **Ceremonial parade** by four platoons of CISF personnel
- **Operational demonstrations** showing preparedness and response capability
- **Firefighting demonstration** by the CISF Fire Wing
- **Performance by the CISF Dog Squad**
- Cultural programmes by CISF personnel and their families

During the event, the RINL CMD praised CISF personnel for their dedication and commitment in ensuring the **security of the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant** and safety of its employees and industrial operations.

Role of CISF in Industrial Security

CISF plays a critical role in safeguarding **strategic industrial infrastructure**.

Major Responsibilities

1. Protection of **public sector industrial units**
2. Ensuring **operational safety in industrial complexes**

3. Preventing **sabotage, theft, and industrial espionage**
4. Maintaining **emergency response capabilities** such as firefighting and disaster management

At large industrial plants such as the **Visakhapatnam Steel Plant**, CISF ensures uninterrupted operations and a secure working environment.

Significance of CISF in National Security

1. Protection of Critical Infrastructure

- CISF secures vital installations including steel plants, oil refineries, airports, nuclear facilities, and ports.

2. Aviation Security

- It manages security operations at major airports across India.

3. Disaster Response and Fire Safety

- The CISF Fire Wing provides specialised firefighting and emergency response services in industrial environments.

4. Enhancing Industrial Confidence

- By maintaining secure conditions, CISF supports smooth functioning of key economic sectors.

Conclusion

The celebration of **CISF Raising Day at the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant** highlights the force's important role in protecting strategic industrial assets and ensuring workplace safety. As India expands its infrastructure and industrial capacity, the role of CISF in safeguarding critical installations and maintaining internal security will continue to grow in importance.

Andhra Pradesh to Celebrate Molla Jayanti as State Festival

Source: [Deccan Chronicle](#)

Relevance: State Current Affairs - Andhra Pradesh Culture and Literature (For UPSC: GS Paper I - Indian Culture and Literature)

Important Keywords for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims

- Atukuri Molla, Molla Jayanti, Molla Ramayanam, Adi Kavayitri of Telugu Literature, Tummalapalli Kalakshetram, Gopavaram (Kadapa district).

For Mains

- Telugu Literary Heritage, Women in Medieval Literature, Cultural Recognition by State Governments, Preservation of Regional Literary Traditions.

Why in News

The **Andhra Pradesh Government** has announced that **Molla Jayanti**, the birth anniversary of the renowned Telugu poetess **Atukuri Molla**, will be celebrated as an **official State festival on March 13**. State-level celebrations will be organised at **Tummalapalli Kalakshetram in Vijayawada**, while district administrations will conduct commemorative events across the state.

About Molla Jayanti

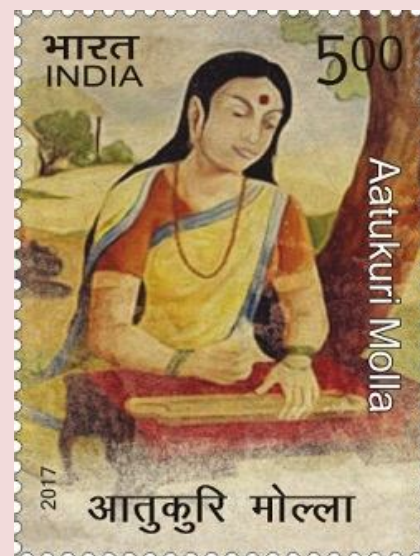
Molla Jayanti marks the birth anniversary of **Atukuri Molla**, one of the most prominent poetesses in Telugu literature.

Key Features of the Celebration

- Declared an **official State festival** by the Andhra Pradesh government.
- State-level programme** at Tummalapalli Kalakshetram, Vijayawada.
- District-level celebrations** across Andhra Pradesh.

The initiative aims to honour Molla's contribution to **Telugu literature and cultural heritage**.

Atukuri Molla



Atukuri Molla, also known as **Molla Mamba**, was a celebrated Telugu poetess.

Key Facts

- Born in the **16th century**.
- Birthplace: **Gopavaram village, Kadapa district (Andhra Pradesh)**.
- Belonged to a **potter's family**.
- Recognised as the **Adi Kavayitri (first poetess) of Telugu literature**.

Her literary achievements are especially significant because she rose to prominence despite her **modest social background**.

Literary Contributions

The most famous work of Atukuri Molla is the **Molla Ramayanam**.



Molla Ramayanam

- Telugu translation of the **Ramayana originally composed by Valmiki in Sanskrit.**
- Written in **simple and accessible Telugu language.**
- Made the epic accessible to common people.

While **Nannayya** is honoured as the **Adi Kavi (first poet) of Telugu literature**, **Molla** is revered as the **Adi Kavayitri.**

Significance of Molla Ramayanam

Molla Ramayanam holds a special place in Telugu literary tradition.

Key Significance

1. **Accessible Language** Written in simple Telugu, making the Ramayana understandable for ordinary people.
2. **Women's Contribution to Literature** Demonstrates the significant role of women in classical Indian literary traditions.
3. **Cultural Preservation** Helped popularise the Ramayana among Telugu-speaking communities.
4. **Social Inclusiveness** Molla's background illustrates how literary excellence transcends social barriers.

Cultural Importance of the Celebration

The declaration of **Molla Jayanti as a State festival** reflects the importance of preserving regional literary heritage.

Key Objectives

- Promote awareness of **Telugu literary traditions.**

- Honour contributions of **women writers in Indian literature.**
- Encourage cultural pride and literary appreciation among younger generations.

Such celebrations also help strengthen **regional identity and cultural continuity.**

Conclusion

The Andhra Pradesh government's decision to celebrate **Molla Jayanti as a State festival** highlights the enduring legacy of **Atukuri Molla**, whose literary work enriched Telugu culture and made classical literature accessible to the masses. Recognising her contributions reinforces the importance of preserving regional literary heritage and celebrating the role of women in India's cultural history.

AP CM Launches 'Araku Kouni' Tribal Millet Menu

Source: [Deccan Chronicle](#)

Relevance: GS Paper III - Agriculture, Food Security & Inclusive Development (*Millet's promotion, tribal livelihoods, sustainable agriculture*)

GS Paper I - Indian Culture (*Traditional food systems and tribal culture*)

Important Keywords

For Prelims

- Araku Kouni, Tribal Millet Menu, Alluri Sitarama Raju (ASR) District, Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (APTDC), Haritha Restaurants, Indian Culinary Institute Tirupati, Millets (Korra,

Ragi, Samalu).

For Mains

- Millets promotion, tribal livelihoods, sustainable agriculture, nutritional security, culinary tourism, indigenous food systems.

Why in News

The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, N. Chandrababu Naidu, launched 'Araku Kouni', the state's first tribal millet-based food menu, during the Collectors' Conference at the State Secretariat. The initiative aims to promote traditional millet-based diets and highlight the culinary heritage of tribal communities in Andhra Pradesh.



The Araku Kouni menu features traditional recipes sourced from indigenous communities in Alluri Sitarama Raju (ASR) district. (Image: DC)

About the 'Araku Kouni' Initiative

'Araku Kouni' is a tribal millet-based food menu inspired by traditional recipes of indigenous communities living in Alluri Sitarama Raju (ASR) district.

The initiative focuses on:

- Promoting traditional tribal food culture
- Encouraging healthy and nutritious millet consumption
- Supporting tribal farmers and local livelihoods

- Developing culinary tourism in the Araku region

The menu will initially be introduced in Haritha restaurants across ASR district and later expanded to other tourism centres across the state.

Key Features of the Tribal Millet Menu

The Araku Kouni menu includes traditional millet-based dishes such as:

- Korra Payasam
- Ragi Chapati
- Samala Pulihora
- Kantla Ambali
- Corn Vada
- Toor Dal Curry

Important Characteristics

- Recipes sourced from tribal communities of the Araku region.
- Ingredients grown in natural environments without chemical fertilisers or pesticides.
- Focus on nutritional value and traditional cooking methods.

Institutions Involved

Several institutions collaborated in developing the initiative.

Key Contributors

Alluri Sitarama Raju District Administration

- Led the initiative and coordinated implementation.

Indian Culinary Institute, Tirupati

- Documented recipes, nutritional value, and calorific index.

Tribal Anganwadi Workers

- Helped identify traditional recipes and local food practices.

Department of Tourism & APTDC

- Responsible for introducing the menu in

Haritha tourism restaurants.

Significance of the Initiative

Promotion of Millets

- Millets such as **Korra, Ragi and Samalu** are highly nutritious and climate-resilient crops.

Tribal Livelihood Support

- Encourages cultivation of traditional crops by **tribal farmers**, improving rural incomes.

Nutritional Security

- Millets provide **high fibre, minerals, and essential nutrients**, supporting healthy diets.

Cultural Preservation

- Promotes **indigenous food traditions and tribal culinary heritage**.

Tourism Development

- The initiative supports **culinary tourism**, attracting visitors interested in authentic tribal cuisine.

Conclusion

The **Araku Kouni millet menu** represents an innovative initiative to integrate **tribal food traditions, nutrition, sustainable agriculture, and tourism promotion**. By mainstreaming millet-based diets and supporting tribal communities, the programme contributes to **inclusive development and preservation of indigenous cultural heritage**.

Andhra Pradesh to Launch Statewide Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) Vaccination Drive

Source: [Deccan Chronicle](#)

Relevance: **GS Paper III - Agriculture and Animal Husbandry (Livestock health, disease control, rural livelihoods, veterinary public**

health)

Important Keywords for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims

- Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD), National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP), Livestock vaccination, Animal Husbandry Department, FMD symptoms, booster vaccination.

For Mains

- Livestock disease management, veterinary healthcare systems, rural economy and dairy sector, preventive animal health measures.

Why in News

The **Andhra Pradesh government** will launch a **statewide vaccination campaign against Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD)** for cattle and buffaloes starting **16 March 2026** under the **National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP)**.

- The vaccination drive will continue until **29 April 2026**.

About the FMD Vaccination Drive in Andhra Pradesh

The programme aims to protect livestock and prevent economic losses for farmers.

Key Features

- Vaccination for **all cattle and buffaloes**.
- Includes **calves aged above four months**.
- Vaccines will be administered **free of cost**.
- **Door-to-door vaccination campaign** conducted by the Animal Husbandry Department.



Vaccine Distribution

- 83,69,700 vaccine doses have been supplied to districts across Andhra Pradesh.

Two Phases of Implementation

Phase	Duration
Phase I	March 16 – April 14
Phase II (follow-up)	April 15 – April 29

The second phase will ensure coverage of remaining animals and provide **booster doses**.

About Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD)

Foot-and-Mouth Disease is a **highly contagious viral disease affecting livestock**, especially cattle, buffaloes, sheep, goats, and pigs.

Key Characteristics

- Caused by **Foot-and-Mouth Disease Virus (FMDV)**.
- Spreads rapidly among livestock populations.
- Particularly dangerous for **young animals and low-immunity livestock**.

Cross-bred cattle are **more susceptible to infection than indigenous breeds**.

Symptoms and Transmission

Symptoms of FMD

- High fever
- Blisters in the mouth and between hooves

- Swelling of the udder
- Excessive salivation
- Difficulty in walking

Transmission

The disease spreads through:

- Wounds in animals
- Contaminated **fodder, feed and water**
- Contact with **infected dung and urine**
- Consumption of **infected milk by calves**

In severe cases:

- Calves may die.
- Pregnant animals may suffer **abortions**.

Impact on Livestock and Farmers

Foot-and-Mouth Disease can cause significant economic losses.

Major Impacts

- Sharp decline in **milk production**
- Reduced **working capacity of animals**
- Increased **livestock mortality among calves**
- Loss of income for **dairy farmers and livestock owners**

Thus, vaccination is essential to protect both **animal health and rural livelihoods**.

Significance of the Vaccination Programme

Protection of Livestock

- Vaccination helps prevent large-scale disease outbreaks among cattle and buffaloes.

Support to Farmers

- Protects farmers from **economic losses due to livestock illness and reduced productivity**.

Strengthening Dairy Sector

- Healthy livestock ensures **stable milk production and food security**.

Public Veterinary Health

- The programme strengthens disease surveillance and preventive veterinary care systems.

Conclusion

The statewide FMD vaccination drive in Andhra Pradesh represents an important preventive step toward protecting livestock health and safeguarding farmers' livelihoods. Effective vaccination coverage and farmer participation will be essential to control the spread of the disease and strengthen the livestock economy.

Andhra Pradesh Ranks First in Hypertension Awareness

Source: [Deccan Chronicle](#)

Relevance: GS Paper III - Health (Public Health and Government Initiatives) (*Disease awareness, preventive healthcare, non-communicable diseases*)

Important Keywords for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims

- World Hypertension Day, Hypertension, Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Awareness Campaign.

For Mains

- Preventive healthcare, public health awareness programmes, non-communicable disease management, health governance.

Why in News

Andhra Pradesh, along with Karnataka, secured first rank in the country for implementing best

practices in hypertension awareness campaigns.

The ranking was awarded by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare based on performance during World Hypertension Day-2025 awareness programmes.



Health commissioner says AP ran statewide hypertension awareness campaign. (Image: X)

About the Achievement

The Andhra Pradesh government conducted a statewide awareness campaign on hypertension.

Key Highlights

- Awareness programmes conducted from May 17 to June 16, 2025.
- Implemented as per guidelines issued by the Union Health Ministry.
- Evaluated at the national level based on effectiveness.
- Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka jointly secured first rank.

About World Hypertension Day

- Observed annually on May 17.
- Aims to increase awareness about hypertension (high blood pressure).
- Promotes early detection, prevention, and control.

Hypertension: Basic Concept

Hypertension is a chronic non-communicable disease (NCD) characterised by persistently high blood pressure.



Causes

- Unhealthy diet (high salt intake)
- Lack of physical activity
- Stress
- Obesity

Risks

- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Kidney failure

Hypertension is often called a “**silent killer**” because it may not show symptoms in early stages.

Government Initiative and Implementation

Key Steps Taken by Andhra Pradesh

- Conducted **large-scale awareness campaigns** across the state.
- Focused on **early detection and lifestyle changes**.
- Spread information through **health workers and public outreach programmes**.

Role of Union Government

- Issued **guidelines for awareness campaigns**.
- Evaluated performance of states.
- Recognised best-performing states through rankings.

Significance of the Achievement

Strengthening Preventive Healthcare

- Promotes awareness and reduces the burden of **non-communicable diseases**.

Public Health Improvement

- Encourages early diagnosis and treatment, reducing complications.

Model for Other States

- Provides a framework for effective **health awareness campaigns**.

Reducing Healthcare Burden

- Prevention helps lower long-term healthcare costs and disease burden.

Conclusion

The recognition of Andhra Pradesh as a top performer in hypertension awareness highlights the importance of **preventive healthcare and public awareness initiatives**. Sustained efforts in addressing non-communicable diseases are essential for improving overall public health outcomes in India.

AP Govt Launches 'Divyang Shakti' Scheme

Source: Deccan Chronicle

Relevance: GS Paper II - Social Justice and Welfare Schemes for Vulnerable Sections.

Important Key Words

Prelims:

- Divyang Shakti Scheme, Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), Free Bus Travel, Disability Percentage Criteria, Social Welfare Scheme, Public Transport Accessibility

Mains:

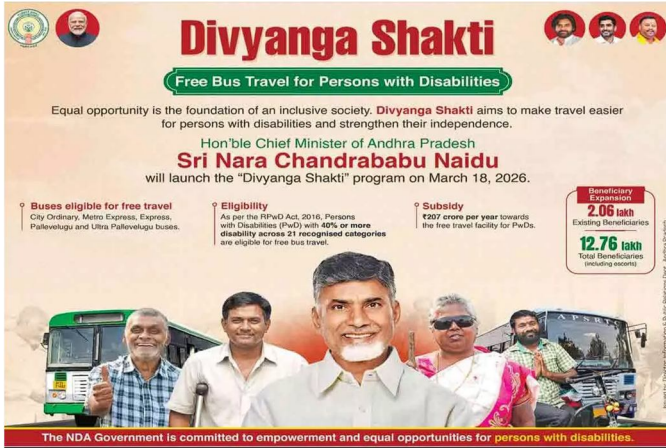
- Inclusive Development, Social Justice, Welfare of Differently-Abled Persons, Accessibility and Mobility Rights, State Welfare Policies, Empowerment of Vulnerable Sections

Why in News?

- The **Andhra Pradesh government** has launched the '**Divyang Shakti Scheme**' to provide **free bus travel for differently-**

abled citizens.

- The initiative aims to promote **equal opportunities, independence, and social inclusion** for persons with disabilities.



Divyanga Shakti
Free Bus Travel for Persons with Disabilities

Equal opportunity is the foundation of an inclusive society. **Divyanga Shakti** aims to make travel easier for persons with disabilities and strengthen their independence.

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh
Sri Nara Chandrababu Naidu
will launch the "Divyanga Shakti" program on March 18, 2026.

Buses eligible for free travel: City Ordinary, Metro Express, Express, Pallevelugu and Ultra Pallevelugu buses.

Eligibility: As per the RPwD Act, 2016, Persons with Disabilities (PwD) with 40% or more disability across 21 recognised categories are eligible for free bus travel.

Subsidy: ₹207 crore per year towards the free travel facility for PwDs.

Beneficiary Statistics:
Existing Beneficiaries: 2.06 lakh
Total Beneficiaries (including ex-cats): 12.76 lakh

The NDA Government is committed to empowerment and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Key Features of the Scheme

- Provides **free bus travel** for eligible persons with disabilities.
- Covers multiple categories of public transport, including:
 - City Ordinary buses
 - Metro Express buses
 - Palle Velugu buses
 - Ultra Palle Velugu buses
 - Express buses
- Allows **helpers/assistants to accompany beneficiaries**, ensuring ease of travel.

Eligibility Criteria

- Applicable to individuals with:
 - more than 40% disability**
- Covers **21 categories of disabilities**.

Implementation and Coverage

- Expected to benefit around **12.76 lakh persons** across the state.
- The government has allocated approximately **₹207 crore annually** for the scheme.

Significance

1. Promotes Inclusive Development

- Enhances **mobility and accessibility** for persons with disabilities.
- Ensures their participation in social and economic activities.

2. Supports Social Justice

- Aligns with constitutional values of **equality and dignity**.
- Reduces barriers faced by differently-abled persons in daily life.

3. Economic Relief

- Reduces transportation costs for vulnerable households.
- Encourages access to:
 - education
 - healthcare
 - employment opportunities

4. Empowerment and Independence

- Improves **confidence and self-reliance** among beneficiaries.

Challenges / Concerns

- Ensuring **proper identification and certification** of beneficiaries.
- Financial burden on state exchequer for long-term sustainability.
- Need for **accessible infrastructure** (ramps, low-floor buses).
- Effective monitoring to prevent misuse.

Way Forward

- Strengthen **digital verification systems** for beneficiaries.
- Improve **accessible transport infrastructure**.
- Integrate scheme with other disability welfare programmes.

- Ensure awareness and outreach for maximum coverage.

Conclusion

The Divyang Shakti Scheme represents a significant step towards **inclusive governance and social equity**. By improving mobility for persons with disabilities, it contributes to their empowerment and participation in society, reinforcing the vision of **accessible and inclusive development**.

AP Festival 2026 Logo Unveiled

Source: [Deccan Chronicle](#)

Relevance: APPSC Group 1 & 2 - Social and Cultural History of Andhra Pradesh

Important Key Words for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims:

- AP Festival 2026, Tummalapalli Kalakshetram, Vijayawada, Cultural Festival, Multilingual Poets' Meet, Film Festival, Live Music Concerts

For Mains:

- Cultural Integration, Creative Economy, Promotion of Arts and Heritage, Public-Private Partnerships in Cultural Events, Tourism Development, Cultural Diplomacy

Why in News?

- The **official logo of Andhra Pradesh Festival 2026 (APF-2026)** has been unveiled in Vijayawada.
- The festival is scheduled to be held as a **three-day event from April 17, 2026**.
- It aims to showcase a **confluence of industry, arts, culture, cinema, music, and**

folk traditions.



APF-2026 aims to celebrate a confluence of industry, arts, culture, cinema, music and folk traditions. (Image: Instagram)

Key Highlights of AP Festival 2026

- Venue: **Tummalapalli Kalakshetram auditorium, Vijayawada**
- Duration: **Three days (from April 17, 2026)**
- Logo unveiled by **MP Kesineni Srinivas**
- The festival will act as a **platform for interaction between diverse sectors** including:
 - industry leaders
 - policymakers
 - entrepreneurs
 - artists and cultural performers

Organising Bodies and Stakeholders

- Jointly organised by:
 - **AP Chambers of Commerce and Industry**
 - **Discovery Multimedia Productions**
 - **Tamkin Alamara Foundation**
- Supported by:
 - **Bright Horizons Foundation** and others
- Participation of:
 - jury members
 - cultural experts
 - historians
 - social activists
 - medical professionals



Events and Activities

The festival will include a diverse range of programmes:

- Industrial and policy discussions
- Cultural performances
- Multilingual poets' meet
- Film festival
- Awards ceremony
- Live music concerts

It aims to bring together both **economic and cultural dimensions** on a single platform.

Significance

1. Promotion of Cultural Heritage

- Showcases **traditional and modern art forms** including folk traditions.
- Encourages preservation and dissemination of regional culture.

2. Integration of Industry and Culture

- Creates a platform linking **economic development with cultural expression**.
- Encourages collaboration between **business and creative sectors**

3. Boost to Tourism

- Large-scale cultural events attract visitors, promoting **tourism and local economy**.

4. Platform for Creative Economy

- Supports artists, performers, and filmmakers.
- Encourages growth of the **creative and cultural industries**.

5. Public-Private Collaboration

- Demonstrates the role of **partnership between government, industry, and private organisations** in organising large events.

Challenges / Concerns

- Effective coordination among multiple

stakeholders.

- Ensuring **adequate infrastructure and logistics**.
- Maintaining inclusivity and representation of diverse cultural groups.
- Financial sustainability of large-scale events.

Way Forward

- Develop AP Festival into a **regular annual cultural brand**.
- Strengthen **infrastructure and digital outreach**.
- Promote participation from **national and international artists**.
- Integrate festival with **tourism and economic policies**.

Conclusion

AP Festival 2026 represents an important initiative to promote **cultural vibrancy alongside economic engagement**. By bringing together diverse stakeholders, it can strengthen Andhra Pradesh's position as a hub for both **cultural expression and economic activity**.

Nutritional Supply in Andhra Pradesh: High Satisfaction but Last-Mile Gaps Persist

Source: [Deccan Chronicle](#)

Relevance: Paper I (Indian Society & Social Issues)

Important Key Words

Prelims:

- Integrated Child Development Services

(ICDS), Take Home Ration (THR), Anganwadi Centres, IVRS Survey, Nutritional Kits, Maternal Nutrition, Lactating Mothers, Public Distribution of Nutrition

Mains:

- Public Health and Nutrition, Women and Child Welfare, Service Delivery Mechanisms, Last-Mile Delivery Challenges, Regional Disparities in Welfare Schemes, Governance and Monitoring Systems

Why in News?

A recent IVRS-based survey in Andhra Pradesh has revealed that while 84–85% of beneficiaries are satisfied with nutritional services, significant last-mile delivery gaps persist, especially in the Rayalaseema region.



Overview of IVRS Survey Findings

- 85.2% beneficiaries confirmed receiving Take Home Ration (THR)
- 14.8% reported non-receipt, indicating delivery gaps
- 82% satisfied with quality of nutrition kits
- 18% dissatisfied, citing:
 - Irregular supply
 - Storage issues

- Delays in distribution

Indicates overall success but **implementation deficiencies at grassroots level**

Status of Nutritional Supply under ICDS

The **Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)** scheme provides:

- Take Home Ration (THR)
- Milk, eggs, and nutrition kits
- Support to:
 - Pregnant women
 - Lactating mothers

Implemented through **Anganwadi Centres**, forming the backbone of India's **maternal and child nutrition strategy**

Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)

Nature of Scheme

- A **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** under the **Umbrella Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)**.
- Implemented by **States/UTs** through **Anganwadi Centres (AWCs)**.

Objectives

- Improve **nutrition and health status** of children (0–6 years).
- Ensure **physical, psychological and social development** of children.
- Reduce **mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropouts**.
- Promote **inter-departmental coordination** for child development.
- Enhance **mother's capacity** through nutrition and health education.

Beneficiaries

- Children (0–6 years)
- Pregnant women
- Lactating mothers

Services Provided (Package of Six Services)



1. Supplementary Nutrition
2. Pre-school Non-formal Education
3. Nutrition & Health Education
4. Immunization
5. Health Check-up
6. Referral Services

Health-related Services

- Immunization
- Health Check-up
- Referral Services These are delivered through:
- National Rural Health Mission (NRHM)
- Public Health Infrastructure

Quality and Delivery Issues

Key Concerns Identified

- Irregular supply of:
 - Milk
 - Eggs
- Poor storage infrastructure
- Delays in distribution cycles

Affects **nutritional outcomes and beneficiary trust**

Regional Disparities in Service Delivery

High-Performing Regions (Coastal Andhra)

- Better monitoring systems
- Efficient supply chains
- Higher satisfaction levels

Low-Performing Regions (Rayalaseema)

- Districts such as:
 - Kurnool
 - Nandyal
 - Kadapa
 - Anantapur
 - Chittoor
- Reported ~22-25% dissatisfaction

Reflects **regional imbalance in welfare delivery**

District-wise Performance Analysis

Top Performing Districts

- Visakhapatnam – 85.6% satisfaction

- West Godavari – 84.0%
- Vizianagaram – 83.9%

Bottom Performing Districts

- Anantapur – 75.8%
- Kurnool – 75.6%
- Sri Sathya Sai – 75.0%
- ASR – 73.3%

Highlights **infrastructure and governance gaps**

Causes of Last-Mile Delivery Gaps

1. Logistical Constraints

- Poor transportation in rural and tribal areas

2. Infrastructure Deficits

- Lack of storage and cold chain facilities

3. Monitoring Gaps

- Weak supervision of Anganwadi services

4. Regional Inequality

- Backward regions face administrative and resource challenges

Governance and Monitoring Challenges

- Dependence on Anganwadi network efficiency
- Need for **real-time monitoring systems**
- Limited accountability mechanisms at grassroots level

IVRS surveys help but require **follow-up corrective action**

Significance for Public Health

1. Maternal and Child Nutrition

- Direct impact on:
 - Infant health
 - Maternal well-being

2. Human Capital Development

- Nutrition is linked to:
 - Cognitive development

- Productivity

3. Reducing Malnutrition

- Critical for addressing:
 - **Stunting, wasting, and anemia**

Way Forward

- Strengthen **last-mile delivery mechanisms**
- Improve **logistics and storage infrastructure**
- Enhance **monitoring using digital tools**
- Focus on **region-specific interventions** (Rayalaseema)
- Increase **accountability of local functionaries**

Conclusion

While Andhra Pradesh has achieved commendable success in delivering nutritional services under ICDS, **last-mile delivery challenges and regional disparities remain key concerns**. Addressing these gaps through improved governance, infrastructure, and monitoring is essential to ensure **equitable and effective nutrition delivery**, thereby strengthening public health outcomes.

Amrabad Turns Invasive Lantana into 'Black Gold': From Ecological Menace to Sustainable Opportunity

Source: **Deccan Chronicle**

Relevance: Paper -IV Environmental Problems

Important Key Words

Prelims:

- Lantana camara, Invasive Species, Biocharcoal, Amrabad Tiger Reserve (ATR),

Allelopathy, IUCN Worst Invasive Species, Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMC)

Mains:

- Invasive Species Management, Biodiversity Loss, Forest Ecology, Sustainable Livelihoods, Community Participation, Climate Change Adaptation, Circular Economy

Why in News?

A pilot project in the **Amrabad Tiger Reserve (ATR)** has demonstrated an innovative approach to managing the invasive plant **Lantana camara** by converting it into **biocharcoal**, thereby transforming a major ecological threat into a sustainable economic resource.



Lantana camara:

- **Origin:** Native to **Central and South America**.
- **Introduction:**
 - Introduced globally during the **17th century**.
 - Initially grown as an **ornamental plant** due to its bright flowers.
- **Spread:**



- Escaped cultivation and became **invasive**.
- Spread across **tropical, subtropical, and warm temperate regions**.
- Found widely in **Asia, Africa, and Australia**.
- **Invasive Nature:**
 - Grows rapidly and spreads aggressively.
 - Competes with native vegetation, reducing biodiversity.
- **Early Recognition of Threat:**
 - By the **early 20th century**, its harmful ecological impact became clear.
- **Control Measures Attempted:**
 - **Manual removal**
 - **Burning**
 - Use of **herbicides**
 - **Biological control methods**
- **Resilience:**
 - Highly **adaptive and persistent**.
 - Difficult to eradicate despite multiple control efforts.
- **Global Status:**
 - Classified by the **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)** as one of the **world's worst invasive species**.

Invasive Plants

Invasive plants are **non-native (alien) plant species** that establish in a new region, spread rapidly, and cause **harm to the environment, economy, or human health**.

Situation in Amrabad Tiger Reserve

- Lantana infestation has reached **alarming**

levels, occupying about one-fourth of the forest.

- It has:
 - Reduced habitat quality for wildlife
 - Hindered regeneration of native plant species

Limitations of Traditional Methods

- Manual removal is:
 - Labour-intensive and time-consuming
- Uprooted plants were:
 - Left to decay or burned during forest fires
- These methods:
 - Did not prevent regrowth
 - Failed to provide a **long-term solution**

Pilot Project: Biocharcoal Production

- ATR authorities introduced a **scientific and controlled method**:
 - Uprooted lantana is covered with soil and burned in low-oxygen conditions
 - This produces **bio charcoal**

Key Observations

- Initial production: **around 3 kg of biochar**
- Demonstrated:
 - **Technical feasibility**
 - Potential for **large-scale application**

Economic Potential: "Black Gold"

- Biocharcoal from lantana has **high market value**.
- Estimated price:
 - Around **₹7,000 per tonne**

Livelihood Opportunities

- Local tribal and rural communities can be involved through:
 - **Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs)**
- Provides:

- Sustainable income
- Employment without harming forest resources

Reasons for Its Aggressive Spread

- **Allelopathy:**
 - Lantana releases chemical substances into the soil that **prevent the growth of nearby plants**, giving it a competitive advantage.
- **Efficient Seed Dispersal:**
 - Its berries attract birds, insects, and animals such as monkeys.
 - These animals help in **long-distance dispersal of seeds**, increasing its spread.
- **Strong Root System:**
 - Deep and widespread roots enable it to **absorb water and nutrients efficiently**, even from poor soils.
- **Drought Resistance:**
 - Leaves have a resin coating that reduces water loss, allowing survival in **dry and hot conditions**.
- **Toxic Nature:**
 - Leaves and fruits are **toxic to livestock**, but still consumed by dispersing animals.

Governance and Policy Significance

The Amrabad initiative exemplifies innovative forest management and highlights the importance of community participation in conservation efforts. By aligning ecological restoration with livelihood generation, the project embodies the principles of sustainable development and circular economy.

- It also demonstrates how localised, context-specific interventions can provide effective solutions to complex environmental problems.

Way Forward

- To maximise its impact, the project needs to be scaled up and replicated in other regions affected by lantana. Strengthening community involvement, improving processing techniques, and integrating such initiatives into broader forest management policies will be crucial.

Conclusion

The transformation of Lantana camara from an invasive ecological threat into a valuable economic resource represents a significant breakthrough in environmental management. The Amrabad Tiger Reserve initiative illustrates how innovative approaches can address ecological challenges while simultaneously promoting sustainable livelihoods. By turning a “notorious weed” into “black gold,” the project offers a replicable model for balancing conservation with development, thereby contributing to both ecological sustainability and social well-being.

A.P. Targets Universal Safe Drinking Water Supply by 2028 under Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: APPSC Group 1 Mains Paper III – Governance (Welfare Schemes, Rural Development, Water Resource Management)

Important Key Words for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims

- Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), Har Ghar Jal, DWCRA, Panchayati Raj Institutions,

Drinking Water Supply

For Mains

- Rural Water Supply, Service Delivery, Decentralised Governance, Operation & Maintenance (O&M), Women Empowerment, Public Health

Why in News?

The Andhra Pradesh government has signed an MoU with the Union Government for implementing Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) 2.0, aiming to provide safe drinking water to every household by 2028.

About Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0

- Extension of the Jal Jeevan Mission to achieve universal tap water supply
- Focus on:
 - Har Ghar Jal (tap connection to every household)
 - Sustainability and maintenance of water systems



Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu participating in a virtual mode from his camp office in the signing of MoU on the Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 in New Delhi on Tuesday. | Photo Credit: Special Arrangement

The Hindu

Key Highlights of Andhra Pradesh Initiative

- Target: 100% safe drinking water supply by 2028

- Commitment to achieve Har Ghar Jal
- MoU signed between Centre and State Government
- Implementation monitored at the highest political level

Coverage and Progress

- Nationally:
 - 16 crore households already covered under JJM Phase-I
 - Additional 3 crore households targeted

Institutional and Administrative Measures

1. Focus on Operation & Maintenance (O&M)

- Priority given to long-term sustainability of water supply systems
- Comprehensive policy introduced in September 2025

2. Decentralised Governance

- Maintenance responsibilities assigned to:
 - Panchayats (local self-government institutions)

3. Community Participation

- Involvement of DW CRA women groups in:
 - Water quality testing
- Enhances local ownership and accountability

Role of Centre and States

Central Government

- Extension of JJM till 2028
- Financial and policy support
- National-level monitoring

State Government

- Infrastructure development
- Implementation through local bodies
- Monitoring by leadership

Significance of the Initiative

1. Public Health Improvement

- Ensures access to **safe drinking water**
- Reduces water-borne diseases

2. Women Empowerment

- Reduces burden of **fetching water from distant sources**

3. Rural Development

- Strengthens **basic infrastructure**
- Enhances quality of life

4. Governance Reform

- Promotes **decentralised and participatory governance**

5. Contribution to National Goals

- Supports vision of **Developed India by 2047**

Challenges

- Ensuring **continuous water supply (not just connectivity)**
- Maintenance of infrastructure in rural areas
- Water quality monitoring
- Financial sustainability of O&M systems

Way Forward

- Strengthen **local capacity of panchayats**
- Promote community-based monitoring systems
- Ensure **sustainable water sources**
- Integrate technology for **real-time monitoring**

Conclusion

The Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 in Andhra Pradesh represents a crucial step towards ensuring **universal access to safe drinking water**, with a strong focus on sustainability, decentralisation, and community participation. Effective implementation will significantly improve public health and rural livelihoods.

AI-Powered Traffic System to Go Live in Nellore Soon

Source: [Deccan Chronicle](#)

Relevance: **GS Paper III - Science & Technology, Internal Security, Urban Infrastructure; Governance & e-Governance**

Important Key Words

Prelims:

- Artificial Intelligence (AI), Intelligent Traffic Management System (ITMS), Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR), E-Challan System, High-Resolution Surveillance Cameras, Radar-Based Speed Detection, Computer Vision Technology, VAHAN Database, Traffic Signal Automation, Digital Enforcement Mechanism

Mains:

- Urban Traffic Management, Smart City Governance, E-Governance in Transport Sector, Road Safety Enforcement, AI in Public Administration, Digital Policing Systems, Data-Driven Governance, Urban Infrastructure Modernisation, Technology-Enabled Law Enforcement, Cybersecurity and Data Privacy in Governance

Why in News?

The city of Nellore is set to operationalise an **Intelligent Traffic Management System (ITMS)** powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI), aimed at enhancing **road safety, traffic discipline, and automated law enforcement**.



Key Features of the AI-Based Traffic System

The ITMS in Nellore is designed as a **fully automated, technology-driven enforcement mechanism** with minimal human intervention.

1. Smart Traffic Signals

- Newly installed signals at key junctions (e.g., Nehru statue junction)
- Calibrated for:
 - Smooth traffic flow
 - Free left turns
 - Signal coordination

2. AI-Based Violation Detection

The system uses **high-resolution cameras and artificial intelligence algorithms** to detect violations in real time.

It can identify:

- Jumping red signals
- Crossing stop lines
- Over-speeding (via radar sensors)
- Helmetless riding
- Not wearing seatbelts
- Triple riding
- Wrong-side driving
- Mobile phone usage while driving

This ensures **objective and consistent enforcement**, reducing human discretion.

3. Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR)

- The system uses **ANPR technology** to read vehicle registration numbers
- Data is linked to national databases like VAHAN

Enables:

- Identification of vehicle owners
- Seamless enforcement across jurisdictions

4. Automated e-Challan System

- Violations are recorded with **photographic evidence**
- E-challans are generated instantly
- Sent via:
 - SMS
 - Email

Promotes **transparency, accountability, and digital governance**

5. Surveillance and Policing Support

The system also strengthens policing capabilities by:

- Tracking stolen or suspicious vehicles
- Triggering alerts when such vehicles pass through monitored junctions

Additionally, **advanced computer vision** enables identification of vehicles based on:

- Make
- Model
- Colour

Role in Road Safety and Urban Governance

The implementation of ITMS is expected to:

- Improve **traffic discipline**
- Ensure higher compliance with road safety norms
- Reduce road accidents caused by human negligence
- Minimise corruption and manual enforcement errors

- Enhance efficiency of urban traffic management

Technological Significance

This initiative reflects the growing use of:

- Artificial Intelligence
- Computer Vision
- Big Data Integration

in governance systems, marking a transition towards **Smart Cities and Digital India** initiatives.

Challenges and Considerations

While promising, the system may face certain challenges:

- Need for **robust infrastructure and maintenance**
- Ensuring **data privacy and cybersecurity**
- Public awareness and acceptance
- Integration with existing traffic systems

Conclusion

The AI-powered traffic management system in Nellore represents a significant step towards **technology-driven governance and safer urban mobility**. By combining automation, real-time monitoring, and digital enforcement, it has the potential to transform traffic management and serve as a model for other cities in India.

APCO Bags SKOCH Award for Digitisation in Handloom Sector

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: Group I & II - Prelims - facts; Group I - Mains, Paper IV - Indian Economy (Inclusive Growth, MSMEs, Digital Economy, Handloom Sector Development)

Important Key Words for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims:

- APCO, SKOCH Award, Handloom Sector, Digitisation, E-commerce Platforms, Computerised Billing

For Mains:

- Digital Transformation, MSME Sector, Handloom Industry, Market Access, Livelihood Promotion, Inclusive Growth

Why in News?

The Andhra Pradesh State Handloom Weavers Co-operative Society Ltd. (APCO) received the **SKOCH Award-2025** for its digitisation initiatives in the handloom sector, recognising efforts to modernise traditional industries and improve weavers' livelihoods.



Background

- APCO is a state-level cooperative organisation working for the promotion of handloom products and welfare of weavers.
- The award highlights the increasing importance of **digital integration in traditional sectors** like handlooms.

Key Highlights

1. Recognition for Digital Initiatives

- APCO was awarded the SKOCH Award-2025.
- The award was presented at the SKOCH Summit in New Delhi.
- It was received by **G. Rekha Rani**, Commissioner (Handlooms and Textiles) and Vice-Chairperson & Managing Director of APCO.

2. Digitisation Measures Implemented

a) Computerised Billing Systems

- Introduced across APCO outlets.
- Helped in:
 - Improving transaction transparency
 - Reducing manual errors
 - Enhancing operational efficiency

b) E-commerce Platforms

- Enabled online sale of handloom products.
- Benefits:
 - Wider market reach beyond physical stores
 - Increased visibility of traditional products
 - Improved sales performance

3. Impact on Handloom Sector

Operational Efficiency

- Streamlined processes through digital systems
- Faster billing and inventory management

Market Expansion

- Access to national and global consumers
- Reduced dependency on local markets

Weavers' Livelihood

- Better income opportunities
- Increased demand for handloom products

4. Alignment with Government Vision

- Supports **digital transformation of MSMEs**
- Promotes **sustainable growth of the handloom sector**

- Enhances **income security for traditional artisans**

Significance

1. Strengthening Traditional Industries

- Helps preserve cultural heritage while modernising operations

2. Inclusive Economic Growth

- Integrates rural artisans into the digital economy

3. Digital India Objectives

- Aligns with broader goals of digitisation and e-commerce expansion

Challenges

- Limited digital literacy among weavers
- Infrastructure gaps in rural areas
- Need for continuous training and capacity building

Way Forward

Expand digital platforms for all handloom clusters

- Provide skill training in digital tools for weavers
- Strengthen logistics and supply chains for online sales
- Promote branding and GI-tagged handloom products

Conclusion

The recognition of APCO through the SKOCH Award underscores the transformative potential of digitisation in traditional sectors. By combining technology with heritage industries, Andhra Pradesh has demonstrated a model for inclusive growth, improved livelihoods, and sustainable development in the handloom sector.

From Hills to Markets: Indigenous Seeds Make a Comeback in AP

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: APPSC Group 1 Mains - Paper IV - Economy - Agriculture, Biodiversity Conservation, Sustainable Farming, Climate Resilience

Important Key Words for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims:

- Indigenous Seeds, Seed Bank, Natural Farming, Jeevamrutam, Millets, Plant Genome Saviour Award, APCNF, Rythu Sadhikara Samstha

For Mains:

- Agro-biodiversity, Climate Resilience, Community-led Conservation, Sustainable Agriculture, Traditional Knowledge Systems, Seed Sovereignty, Natural Farming

Why in News?

A grassroots network of farmers in the **Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh** is actively conserving **indigenous seed varieties** and promoting natural farming. This initiative has revived traditional agriculture, improved soil health, and enhanced resilience to climate variability.



Native seed varieties being displayed by seed savers Pangji Sunkri, who won the national award of Plant Genome Saviour Community Award from the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority, and Radhika at Gasaba village in the Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh. | Photo Credit: KR Deepak



The native seed collection at the Soil and Seed Information Centre of Sanjeevini Rural Development Society at Kiloguda in the Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh, about 130 kilometres from Visakhapatnam. | Photo Credit: KR Deepak



Farmers practising natural farming at Devuduvalasa village in Suvva Valley near Araku in the Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh, about 130 km from Visakhapatnam. | Photo Credit: KR Deepak



Visitors from Odisha examining the native seed collection at the Soil and Seed Information Centre of Sanjeevini Rural Development Society at Kiloguda in the Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh, about 130 kilometres from Visakhapatnam. | Photo Credit: KR Deepak

Background and Context

In remote villages like **Gasaba in Peda Bayalu mandal (Alluri Sitharama Raju district)**, farmers traditionally depended on indigenous seeds adapted to local terrain and rainfall. However, over time, commercial hybrid seeds replaced these varieties, increasing input costs and reducing ecological resilience.

- To address this, the **Sanjeevini Rural Development Society** initiated efforts in the early 2000s to revive native seeds through community participation and natural farming practices.

Key Features of the Initiative

1. Community-Based Seed Conservation

- Farmers act as “**seed savers**”, selecting, preserving, and distributing indigenous seeds
- Seed multiplication carried out at **block-level demonstration plots**
- Seeds distributed across **18 nearby villages**

2. Diversity of Indigenous Crops

- Crops include:
 - Millets
 - Pulses
 - Vegetables
 - Tubers

- Mixed cropping system instead of monoculture
- Varieties adapted to local climate and soil conditions

3. Establishment of Seed Bank

- Soil and Seed Information Centre at Kiloguda**
- Started in **2001 with 45 varieties**
- Expanded to **over 360 indigenous varieties**
- Managed by a committee of experienced farmers

4. Traditional Knowledge Integration

- Elderly farmers (above 70 years) guide seed selection
- Knowledge based on **experience and local ecology**, not formal training

Institutional Support

- Supported by:
 - Rythu Sadhikara Samstha (RySS)**
 - AP Community Managed Natural Farming (APCNF)**
- Network expanded through:
 - Dhimsa Farmers Producer Organisation (FPO)**
 - Covers **5,000 farmers across 90 villages**

Economic and Market Linkages

- Produce sold in **Rythu Bazaars in Visakhapatnam**
- Movement from **subsistence farming to market integration**
- Millet processing unit established at Kiloguda
- Plans for **farm-to-fork model**

Ecological and Agricultural Significance

1. Climate Resilience

- Indigenous seeds withstand **erratic rainfall and climate variability**
- Reduce risk of crop failure



2. Soil Health Improvement

- Reduced chemical usage
- Use of natural inputs like **Jeevamrutam**
- Enhances soil fertility and microbial activity

3. Low Input Costs

- Farmers save on expensive hybrid seeds and fertilizers
- Ensures **economic sustainability**

Community Institutions and Practices

1. Annual Seed Festival

- Conducted every April (now in its **17th year**)
- Farmers exchange seeds and knowledge
- Encourages conservation and diversity

2. Participatory Governance

- Community decides:
 - Seed selection
 - Distribution
 - Maintenance of seed banks

Recognition

- Awarded **Plant Genome Saviour Community Award (2011-12)**
- Given by **Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority**
- Recognised contribution to conservation of agro-biodiversity

Challenges

1. Youth Migration

- Younger generation moving away from agriculture

2. Limited Market Access

- Markets for diverse indigenous produce still developing

3. Sustainability of Efforts

- Seed conservation requires continuous effort and community participation

Significance

1. Promotes Agro-Biodiversity

- Conserves traditional crop varieties

2. Strengthens Food Security

- Diverse crops ensure nutritional security

3. Enhances Farmer Autonomy

- Farmers regain control over seeds (seed sovereignty)

4. Supports Sustainable Agriculture

- Aligns with climate-resilient and eco-friendly farming systems

Way Forward

- Expand indigenous seed networks to other regions
- Strengthen market linkages for traditional crops
- Encourage youth participation in sustainable agriculture
- Integrate traditional knowledge with modern research
- Scale up natural farming initiatives

Conclusion

The revival of indigenous seeds in Andhra Pradesh demonstrates the power of **community-led conservation and traditional knowledge systems**. By combining ecological sustainability with economic viability, this model offers a pathway for **climate-resilient and inclusive agricultural development** in India.