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TOPICS

APPSC NEWS SUMMARY.....3

- APCO Bags SKOCH Award for Digitisation in Handloom Sector3
- Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2026: Amaravati Declared Capital5
- Seasonal Guidelines to Protect Cattle Health During Summer.....7
- Paddy Procurement Target for Rabi Season in Andhra Pradesh.....9
- Amaravati as the Sole Capital of Andhra Pradesh: Legislative and Constitutional Dimensions.....11
- Sabarimala Case: Essential Religious Practices, Denomination and Constitutional Limits.....14
- Shatabdi Mahotsav Marks Centenary Run-up of Andhra University17
- Amaravati to be Developed as a Global Creative Economy Hub.....21
- Akshaya Kshetram: 30 Years of Care for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities23
- Settipalle Land Registration Breakthrough and Township Development26
- Rubber Plantation Expansion in Polavaram and Tribal Livelihoods.....28
- 'Nation First' Approach Highlighted in BJP Cadre Training Programme in Andhra Pradesh31
- A.P. Government Pushes Deregulation Reforms to Fast-Track Industrial Clearances.....33
- Women's Political Representation in India: The Case of Byreddy Shabari35
- Development Must Go Hand-in-Hand with Environmental Responsibility: Lanka Dinakar38
- Illegal Sand Mining Near K. Pallepalem Beach Raises Environmental Concerns42
- PM Surya Ghar Utsav Launched in Andhra Pradesh for Free Rooftop Solar Access46
- Urea Use Stable Despite Sharp Rise in Cropped Area in Andhra Pradesh.....50
- APSRTC Draws Roadmap to Shift to Electric Fleet54
- Amaravati Blue City Project: Flood Management, River Geography and Capital Region Planning59
- Justice Lisa Gill appointed Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh High Court63
- Maharashtra Tiger "Explorer" Returns to East Godavari Again.....66
- Tent Cities Planned at 21 Godavari Temples for Pushkarams68
- Lisa Gill Takes Charge as Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh High Court70
- Chandrababu Naidu Lays Foundation for Google's ₹1.35 Lakh Crore AI Data Centre in Visakhapatnam73
- Andhra Pradesh to Launch First-of-its-Kind Mushroom Mission76



APPSC News Summary

APCO Bags SKOCH Award for Digitisation in Handloom Sector

Source: The Hindu

Relevance: GS Paper III - Indian Economy (MSMEs, Handloom Sector, Digital Economy, Inclusive Growth)

Important Key Words for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims:

- APCO (Andhra Pradesh State Handloom Weavers Co-operative Society), SKOCH Award, Handloom Sector, E-commerce Platforms, Digital Billing System

For Mains:

- MSME Digitisation, Inclusive Growth, Digital Economy, Traditional Sector Modernisation, Livelihood Security, E-Governance in Rural Economy

Why in News?

The Andhra Pradesh State Handloom Weavers Co-operative Society Ltd. (APCO) has been awarded the SKOCH Award-2025 in recognition of its digitisation initiatives in the handloom sector, aimed at modernising traditional systems and improving the livelihoods of weavers through digital integration.

Background and Context

- The handloom sector forms a crucial component of India's traditional economy, providing employment to a large number of rural artisans while preserving cultural heritage.
- However, the sector has long suffered from structural challenges such as limited market access, low productivity, and competition from mechanised production.
- In this context, digitisation has emerged as an important tool to enhance transparency, efficiency, and market outreach, thereby revitalising the sector and integrating it with the modern digital economy.

Key Highlights

- APCO received the SKOCH Award-2025 at the SKOCH Summit held in New Delhi, which recognises excellence in governance, digital transformation, and inclusive development.
- The award was received by G. Rekha Rani, Commissioner of Handlooms and Textiles and Vice-Chairperson and Managing Director of APCO, highlighting institutional commitment towards reform in the handloom sector.



Digitisation Initiatives

1. Computerised Billing Systems

- APCO has introduced computerised billing systems across its outlets, which have significantly improved transparency in transactions by reducing manual intervention and errors.
- This system has also enhanced operational efficiency by enabling faster billing processes and better record management.

2. Adoption of E-commerce Platforms

- The organisation has enabled the online sale of handloom products through e-commerce platforms, thereby expanding the market beyond physical stores.
- This initiative has increased the visibility of traditional handloom products, facilitated access to a wider consumer base, and contributed to higher sales and revenue generation.

Impact on Handloom Sector

1. Improvement in Operational Efficiency:

Digitisation has led to faster billing, improved inventory management, and streamlined business operations, thereby enhancing the overall efficiency of APCO's functioning.

2. Expansion of Market Access:

The adoption of digital platforms has enabled access to national and global markets, reducing the dependence of weavers on local demand and opening new avenues for growth.

3. Enhancement of Weavers' Livelihoods:

With increased market reach and improved sales, weavers have benefited from better income opportunities and greater demand for their products, contributing to livelihood security.

Alignment with Government Vision

- The initiative aligns with the broader objectives of promoting digital transformation in MSMEs and strengthening the handloom sector through sustainable practices.
- It also supports the vision of Digital India by encouraging the adoption of e-commerce and digital governance in rural and traditional sectors, thereby enhancing economic inclusion and self-reliance.

Significance

- 1. Modernisation of Traditional Sector:** The integration of digital tools with traditional handloom practices represents a significant step towards modernisation, ensuring long-term sustainability without compromising cultural heritage.
- 2. Promotion of Inclusive Growth:** By bringing rural weavers into the digital economy, the initiative fosters inclusive growth and reduces the digital divide between urban and rural areas.
- 3. Strengthening of Digital Economy:** The initiative contributes to the expansion of the digital economy by promoting e-commerce and digital transactions in grassroots sectors.
- 4. Support to MSME Development:** It enhances the competitiveness and resilience of MSMEs in the handloom sector, enabling them to adapt to changing market dynamics.

Challenges

- 1. Digital Literacy Constraints:** A major challenge lies in the limited digital literacy among weavers, which can hinder effective utilisation of digital tools and platforms.
- 2. Infrastructure Limitations:** Inadequate digital



infrastructure, especially in rural areas, poses a barrier to the seamless adoption of digitisation initiatives.

3. **Need for Continuous Capacity Building:** Sustained efforts are required in terms of training and skill development to ensure that weavers can effectively participate in the digital ecosystem.
4. **Competition from Power Looms and Mass Production:** The handloom sector continues to face stiff competition from cheaper, machine-made alternatives, which can affect its market share.

Way Forward

- There is a need to expand digitisation initiatives to cover all handloom clusters and ensure universal access to digital platforms.
- Focus should be placed on enhancing digital literacy through targeted training programs for weavers. Strengthening rural digital infrastructure and improving logistics and supply chain systems will be essential for effective e-commerce operations.
- Additionally, promoting branding, geographical indication (GI) tagging, and export potential of handloom products can further enhance market competitiveness. Collaboration between government and private sector can accelerate technological integration and innovation in the sector.

Conclusion

The recognition of APCO through the SKOCH Award underscores the transformative role of digitisation in revitalising traditional sectors. By successfully integrating technology with the handloom industry, Andhra Pradesh has set an

example of inclusive and sustainable development, ensuring improved livelihoods for weavers while strengthening the MSME sector in the digital age.

Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2026: Amaravati Declared Capital

Source: [PIB / News Reports](#)

Relevance: **GS Paper II - Polity (State Reorganisation, Federalism, Parliament, Governance)**

Important Key Words for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims:

- Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014, Section 5, Hyderabad Joint Capital, Amaravati, Retrospective Legislation, Capital Region Development Authority

For Mains:

- State Reorganisation, Cooperative Federalism, Capital Formation, Governance Stability, Retrospective Legislation, Centre-State Relations

Why in News?

The Lok Sabha has passed the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2026, which formally declares Amaravati as the capital of Andhra Pradesh, providing statutory clarity after the expiry of the transition period.

Background and Constitutional Context

- The Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act,

2014 was enacted under **Article 3 of the Constitution** to bifurcate the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh and create Telangana.

- Section 5 of the Act provided that Hyderabad would serve as a **common capital** for both states for a period not exceeding ten years from 2 June 2014.
- After this period, Hyderabad would remain the capital of Telangana, while Andhra Pradesh was required to establish a new capital.
- However, the Act did not specify the name or location of the new capital, which led to ambiguity after the transition period ended in 2024.

Key Highlights of the Amendment

The Amendment Bill introduces clear legal provisions to remove ambiguity:

- It replaces the phrase *“there shall be a new capital”* with *“Amaravati shall be the new capital.”*
- It defines Amaravati to include the notified area under the Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority Act, 2014.
- It provides **retrospective effect from 2 June 2024**, ensuring continuity in governance.
- It grants **statutory recognition** to Amaravati as the capital of Andhra Pradesh.



1. Source: PIB

Rationale Behind the Amendment

- The amendment is driven by administrative, legal, and federal considerations.
- Following bifurcation, the Andhra Pradesh government undertook extensive planning and notified Amaravati as the capital region.
- Infrastructure development and institutional establishment were initiated to build it as the administrative centre.
- To align legal provisions with these developments, the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly passed a **Resolution on 28 March 2026**, requesting the Union Government to amend the Act.
- Thus, the amendment seeks to bridge the gap between **legal provisions and administrative reality**.

Significance

- The amendment has important implications for governance and federal structure.
- It ensures **legal clarity**, removing ambiguity regarding the capital after the expiry of the 10-year period.
- It provides **administrative stability**, enabling smooth functioning of government institutions.
- The retrospective clause ensures **continuity of governance**, validating decisions taken in Amaravati since June 2024.
- It reflects **cooperative federalism**, as Parliament acted on the request of the state legislature.
- Additionally, it supports **planned urban development**, which is essential for long-term economic and administrative efficiency.



Issues and Concerns

- Despite its importance, certain concerns remain.
- There have been **political debates within Andhra Pradesh** regarding alternative capital models, which may continue to influence governance decisions.
- The development of Amaravati requires **substantial financial resources and sustained investment**, posing fiscal challenges.
- The use of **retrospective legislation**, though constitutionally valid, may raise concerns regarding legislative practices and precedent.

Way Forward

- The government must ensure **time-bound development of Amaravati** as a functional and modern capital city.
- Balanced regional development should be prioritised to address concerns of other regions within the state.
- There is a need for **strong Centre-State coordination** to ensure adequate financial and institutional support.
- Focus should also be on building Amaravati as a **sustainable, inclusive, and well-planned urban centre**.

Conclusion

The Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2026 represents a crucial step in resolving the long-standing ambiguity regarding the state's capital. By formally recognising Amaravati, the amendment strengthens legal certainty, administrative stability, and cooperative federalism, while also paving the way for planned

capital development in Andhra Pradesh.

Seasonal Guidelines to Protect Cattle Health During Summer

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: GS Paper III - Agriculture (Animal Husbandry, Livestock Management, Climate Impact on Agriculture)

Important Key Words for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims:

- Animal Husbandry, Heat Stress in Livestock, Mineral Supplements, Fodder Management, Mobile Veterinary Services, Livestock Productivity

For Mains:

- Livestock Health Management, Climate Change and Agriculture, Heatwave Impact on Livestock, Farmer Income Enhancement, Veterinary Extension Services

Why in News?

The Director of Animal Husbandry in Andhra Pradesh issued seasonal guidelines advising farmers to protect cattle from heat stress during summer and improve livestock productivity.

Background

- Rising temperatures and heatwaves in many parts of India affect **livestock health and productivity**.
- Livestock are vulnerable to **heat stress**, which can reduce milk yield, growth rate,



and immunity.

- To address this, the Animal Husbandry Department issued an advisory for farmers to adopt **season-specific livestock management practices**.

Key Highlights of the Advisory

- Farmers should provide **clean drinking water throughout the day** for cattle.
- Community **water troughs** should be established in villages.
- Fodder should be **chopped and fed during cooler hours** of the day.
- Animals should receive **30–50 grams of mineral supplements** to improve digestion and immunity.
- Grazing should be limited to **morning and evening hours** to avoid heat exposure.
- Cattle should be housed in **cool and well-ventilated sheds**.
- Early morning milking is recommended to **reduce stress and increase milk yield**.
- Sheds should be constructed in an **east-west orientation** to minimise heat exposure.
- Crossbred cattle should be provided with **fans and water sprinklers** during extreme heat.
- Wet gunny bags may be hung around sheds to create a **cooling effect**.

Heat Stress in Livestock

Aspect	Details
Meaning	Physiological stress experienced by animals due to excessive heat and humidity
Major Causes	Heatwaves, high temperatures, lack of shade, inadequate water supply
Common Symptoms	Rapid breathing, excessive salivation, reduced appetite,

	decreased milk production
Vulnerable Animals	Crossbred cattle and high-yield dairy animals
Preventive Measures	Adequate water, ventilated sheds, shade, mineral supplements, reduced daytime grazing
Veterinary Support	Mobile veterinary services and emergency treatment
Economic Impact	Reduced milk yield and productivity affecting farmer incomes

Significance

- Protects livestock from **heat-related health problems**.
- Helps maintain **milk production and livestock productivity**.
- Supports **farmer income stability** in the livestock sector.
- Strengthens **veterinary extension services and awareness** among farmers.

Issues and Challenges

- Limited awareness among farmers about **heat stress management**.
- Inadequate **veterinary infrastructure in rural areas**.
- Water scarcity during summer months.
- Increasing frequency of **heatwaves due to climate change**.

Way Forward

- Strengthen **extension services and farmer awareness programmes**.
- Expand **mobile veterinary services** in rural areas.
- Promote **climate-resilient livestock management practices**.

- Improve **rural water infrastructure** for livestock.
- Encourage adoption of **scientific shed design and cooling systems**.

Conclusion

Seasonal livestock management is essential to safeguard cattle health and sustain productivity. Adoption of simple practices such as proper hydration, ventilation, and heat stress management can significantly improve livestock welfare and farmer incomes.

Paddy Procurement Target for Rabi Season in Andhra Pradesh

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: **GS Paper III - Agriculture (Food Procurement, Cropping Seasons, Agricultural Marketing)**

Important Key Words for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims:

- Rabi Crop, Kharif Crop, Paddy Procurement, Minimum Support Price (MSP), Gunnysacks, Procurement Centres, Foodgrain Storage

For Mains:

- Agricultural Procurement System, Farmer Income Support, Food Security, Supply Chain Management in Agriculture, Public Distribution System (PDS)

Why in News?

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has set a target to procure **23 lakh metric tonnes (MT) of paddy**

during the Rabi season starting from April 4, 2026.

The procurement will take place through **1,917 paddy procurement centres**, and the government has assured that farmers will receive **payment within 24 hours of procurement**.

Background

- Paddy is one of the most important foodgrain crops in India and forms the staple diet for a large section of the population.
- State governments procure paddy from farmers at **Minimum Support Price (MSP)** through procurement centres to protect farmers from price fluctuations in the market.
- The procured paddy is milled into rice and supplied through the **Public Distribution System (PDS)** to ensure food security.
- Effective procurement operations are essential to support farmers and maintain stable foodgrain supplies.



Source: [The Hindu](#)

Key Highlights of the Procurement Plan

- The government has fixed a procurement target of **23 lakh MT of paddy for the Rabi season**.



- Procurement will be conducted through **1,917 procurement centres** across the state.
- Farmers will receive **payment within 24 hours** after procurement of their produce.
- Around **5.4 crore gunnysacks** have been arranged for packing and storing the procured paddy.
- Approximately **17,200 lorries** will be deployed for transportation of paddy, and their movement will be monitored through **GPS tracking**.
- During the previous **Kharif season**, about **51 lakh MT of paddy** was procured and payments worth **₹11,300 crore** were made to around **7.8 lakh farmers**.

Rabi and Kharif Cropping Seasons

Aspect	Rabi Crops	Kharif Crops
Sowing Period	October–December	June–July
Harvesting Period	March–April	September–October
Climate Requirement	Cool and dry climate	Warm and wet climate
Major Examples	Wheat, barley, mustard, gram	Rice, maize, cotton, soybean
Dependence on Monsoon	Low	High

Gunnysacks in Foodgrain Procurement

Aspect	Details
Material	Traditionally made from jute fibre
Purpose	Used for packing, storing, and transporting foodgrains
Importance	Protects grains from moisture and damage

Policy Link	Procurement agencies must ensure adequate supply during harvest seasons
Environmental Benefit	Biodegradable and environmentally friendly compared to plastic packaging

Significance

- **Supports farmer income**
 - ❖ Timely procurement at MSP ensures that farmers receive a fair price for their produce.
- **Prevents distress sales**
 - ❖ Farmers are protected from selling their produce at low market prices during harvest season.
- **Strengthens food security**
 - ❖ Procured grains are used for welfare schemes and the Public Distribution System.
- **Improves supply chain efficiency**
 - ❖ Use of GPS tracking for transportation enhances transparency and monitoring.
- **Strengthens procurement infrastructure**
 - ❖ Establishment of procurement centres improves access for farmers.

Issues and Challenges

- Storage and transportation logistics can become difficult during peak harvest periods.
- Shortage of gunnysacks can disrupt procurement operations.
- Delays in transportation or milling may affect the overall supply chain.
- Weather conditions during harvesting can affect grain quality.

Way Forward

- Expand **modern grain storage infrastructure** such as silos and warehouses.
- Improve **digital monitoring systems** for procurement and payments.
- Strengthen **transportation logistics and supply chains**.
- Promote **crop diversification** to reduce excessive dependence on water-intensive crops like paddy.

Conclusion

The procurement of Rabi paddy in Andhra Pradesh reflects the crucial role of government procurement in supporting farmers and maintaining food security. Efficient procurement, adequate storage materials such as gunnysacks, and timely payments help ensure that agricultural markets function smoothly and farmer incomes remain stable.

Amaravati as the Sole Capital of Andhra Pradesh: Legislative and Constitutional Dimensions

Source: The Hindu

Relevance: GS Paper II - Polity (Federalism, State Reorganisation, Centre-State Relations, Constitutional Law)

Important Key Words for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims:

- Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014, Amaravati, Hyderabad (Joint Capital), Section 5, Capital Region Development Authority

For Mains:

- Federalism, Legislative Competence, Capital Location Policy, Centre-State Relations, Statutory Backing, Policy Continuity, Land Pooling Scheme, Regional Development Debate

Why in News?

- Parliament has passed the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2026, formally recognising Amaravati as the sole and permanent capital of Andhra Pradesh.
 - The Bill received broad political support, except from the YSR Congress Party, which had earlier advocated a three-capital model.
 - The development marks the end of prolonged uncertainty over the capital issue since the bifurcation of the State in 2014.
 - It also reflects an attempt to provide statutory clarity and policy stability regarding the location of the capital.
 - The move has both constitutional and political significance in the context of federal governance.



Source: The Hindu 1

Background and Context

- The Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014 led to the bifurcation of the State into

Telangana and residual Andhra Pradesh.

- Hyderabad was designated as the joint capital for both States for a period of ten years, ending in June 2024.
- Following bifurcation, Amaravati was identified as the new capital by the then State government.
- However, in 2019, the incoming government proposed a three-capital model, distributing executive, legislative, and judicial functions across different cities. This led to legal challenges and policy uncertainty.



SOURCE: *The Hindu*

- In 2022, the Andhra Pradesh High Court ruled that the State lacked legislative competence to shift the capital. The issue continued until the recent legislative amendment.

History:

- After the bifurcation of the erstwhile state of Andhra Pradesh in 2014 under the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014, the newly formed state required a new capital because Hyderabad became part of Telangana.
- The Act allowed Hyderabad to function as the **joint capital for both states for a period of up to 10 years** (till 2024).
- Consequently, the government of Andhra

Pradesh proposed building a **new greenfield capital city at Amaravati**.

Concept of Capital Determination

- The location of a State capital is both an administrative and political decision, often linked to governance efficiency and regional development.
- While States generally have the authority to decide their capitals, such decisions may be constrained when **linked to Central legislation**
- In the case of Andhra Pradesh, the capital issue is rooted in the Reorganisation Act, making it subject to Parliamentary intervention.
- **Capital determination** also involves considerations of infrastructure, equity, and long-term planning.
- Thus, it is not merely a policy choice but a **governance decision** with constitutional implications.

Amaravati Capital Project

Location and Vision

- **Amaravati** is located on the banks of the **Krishna River** between the cities of **Vijayawada** and **Guntur**.
- It was envisioned as a **world-class, planned capital city** with modern administrative, residential, and commercial infrastructure.
- The project was implemented through the **Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA)**.

Key Features

- Planned area: about **217 sq. km** for the capital city.
- Development through **land pooling scheme**, where farmers voluntarily



contributed land in return for developed plots and compensation.

- Designed as a **sustainable and smart city** with green spaces, riverfront development, and integrated transport systems.
- Master plan prepared with assistance from **Surbana Jurong**.

Legislative Framework and Amendment

- The Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly passed a resolution requesting the Union government to grant statutory recognition to Amaravati as the capital.
- In response, Parliament amended Section 5 of the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014 to explicitly designate Amaravati as the sole capital.
- The amendment inserts specific references to Amaravati and defines it in relation to the notified capital region
- It also retrospectively recognises Amaravati as the capital from June 2, 2024, after the end of Hyderabad's status as a joint capital. This amendment removes ambiguity created by earlier policy proposals and provides legal certainty.

Nature and Characteristics

- The decision to declare Amaravati as the sole capital is both legislative and political in nature.
- It reflects central intervention in a **State-specific governance** issue due to its origin in a Parliamentary Act.
- The move ensures policy continuity by preventing frequent shifts in capital location. It also establishes a clear administrative centre for the State.
- At the same time, it highlights the complex

interplay between State autonomy and central authority in federal systems.

Causes / Reasons

- The need for amendment arises from the ambiguity in the original Reorganisation Act, which did not explicitly name a permanent capital.
- The three-capital proposal created legal and administrative uncertainty, necessitating statutory clarity.
- The High Court judgment further reinforced the need for a clear legal framework.
- Political changes in the State also influenced the shift back to a single-capital model. The objective was to ensure long-term stability and prevent future policy reversals.

Implications

- **Federalism Dimension** - The amendment demonstrates the role of Parliament in resolving issues arising from State reorganisation, highlighting the limits of State autonomy in such matters.
- **Governance Dimension** - A single capital can improve administrative efficiency and reduce fragmentation of governance functions.
- **Legal Dimension** - Providing statutory backing ensures policy continuity and reduces scope for legal disputes in the future.
- **Socio-Economic Dimension** - The development of Amaravati as a capital has implications for regional growth, infrastructure development, and land value appreciation.

Challenges / Criticisms

- The YSRCP has criticised the Bill for not



addressing issues related to the Land Pooling Scheme and compensation to farmers.

- Concerns have also been raised about the financial burden of developing a greenfield capital.
- The debate over balanced regional development remains unresolved, as concentrating development in one region may create disparities.
- Additionally, long-term implementation challenges related to funding and infrastructure persist.

Way Forward

- The focus should be on developing Amaravati in a sustainable and inclusive manner, ensuring that commitments to farmers and stakeholders are fulfilled.
- Transparent timelines for infrastructure development and compensation mechanisms are essential.
- Balanced regional development strategies should complement capital development to address disparities. Strengthening institutional coordination and ensuring financial viability will be crucial for successful implementation.

Conclusion

The recognition of Amaravati as the sole capital of Andhra Pradesh marks the resolution of a prolonged political and legal issue. By providing statutory clarity, the amendment ensures stability and continuity in governance. However, the success of this decision will depend on effective implementation and addressing the concerns of stakeholders. The episode highlights the complexities of federal governance and the importance of balancing legal, political, and developmental considerations.

Sabarimala Case: Essential Religious Practices, Denomination and Constitutional Limits

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: GS Paper II - Polity (Fundamental Rights, Judiciary, Religious Freedom, Constitutional Interpretation)

Important Key Words for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims:

- Article 14, Article 15, Article 17, Article 25, Article 26, Religious Denomination, Essential Religious Practices, Sabarimala

For Mains:

- Constitutional Morality, Faith vs Rights, Judicial Review in Religion, Gender Justice, Intrareligious Diversity, Essential Religious Practices Doctrine

Why in News?

- The Supreme Court has constituted a nine-judge Bench to examine review petitions arising from the Sabarimala case.
- The Union government has argued that rigid definitions of “religious denomination” and “essential religious practices” may distort the inherently plural and diverse nature of Hinduism.
- The Court will also examine the broader constitutional question regarding the extent to which courts can intervene in matters of faith.

Background and Historical Context

- The Sabarimala Temple, located in the Periyar Tiger Reserve in Kerala, is dedicated to Lord Ayyappa, who is believed to be a celibate deity.
- The temple follows a distinct religious tradition where devotees undertake a 41-day penance involving strict discipline and renunciation before pilgrimage.
- Traditionally, women aged between 10 and 50 years were not permitted to enter the temple



Source: The Hindu

- It is based on the belief that their presence would violate the celibate nature of the deity.
- This custom existed for decades and was considered an integral part of temple practice.
- The restriction was first legally upheld by the Kerala High Court in 1991 in the **S. Mahendran case**.
- It is where the court held that the practice was constitutional and did not violate Articles 14 or 25.

Nature of the Sabarimala Practice

- The exclusion was not universal but applied only to women of menstruating age, reflecting a specific religious belief linked to the deity's celibacy.
- The temple's practices are embedded in a broader system of rituals, including penance, austerity, and discipline.
- The Travancore Devaswom Board, which administers the temple, maintained that the restriction was an essential religious practice protected under Article 26.
- It also relied on Rule 3(b) of the Kerala Hindu Places of Public Worship Rules, 1965, which allowed exclusion based on custom.
- However, critics argued that such practices reflected patriarchal norms and were inconsistent with constitutional guarantees of equality and dignity.

Timeline of Legal Developments

- The issue reached the Supreme Court in 2006 through a petition filed by the Indian Young Lawyers Association challenging the ban on women's entry.
- The matter underwent several stages:
 - ❖ it was referred to a three-judge Bench in 2008, heard in detail in 2016, and later referred to a five-judge Constitution Bench in 2017.

Landmark Judgement of Supreme Court

- In 2018, the Supreme Court delivered its landmark judgment.
- Following widespread protests and implementation challenges, the Court in 2019 referred the matter to a larger bench for reconsideration.
- The case, titled **Kantaru Rajeevaru v Indian Young Lawyers Association**, remains pending and is now being examined by a



nine-judge Bench.

Key Constitutional Issues

- The case raises several fundamental constitutional questions.
- It examines whether the exclusion of women violates the right to equality under Article 14 and the prohibition of discrimination under Article 15.
- It also questions whether such exclusion amounts to a form of untouchability under Article 17.
- Another key issue is whether devotees of Lord Ayyappa constitute a separate religious denomination entitled to protection under Article 26.
- The Court must also determine whether the exclusion qualifies as an essential religious practice under Article 25.
- Additionally, the case raises a broader question about the extent of judicial intervention in religious matters and the limits of constitutional courts in interpreting faith-based practices.

Supreme Court Judgment (2018)

- In a 4:1 majority judgment, the Supreme Court declared the exclusion of women unconstitutional.
- The Court held that the practice violated fundamental rights, particularly equality and dignity. It rejected the claim that Ayyappa devotees formed a separate religious denomination, stating that there was no distinct group with exclusive beliefs or practices.
- The Court also ruled that the exclusion was not an essential religious practice and struck down Rule 3(b) as unconstitutional.
- It observed that exclusion based on biological attributes amounted to discrimination and could be seen as a form of untouchability.

- The dissenting opinion by Justice Indu Malhotra emphasised judicial restraint and argued that courts should not interfere in religious practices unless they are oppressive or socially harmful.

Centre's Recent Stand (2026)

- The Union government has taken a position that challenges the reasoning of the 2018 judgment.
- It argued that imposing rigid or uniform definitions of "religious denomination" and "essential religious practices" would undermine the diversity of Hinduism. Hinduism, according to the Centre, is characterised by multiple traditions, sects, and evolving practices, rather than a single authoritative doctrine.
- The Centre emphasised that many religious traditions lack canonical texts or fixed practices, making it difficult to determine what is "essential." It cautioned that judicial standardisation may lead to doctrinal errors and constitutional risks by oversimplifying a complex and plural religious system.
- This argument introduces a critical dimension of **intrareligious diversity** into the constitutional debate.

Core Debate: Faith, Equality and Judicial Role

- The Sabarimala case reflects a deep constitutional tension between competing principles.
- On one side is the argument of religious autonomy, where communities claim the right to manage their internal affairs under Article 26
- . On the other side is the principle of equality and non-discrimination, which demands that all



individuals have equal access to public religious institutions.

- The case also raises the issue of constitutional morality versus social morality. While the Constitution prioritises dignity and equality, religious practices are often shaped by tradition and belief.
- A critical dimension of the debate is the role of courts in interpreting religious practices.

Implications

- It will influence the balance between gender justice and religious freedom, setting a precedent for similar issues across religions.
- The judgment could impact cases involving entry of women into mosques, Parsi fire temples, and practices like female genital mutilation.
- More broadly, it will shape the relationship between judiciary and religion in India's constitutional framework.

Challenges

The Court faces the challenge of balancing competing constitutional values without overstepping its institutional role. Determining what constitutes an essential practice remains inherently subjective.

Public resistance and social tensions complicate the implementation of judicial decisions. There is also a risk that excessive judicial intervention may undermine religious autonomy, while insufficient intervention may perpetuate discrimination.

Way Forward

A balanced approach is required that respects religious diversity while upholding fundamental rights. The Court may need to refine the essential religious practices doctrine to limit judicial

overreach. Engagement with scholars, communities, and reform movements may also help in evolving socially acceptable solutions.

Conclusion

The Sabarimala case represents a landmark moment in India's constitutional evolution. It brings into focus the complex interplay between faith, law, and rights in a plural society.

The ongoing review provides an opportunity to clarify the boundaries of judicial intervention in religion while reinforcing constitutional values. The final outcome will shape the future of religious freedom, gender justice, and constitutional interpretation in India.

Shatabdi Mahotsav Marks Centenary Run-up of Andhra University

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: **GS Paper I - Culture & Education / GS Paper II - Governance (Higher Education Institutions, Regional Development)**

Important Key Words for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims:

- Andhra University, Visakhapatnam, Centenary Celebration, KOHA Software, Integrated Library System (ILS), Distance Education

For Mains:

- Higher Education Institutions, Cultural Preservation, Academic Outreach, Digital Education, Knowledge Economy, Regional Development

Why in News?

The **Shatabdi Mahotsav**, a three-day cultural festival, has been organised as part of the centenary celebrations of Andhra University. The event marks the beginning of a series of programmes leading up to the university's foundation day on April 26, reflecting a blend of cultural vibrancy and academic engagement.



Source: *The Hindu*

Background and Context

- Established in 1926, Andhra University, located in Visakhapatnam, is one of the oldest higher education institutions in India.
- Over the decades, it has contributed significantly to the development of higher education in southern India, producing scholars, administrators, and professionals across diverse fields.
- The centenary celebrations (AU@100) are not merely symbolic but are designed as a **year-long engagement programme**, focusing on academic excellence, infrastructure development, cultural preservation, and community outreach.
- This reflects the evolving role of universities in contemporary India, where institutions are expected to go beyond teaching and actively contribute to social and economic development.

Key Highlights

- The Shatabdi Mahotsav is conceived as the ceremonial beginning of the centenary celebrations and sets the tone for subsequent events.
- The festival, held from April 6 to April 8, brings together students, faculty members, artists, and public representatives.
- It creates a vibrant platform for cultural exchange and academic interaction.
- The overall schedule extends beyond the initial three-day event and includes a series of programmes over the following weeks, culminating in the grand centenary foundation day celebrations on April 26, which are expected to witness participation from prominent political leaders and distinguished alumni.

- 6-10 April: Workshop on KOHA (open-source Integrated Library System).**
- 7 April: Kavi Sammelanam** (poetry gathering).
- 8-10 April: National workshop on Indian classical music and dance.**

Academic and Cultural Initiatives

- The centenary celebrations are marked by a carefully designed combination of academic programmes and cultural activities, reflecting a holistic approach to education.
- Workshops and academic events form a key component of the programme.
- A notable initiative is the training on **KOHA**, an open-source Integrated Library System, which highlights the university's focus on digital transformation in academic infrastructure.
- Additionally, workshops on Indian classical



music and dance emphasise the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage.

- Literary activities such as Kavi Sammelanam encourage intellectual engagement and creative expression among students and scholars.
- Outreach initiatives like the “AU Calling” campaign aim to strengthen institutional engagement by connecting with faculty, students, and the broader academic community.
- The celebrations also extend to affiliated and constituent colleges, ensuring that the centenary is not limited to the main campus but becomes a **collective institutional**

event.

Role of Higher Education Institutions

- Higher education institutions such as Andhra University play a multifaceted role in national development.
- They are not only centres for imparting knowledge but also serve as hubs for research, innovation, and cultural preservation.
- They contribute to the creation of **skilled human resources**, which are essential for economic growth.
- At the same time, they act as custodians of cultural traditions, promoting classical arts, languages, and heritage.

Major Mahotsavs / Festivals in Andhra Pradesh

Mahotsav / Festival	Location	Theme / Deity / Focus	Important Features	Time / Month
Shatabdi Mahotsav (AU@100)	Andhra University, Visakhapatnam	Centenary celebration of Andhra University	Cultural festivals, academic workshops, alumni outreach programmes	April 2026
Chandanotsavam	Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Temple	Lord Narasimha	Idol covered with sandalwood paste throughout the year; revealed only on this day	April-May
Tirupati Brahmotsavam	Tirumala Venkateswara Temple	Lord Venkateswara	One of the largest temple festivals in India; includes Garuda Seva procession	September-October
Rottela Panduga	Bara Shaheed Dargah	Communal harmony festival	Devotees exchange rotis while making wishes	October
Gangamma Jatara	Tirupati	Goddess Gangamma	Traditional folk festival with cultural rituals	May



Mahotsav / Festival	Location	Theme / Deity / Focus	Important Features	Time / Month
			and masked performances	
Ugadi Festival Celebrations	State-wide	Telugu New Year	Cultural programmes, Panchanga Sravanam, traditional foods	March–April
Lepakshi Utsav	Lepakshi Temple, Lepakshi	Promotion of art, culture and tourism	Dance, music, handicrafts exhibitions	February
Rayalaseema Utsav	Rayalaseema region	Regional culture and traditions	Folk arts, food festivals, cultural exhibitions	Periodically organized
Visakha Utsav	Visakhapatnam	Tourism promotion festival	Beach events, cultural shows, handicrafts	December–January

Significance

- The centenary celebrations hold importance at multiple levels.
- They highlight the **historical legacy and institutional contribution** of Andhra University over the past hundred years.
- They promote a **balanced integration of tradition and modernity**, where cultural programmes coexist with digital and academic initiatives.
- They strengthen **institutional identity and alumni networks**, which are crucial for long-term development and global recognition.
- Furthermore, such events underline the role of universities in contributing to a **knowledge-based economy**, where education, innovation, and cultural capital play a central role in development.

Challenges

- Despite their importance, higher education institutions face several structural and emerging challenges.
- There is a growing need for **adequate funding and modern infrastructure**, especially in the context of expanding student populations and technological demands.
- Ensuring **quality and accessibility in online and distance education** remains a significant concern.
- Universities also face the challenge of aligning academic curricula with **industry requirements and employability needs**.
- Additionally, rapid technological advancements require continuous adaptation, which places pressure on institutional capacity and governance.

Way Forward

- To remain relevant and effective, universities must focus on **strengthening research ecosystems and promoting innovation-driven education**.
- Greater emphasis should be placed on **industry-academia collaboration**, ensuring that students are equipped with practical skills and employment opportunities.
- Digital transformation should be accelerated through the adoption of advanced technologies in teaching, learning, and administration.
- At the same time, efforts must be made to preserve and promote **cultural heritage**, ensuring that modernisation does not come at the cost of traditional knowledge systems.

Conclusion

The Shatabdi Mahotsav of Andhra University represents more than a celebration of the past; it reflects a vision for the future of higher education in India. By integrating academic excellence, cultural richness, and digital innovation, the university sets an example of how educational institutions can contribute to holistic and inclusive development.

Amaravati to be Developed as a Global Creative Economy Hub

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: APPSC - Andhra Pradesh Specific (Tourism, Investment, Culture, Regional Development)

Important Key Words for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims:

- Amaravati Capital Region, Kandula Durgesh, HICSA (Mumbai), Storytelling Corridor, Amaravati-Visakhapatnam-Tirupati Corridor, Eros International, Red Bull, Immersive Tourism

For Mains:

- Tourism Circuits in Andhra Pradesh, Amaravati Development Model, Cultural Tourism, Private Investment in Tourism, Regional Connectivity, Experience-based Tourism

Why in News?

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has proposed to develop Amaravati as a **global creative economy hub**, with a focus on tourism, cultural integration, and private investment.



Source: *The Hindu*

Background

- Amaravati is being developed as the capital of Andhra Pradesh with an emphasis on planned urban growth.
- The State is simultaneously promoting tourism through major centres such as Visakhapatnam (coastal tourism), Tirupati (religious tourism), and Amaravati (cultural and heritage significance).



- The current initiative reflects an effort to connect these centres into a structured tourism model rather than treating them as isolated destinations.

Amaravati: Historical and Cultural Significance

- Amaravati was a prominent centre of Buddhism during the **Satavahana period** and is known for the **Amaravati Stupa**
- It is one of the major Buddhist monuments in India.
- The region is associated with the **Mahayana tradition of Buddhism** and is also known for the **Amaravati School of Art**, which developed distinctive sculptural styles.
- Located on the banks of the Krishna River, Amaravati was historically an important centre of trade and cultural exchange.

Key Developments

- The proposal was presented by Kandula Durgesh at the Hotel Investment Conference South Asia (HICSA) held in Mumbai.
- The State plans to develop Amaravati as a hub that integrates **culture, tourism, and digital content**.

A major component is the proposed **Storytelling Corridor** connecting:

- Amaravati
- Visakhapatnam
- Tirupati

This corridor is intended to present Andhra Pradesh's **spiritual, cultural, and regional identity** through structured tourism experiences.

The government is also in discussions with Eros International and Red Bull for content creation and destination-based promotion.

Tourism Model in Andhra Pradesh

The project links three major tourism anchors of the State into a single corridor:

- **Amaravati** → cultural and administrative centre (Buddhist heritage + capital region)
- **Visakhapatnam** → coastal, port-based and urban tourism hub
- **Tirupati** → major pilgrimage centre (Sri Venkateswara Temple)

This reflects a **corridor-based tourism model**, where different types of tourism (cultural, coastal, spiritual) are integrated.

Amaravati School of Art

- The Amaravati School of Art developed in the region of Amaravati (present-day Andhra Pradesh).
- It flourished mainly during the **Satavahana dynasty period (around 2nd century BCE to 3rd century CE)**. It is one of the most important schools of ancient Indian sculpture, closely associated with **Buddhist art and architecture**.

Economic and Employment :

The corridor approach will improve connectivity and movement between **Amaravati, Visakhapatnam, and Tirupati**, increasing tourist circulation within the State.

- The involvement of private players like Eros International and Red Bull reflects efforts to bring **investment into tourism, media, and event-based activities in Andhra Pradesh**.

The development of storytelling-based tourism will create opportunities in:

- Tourism services
- Cultural events
- Digital content production linked to State heritage



Significance

- The initiative strengthens Amaravati's role beyond administration by positioning it as a **cultural and tourism centre**.
- It connects three major regions of Andhra Pradesh into a **single tourism corridor**, improving regional balance.
- It reflects the State's shift towards **integrated tourism development**, combining religious, coastal, and cultural tourism.
- The emphasis on private participation highlights the State's approach towards **investment-driven tourism development**.

Challenges

- Coordination between multiple regions (Amaravati-Visakhapatnam-Tirupati)
- Development of supporting infrastructure along the corridor
- Implementation of advanced technologies in tourism
- Ensuring that cultural representation remains authentic

Way Forward

- Strengthen infrastructure connectivity across the corridor
- Promote partnerships with private companies for tourism development
- Develop skill-based training for tourism and cultural sectors
- Ensure balanced development of all three regions

Akshaya Kshetram: 30 Years of Care for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: **GS Paper II - Social Justice | GS Paper I - Societ**

Important Key Words for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims

- Intellectual Disability, RPwD Act 2016, Rehabilitation Institutions, Tirupati, Community Care, Disability Inclusion

For Mains

- Disability inclusion, Social stigma, Gandhian philosophy, Antyodaya, Sarvodaya, Inclusive development, Rights-based approach, Community participation, Social justice, Human dignity, Welfare governance

Why in News?

- Akshaya Kshetram, a residential home for persons with intellectual disabilities near Tirumala.
- It has completed 30 years of service and is planning outreach initiatives including awareness campaigns and a 5 km walk to promote inclusion and reduce stigma.

About Akshaya Kshetram

- Akshaya Kshetram is a social welfare institution providing residential care to around 100 persons with intellectual disabilities.
- It operates two ashrams at Durgasamudram

and Renigunta, supported by about 30 staff members, ensuring round-the-clock care.



Source: *The Hindu*

Historical Background and Gandhian Linkages

Founded on October 2, 1996, the birth anniversary of **Mahatma Gandhi**, the institution reflects Gandhian ideals of service and compassion.

The founders were guided by:

- **Antyodaya** - prioritising the most marginalized (abandoned individuals)
- **Sarvodaya** - welfare of all sections of society
- **Seva and Trusteeship** - moral responsibility towards vulnerable groups

Initially a daycare centre, it expanded into a full residential facility responding to the growing issue of abandonment of persons with disabilities.

Institutional Framework and Services

The institution provides:

- Long-term residential care
- Daily living assistance and supervision
- Emotional and social support
- Safe shelter for abandoned individuals

This reflects a **support-based welfare model**, bridging gaps between family and state support systems

Social Issues Highlighted

- **Abandonment of Persons with Disabilities:** Lack of awareness and support leads to abandonment, especially in pilgrimage areas like Tirumala.
- **Social Stigma:** Deep-rooted prejudices result in exclusion and marginalisation.
- **Lack of Institutional Support Systems:** Limited access to formal rehabilitation services increases dependence on NGOs

Constitutional, Legal and Ethical Foundations of Disability Welfare

1. Constitutional Foundations

- **Article 21:** Guarantees right to life with dignity, which includes care, protection, and humane treatment of persons with disabilities
- **Article 41 (DPSP):** Directs the State to provide assistance in cases of disability, unemployment, and old age
- **Article 46:** Promotes protection of weaker sections and ensures social justice

These provisions collectively establish a **welfare-oriented constitutional mandate**

2. Legal Framework

Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (RPwD Act)

- Expands recognised disabilities from 7 to 21 categories
- Ensures equality, dignity, and non-discrimination
- Mandates inclusive education, employment, and accessibility



3. Policy and Scheme Linkages

- **Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan)** : Focuses on accessibility in public infrastructure and services
- **Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS)** : Provides financial support to NGOs working for persons with disabilities
- **National Trust Act, 1999**: Supports welfare of persons with autism, cerebral palsy, mental retardation, and multiple disabilities

4. International Framework

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

- India is a signatory
- Emphasises dignity, autonomy, and inclusion
- Promotes shift from charity-based to rights-based approach

5. Ethical and Philosophical Dimension

Akshaya Kshetram reflects:

- **Human dignity and compassion** (core ethical values)
- **Inclusive society** (no exclusion based on ability)
- **Gandhian ethics of service and equality**

Role in Community and Awareness

The institution actively works to:

- Reduce stigma around intellectual disabilities
- Promote awareness through outreach programmes
- Encourage families to accept children with disabilities
- Build inclusive social attitudes

This reflects **community-based social transformation**, not just institutional care

Challenges

- The functioning of institutions like Akshaya Kshetram highlights several structural and societal challenges that continue to affect disability welfare in India.
- Limited funding remains a major constraint, as such institutions largely depend on donations and philanthropic contributions, making long-term financial sustainability uncertain.
- The growing number of persons requiring care, especially those abandoned or without family support, places pressure on limited institutional capacity, leading to resource and infrastructure constraints.
- Persistent social stigma associated with intellectual disabilities continues to discourage family acceptance and community integration, thereby reinforcing cycles of exclusion.
- Dependence on voluntary efforts and non-state actors reflects gaps in formal state-led rehabilitation systems, indicating uneven implementation of welfare policies on the ground.

Way Forward

- Addressing these challenges requires a multi-dimensional approach combining state support, community participation, and policy implementation.
- Strengthening partnerships between government and civil society organisations can ensure better resource mobilisation, institutional support, and policy outreach at the grassroots level.
- Promoting community-based rehabilitation models is essential to shift from institutionalisation towards inclusion,

enabling persons with disabilities to live within family and community settings.

Enhancing awareness through education, media campaigns, and outreach programmes can help reduce stigma and promote acceptance of persons with intellectual disabilities in society.

Ensuring effective implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, along with schemes like DDRS and Accessible India Campaign, is crucial to translate legal provisions into tangible outcomes.

Conclusion

Akshaya Kshetram stands as a significant example of how civil society initiatives can translate constitutional ideals, Gandhian philosophy, and rights-based frameworks into meaningful action. Its work extends beyond providing care to addressing deeper societal issues such as stigma, exclusion, and lack of awareness. By promoting dignity, inclusion, and social acceptance, such institutions contribute to the realization of an inclusive and humane society envisioned in the Constitution.

Settipalle Land Registration Breakthrough and Township Development

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: GS Paper II - Governance/ GS Paper III - Urban Development/ Land Reforms

Important Key Words

For Prelims

- Inam land, Section 22A Registration Act 1908, Stamp Duty, Land Settlement, Urban Development Authority, Township Development

For Mains (Horizontal Keywords)

- Land record reforms, Legal-institutional bottlenecks, Property rights and governance, Urban expansion planning, Land monetisation, Inclusive urbanisation, Administrative delays in land settlement

Why in News?

- Settipalle village in Tirupati witnessed its **first land registration after nearly five decades**, resolving a long-pending land settlement dispute.
- The development coincides with a **₹1,766 crore township project** proposed by the Tirupati Urban Development Authority.
- The event marks a significant breakthrough in **land governance, property rights, and urban development planning**.



Source: [The Hindu](#)

Historical Background of the Dispute

- Settipalle is an Inam village covering 636.38 acres, historically governed under special land tenure systems that existed during pre-colonial and colonial periods.
- The land was taken over by the government in 1979, but the process of settlement and



regularisation of land ownership remained incomplete for several decades.

- The prolonged delay was mainly caused by multiple registrations, overlapping ownership claims, unclear land records, and legal restrictions on property transactions.
- Because of these unresolved administrative and legal issues, several families were unable to legally register, transfer, inherit, or develop their land for nearly five decades.
- The situation highlights the challenges arising from incomplete land settlement operations and outdated land administration systems, which often lead to long-standing disputes and delays in securing property rights.

Section 22A and Restrictions on Registration

- A major legal barrier to land registration in Settipalle was Section 22A of the Registration Act, 1908.
- This provision empowers State Governments to prohibit the registration of specific categories of land in order to prevent illegal transactions and protect public property.
- Lands commonly placed under the prohibited list include government land, assigned land, disputed or litigated land, and properties with unclear ownership records.
- The objective of Section 22A is to prevent fraudulent transfers and illegal sale of public or disputed land.
- However, when land remains in the prohibited list for a long time due to unresolved surveys or pending legal issues, genuine landowners may face significant

delays in registering or transferring their property.

- In such cases, removal of land from the prohibited list becomes necessary once ownership records are verified and settlement procedures are completed.

Inam Land and Land Settlement Issues

- Inam lands were historically granted by rulers or colonial authorities to individuals, religious institutions, or service providers as a form of reward or compensation for administrative, military, or religious services.
- These grants often came with special tenure rights and exemptions from certain taxes, which created a distinct category of land ownership different from ordinary private property.
- After Independence, many State Governments enacted Inam Abolition laws to abolish these traditional land tenures and convert them into regular land ownership under modern land administration systems.
- Despite these reforms, incomplete surveys, outdated land records, and administrative delays resulted in uncertainty regarding ownership rights and delayed settlement operations in many regions.
- These issues led to ownership disputes, restrictions on land transactions, and prolonged legal uncertainty for landholders.
- The Settipalle case illustrates how legacy land tenure systems and unresolved land records can continue to affect modern governance, land markets, and urban development processes.

Conclusion

The Settipalle case represents a significant breakthrough in resolving long-standing land disputes while simultaneously enabling planned urban development. It highlights the need for **efficient land governance, updated records, and balanced regulatory mechanisms** to ensure both legal protection and economic utilisation of land resources.

Rubber Plantation Expansion in Polavaram and Tribal Livelihoods

Source: **The Hindu**

Relevance: **GS Paper III - Agriculture / Economy / Environment**

Important Key Words

For Prelims

- Rubber Board, Rubber Act 1947, *Hevea brasiliensis*, latex extraction, vulcanisation, ITDA, plantation crops

For Mains

- Tribal livelihood enhancement, plantation-based economy, sustainable agriculture diversification, agro-climatic suitability, institutional support mechanisms, inclusive rural development, value chain strengthening.

Why in News?

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has proposed to expand rubber plantations over **3,000 acres in Polavaram district of Andhra Pradesh**.

- The initiative is specifically aimed at improving the **economic conditions of tribal communities**, especially the Konda

Reddi tribe living in this region.

- Officials conducted field inspections and observed that **existing rubber cultivation has already improved income levels and livelihood stability** among tribal households.



Source: *The Hindu*

Key Developments in Polavaram

- The expansion of rubber plantations in the Polavaram region is being undertaken as a coordinated initiative with institutional support from the Rubber Board and the Integrated Tribal Development Agency.
- This collaboration aims to ensure both technical guidance and effective implementation at the grassroots level.
- The region has been identified as suitable for rubber cultivation due to multiple favourable factors.
- These include adequate and well-distributed rainfall, availability of land in tribal-dominated areas, and the demonstrated success of earlier pilot rubber plantation projects.
- The initiative is expected to generate significant economic and social benefits.
- It aims to expand the area under rubber cultivation, enhance domestic production of



natural rubber, and most importantly, provide long-term and stable income opportunities for tribal communities.

Institutional Framework: Rubber Board

- The Rubber Board was established under the Rubber Act, 1947, as the apex statutory body for the development of the rubber sector in India.
- It functions under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and plays a central role in policy implementation, promotion, and regulation of rubber cultivation and industry.
- The headquarters of the Board is located in Kottayam, Kerala, which is traditionally the core region of rubber production in India.
- From this base, the Board coordinates activities across both traditional and non-traditional rubber-growing areas.
- The major functions of the Rubber Board include promoting rubber cultivation in suitable agro-climatic regions, providing scientific and technical assistance to farmers.

Scientific and Economic Aspects of Natural Rubber

- Natural rubber is obtained from the latex of the tree **Hevea brasiliensis**, which is native to the Amazon basin.
- Latex is extracted through a process called **tapping**, which involves making controlled cuts on the bark of the tree.
- Rubber cultivation requires:
 - High temperature
 - High humidity
 - Well-distributed rainfall of about **200 cm annually**

The process of **vulcanisation** involves heating rubber with sulphur, which improves:

- Elasticity
- Strength
- Resistance to wear and tear
- Around **65% of natural rubber is used in the automobile sector**, especially in the production of tyres and tubes.

Rubber Cultivation Pattern in India

- The total area under rubber cultivation in India is approximately 8.5 lakh hectares, reflecting its importance as a commercial plantation crop.
- Over time, the spatial distribution of rubber cultivation has undergone significant diversification beyond its traditional strongholds.
- Traditionally, rubber cultivation has been concentrated in Kerala and the Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu.
- This region continues to account for the largest share of production due to its favourable agro-climatic conditions and long history of plantation practices.
- In recent decades, the Northeastern region has emerged as an important contributor.
- States such as Tripura and Assam together account for more than 16 percent of India's total rubber production.
- As a result of this diversification, Kerala's share in total rubber production has declined from around 90 percent in earlier decades to approximately 78 percent at present, indicating a gradual geographical shift in cultivation patterns.

Significance for Tribal Livelihoods

- Rubber cultivation plays a crucial role in



enhancing the livelihoods of tribal communities, particularly in regions where economic opportunities are limited.

- Unlike seasonal crops that are highly dependent on monsoon variability, rubber provides a stable and long-term source of income once the plantation matures.
- It contributes to livelihood diversification by reducing dependence on forest produce and irregular daily wage labour.
- Rubber cultivation also generates multiple employment opportunities across different stages of production, including plantation maintenance, latex tapping, and processing and transportation activities.
- Moreover, it contributes to the economic empowerment of tribal communities, especially in Scheduled Areas, by integrating them into market-oriented agricultural systems.
- Additionally, rubber cultivation encourages settled agricultural practices, which reduces seasonal migration and contributes to greater social stability and community development.

Government Policy Support

- Rubber Plantation Development Scheme promotes rubber cultivation in both traditional and non-traditional regions.
- Scheme for Rubber Development in Northeast focuses on expanding rubber plantations in northeastern states.

Rubber Production Incentive Scheme (RPIS):

- Provides financial support
- Ensures minimum price of ₹150 per kg

NE Mitra Scheme:

- Targets expansion of rubber cultivation over **2 lakh hectares**

Proposed PLI Scheme aims to promote domestic

rubber goods manufacturing and reduce dependence on imports.

Challenges

- Rubber plantations have a **long gestation period of 6-7 years**, during which farmers do not receive immediate returns.
- Price fluctuations in global markets can affect farmer income.
- Monoculture plantations may lead to:
 - Loss of biodiversity
 - Ecological imbalance
- Tribal farmers may lack:
 - Technical knowledge
 - Processing infrastructure

Way Forward

- Promote **mixed cropping and agro-forestry models** to reduce ecological risks.
- Strengthen **market linkages and procurement systems** to ensure stable prices.
- Provide **training and capacity building** for tribal farmers.
- Develop **local processing units** to increase value addition.
- Integrate rubber cultivation with **tribal development programmes**.

Conclusion

The expansion of rubber plantations in Polavaram represents an important step towards combining **agricultural diversification with tribal welfare**. By ensuring institutional support, ecological sustainability, and market access, such initiatives can significantly improve income security and contribute to inclusive rural development.

'Nation First' Approach Highlighted in BJP Cadre Training Programme in Andhra Pradesh

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: APPSC - Andhra Pradesh Specific (Political Processes, Party Ideology, Governance, Public Administration)

Important Key Words for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims:

- Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Prashikshan Maha Abhiyan, Bathalapalli, Sri Sathya Sai District, Bharatiya Jana Sangh (1951), Syama Prasad Mookerjee, Emergency (1975-77), Janata Party (1977), BJP Formation (1980), NDA

For Mains:

- Political Party Organisation, Cadre-Based Parties, Grassroots Governance, Political Ideology, Integral Humanism, Role of Party Workers in Welfare Delivery

Why in News?

Satya Kumar Yadav addressed a cadre training programme at Bathalapalli in Sri Sathya Sai district and emphasised the principle of “**Nation First, Party Next, Self Last**” as part of organisational training under the BJP’s Prashikshan Maha Abhiyan.

Background

- The programme was conducted under the **Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Prashikshan Maha Abhiyan 2026**, which aims to train

party workers at different organisational levels.

- Such training camps are an important feature of cadre-based political parties, where emphasis is placed on ideological clarity, organisational discipline, and grassroots engagement.



Source: [The Hindu](#)

Key Highlights

- The Minister highlighted that the party should be seen not merely as a political organisation but as a **movement committed to national service**.
- He stressed that party workers must understand the history, ideology, and organisational structure of the party in order to effectively engage with the public.
- Cadres were encouraged to strengthen the organisation at the grassroots level, identify local issues, and ensure proper implementation of welfare schemes.

Ideological Foundations

- The Minister referred to the historical evolution of the party and its ideological roots.



- The **Bharatiya Jana Sangh**, founded by Syama Prasad Mookerjee in 1951, laid the foundation for the present political framework.
- The philosophy of **Integral Humanism**, propounded by Deendayal Upadhyaya, emphasises balanced development focusing on both material and spiritual well-being.
- The experience of the **Emergency (1975-77)** is often cited as a turning point, where political forces united to defend democratic values, eventually leading to the formation of the Janata Party and later the BJP in 1980.

Organisational Aspects

- The training programme focused on strengthening the organisational structure from the grassroots level.
- Special emphasis was placed on booth-level workers and local representatives, as they form the direct link between the party and the public.
- The training aims to equip cadres with skills related to communication, public engagement, and organisational management.

Link with Governance and Welfare Delivery

- The programme also highlighted the role of party workers in ensuring effective implementation of government schemes.
- Cadres were encouraged to engage directly with citizens, identify issues at the local level, and facilitate the delivery of welfare measures.
- This reflects the connection between **political organisation and administrative outcomes**, particularly in a federal system like India.

Significance

- The programme highlights the importance of **cadre-based political organisation** in Andhra Pradesh.
- It demonstrates how political parties invest in training and ideological orientation of workers to strengthen grassroots presence.
- It also reflects the role of political cadres in **bridging the gap between government policies and public delivery**, which is relevant from a governance perspective.

Challenges

- Ensuring consistent training and ideological clarity across all levels of organisation can be difficult.
- There may be variations in the effectiveness of grassroots engagement depending on local conditions.
- Balancing political objectives with public service delivery is also a continuing challenge.

Way Forward

- Political training programmes should focus on improving **public service orientation and accountability**.
- Greater emphasis should be placed on understanding local governance issues and strengthening coordination with administrative systems.
- Continuous training and feedback mechanisms can help improve organisational effectiveness.

A.P. Government Pushes Deregulation Reforms to Fast-Track Industrial Clearances

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: APPSC - Andhra Pradesh Specific (Economy, Industrial Policy, Governance Reforms, Ease of Doing Business)

Important Key Words for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims:

- Deregulation Phase-2, Industrial Clearances, Ordinance Route, CFMS, AWARE 2.0, Data Lakes, WhatsApp Governance, Single-Window System

For Mains:

- Ease of Doing Business in Andhra Pradesh, Industrial Policy Reforms, Regulatory Simplification, Digital Governance, Investment Promotion.

Why in News?

N. Chandrababu Naidu has directed officials to implement **Deregulation Phase-2 reforms** to simplify industrial approvals and improve ease of doing business in Andhra Pradesh.

Background

- Andhra Pradesh has been focusing on improving its **industrial ecosystem** to attract investment and promote economic development.
- Complex regulatory procedures, multiple approvals, and outdated laws have been

identified as key obstacles for industries.

- In this context, the State government has initiated a phased deregulation strategy to simplify procedures and enhance investor confidence.



Source: [The Hindu](#)

Key Decisions and Announcements

- The Chief Minister emphasised the need to **reduce complexity in industrial approvals** and ensure a transparent, time-bound process.
- He proposed reducing more than **800 existing regulations to fewer than 100**, thereby simplifying compliance requirements.
- Permissions and licences are to be limited to **single-digit numbers**, reducing procedural burden on industries.
- A **lifetime validity for business registrations** has been suggested to avoid repeated renewals.
- The government aims to reduce the time taken for industrial clearances by at least **40%**.
- It has also been proposed to implement reforms through the **Ordinance route** for faster execution.

Deregulation Measures

The reform strategy includes several structural changes:



- Removal of **outdated laws**, including those from the colonial period
- Shift from **permission-based system** → **self-declaration and intimation-based system**
- Merging of approvals within departments to avoid duplication
- Elimination of **double licensing systems**
- Introduction of **third-party inspections** to reduce bureaucratic delays

Digital Governance Tools Used in Andhra Pradesh

The State is leveraging advanced digital systems to support these reforms:

- **CFMS (Comprehensive Financial Management System)** → financial monitoring
- **AWARE 2.0** → real-time governance and data integration
- **Data Lakes** → centralised data storage and analytics
- **Real-time data platforms** → monitoring administrative processes
- **WhatsApp Governance** → citizen-service interface

These tools aim to make the approval process **fully online and transparent**.

Administrative Reform Model

The reform reflects a transition from a **control-based regulatory system** to a **facilitation-based governance model**.

The focus is on:

- Reducing administrative burden
- Increasing efficiency
- Enhancing investor experience

At the same time, the government has clarified that **public safety and environmental standards will not be compromised**.

Significance

- The reforms directly strengthen Andhra Pradesh's position in **Ease of Doing Business rankings**.
- They aim to attract **domestic and foreign investment** by creating a simplified regulatory environment.
- The use of digital tools highlights the State's emphasis on **technology-driven governance**.
- The shift towards self-declaration reflects a move towards **trust-based governance**, reducing bureaucratic intervention.

Challenges

- Ensuring compliance under a self-declaration system may require strong monitoring mechanisms.
- There is a need to balance deregulation with **environmental and safety safeguards**.
- Effective coordination across departments is necessary for successful implementation.
- Adoption of digital systems requires capacity building and technical infrastructure.

Way Forward

- The government should ensure proper monitoring and auditing mechanisms to prevent misuse of deregulation.
- Capacity building of officials and industries is essential for smooth implementation.
- Further phases of deregulation should focus on **AI-based governance tools** and deeper digital integration.
- A balanced approach combining **ease of doing business with regulatory safeguards** will be crucial.

Women's Political Representation in India: The Case of Byreddy Shabari

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: APPSC - Andhra Pradesh Specific (Polity, Political Parties, Women Empowerment, Representation)

Important Key Words for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims:

- Byreddy Shabari, Telugu Desam Party, Nandyal, National General Secretary, Women's Reservation Act (106th Constitutional Amendment, 2023), Nari Shakti Vandan Adhinyam, Articles 325, 326, 84, 173, 243D, 243T, Representation of the People Act, 1951

For Mains:

- Women in Politics, Political Representation, Gender Equality, Party Organisation, Constitutional Framework, Democratic Inclusion

Why in News?

Byreddy Shabari has been appointed as the first woman National General Secretary of the Telugu Desam Party. This development is significant as it reflects the increasing recognition of women's leadership within political party structures and aligns with the broader national focus on enhancing women's political participation.

This topic is highly important for aspirants preparing through best APPSC Group 1 coaching,

best APPSC Group 2 coaching, and APPSC online coaching, as it relates to governance, economy, and administrative reforms—key areas in the APPSC Group 1 syllabus and APPSC Group 2 syllabus in Telugu PDF.



Source: [The Hindu](#)

Key Facts from the Development

- Byreddy Shabari, who represents Nandyal constituency in the Lok Sabha, has become the first woman to occupy the position of National General Secretary in the party.
- She is a first-time Member of Parliament and is currently serving as the Deputy Floor Leader of the party in the Lok Sabha.
- she has actively represented party positions in parliamentary debates.
- The appointment has taken place at a time when discussions regarding the implementation of the Women's Reservation Act (106th Constitutional Amendment, 2023) are gaining prominence.
- This provides an important political and institutional context to the development.

Background

- Political parties play a central role in democratic systems, as they serve as the primary vehicles for representation, leadership selection, and policy articulation.



- Despite constitutional guarantees of equality, women's representation in leadership positions within political parties has historically been limited.
- The appointment of a woman leader to a senior organisational position represents a shift towards greater inclusiveness within party structures.
- It also reflects the growing emphasis on gender equality in political representation.

For aspirants enrolled in best APPSC Group 1 coaching online or APPSC Group 2 coaching online, this reform is a classic example of governance transformation, often asked in APPSC Group 1 mains preparation and APPSC Group 2 mains preparation

Women's Political Participation in India

- Women's participation in politics encompasses multiple dimensions, including voting, contesting elections, holding public office, and participating in policy-making processes.
- It is a critical component of democratic governance, as it ensures that diverse perspectives are represented in decision-making.
- At the global level, women's representation in legislatures has shown gradual improvement. According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, women held approximately 26.9% of parliamentary seats worldwide in 2023.
- However, there are significant regional variations, with some countries achieving much higher levels of representation.
- In India, women have enjoyed equal voting rights since independence, but their representation in legislative bodies has

increased slowly over time. In the Lok Sabha, women constitute around 13–14% of members as of recent elections.

- While this reflects progress compared to earlier decades, it still indicates a considerable gap in representation.
- At the local level, however, women's participation is significantly higher due to reservation policies introduced through constitutional amendments
- Women now occupy a substantial proportion of seats in Panchayati Raj Institutions Part IX of the Constitution (Articles 243 to 243-O) and urban local bodies.

Such developments are frequently covered in APPSC test series, APPSC Group 1 test series, and APPSC Group 2 mock tests, making them crucial for APPSC Group 1 preparation strategy 2026.

Constitutional and Legal Framework

- The Constitution of India provides a strong foundation for political equality and participation.
- Articles 325 and 326 ensure that no individual is excluded from electoral rolls on the basis of sex and that all adult citizens have the right to vote under the principle of universal adult franchise.
- Articles 84 and 173 lay down the qualifications required for contesting elections to Parliament and State Legislatures, thereby ensuring equal eligibility for men and women.
- The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments marked a significant milestone by introducing reservation of one-third of seats for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions and urban local bodies. This has



led to a substantial increase in women's participation at the grassroots level.

- The Women's Reservation Act (106th Constitutional Amendment, 2023), also known as the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhinyam, represents a major step towards improving women's representation in higher legislative bodies.
- It provides for 33% reservation of seats for women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies, including within seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
- However, its implementation is linked to the completion of the next Census and delimitation exercise.

This concept is critical for how to prepare for APPSC Group 1 at home and for candidates following best coaching for APPSC Group 1 and best coaching for APPSC Group 2.

Institutional Measures and Election-Related Initiatives

- The Election Commission of India has taken several initiatives to promote women's participation in the electoral process.
- These include the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme, which aims to increase voter awareness and participation.
- The Commission has also introduced women-friendly measures such as "pink polling booths," where the entire polling staff is composed of women, thereby encouraging greater participation and confidence among female voters.
- Institutions such as the National Commission for Women also play a role in promoting gender equality and supporting

women's participation in public life.

These topics are important for those using APPSC study material, APPSC Group 1 study material PDF, and APPSC Group 2 study material, especially while practicing APPSC Group 1 previous papers with answers and APPSC Group 2 previous papers with solutions.

Challenges Faced by Women in Politics

- Despite various measures, women continue to face multiple challenges in political participation.
- Social and cultural norms often restrict women's involvement in public life, while financial constraints make it difficult for many women to contest elections.
- Political parties may not provide adequate opportunities for women to occupy leadership positions, limiting their representation at higher levels.
- Women also face issues such as political violence, intimidation, and online harassment, which can discourage active participation.

These challenges are often discussed in APPSC Group 1 exam date-based current affairs revisions and APPSC Group 1 eligibility stage preparation.

Significance for Andhra Pradesh

- The appointment of Byreddy Shabari to a senior leadership position reflects a broader trend towards greater inclusion of women in the political landscape of Andhra Pradesh.
- It highlights the increasing role of women leaders in shaping political discourse and organisational structures within the State.
- Such developments are likely to encourage more women to participate in politics and

contribute to strengthening democratic representation.

These points are essential for writing answers in APPSC Group 1 mains preparation and scoring high using APPSC Group 1 books and APPSC Group 2 preparation plan 3 months.

Way Forward

- Political parties need to ensure greater inclusion of women in leadership roles and candidate selection processes.
- Effective implementation of the Women's Reservation Act will be a critical step in improving representation at higher levels.
- There is also a need for capacity-building initiatives, financial support mechanisms, and institutional safeguards to address the barriers faced by women in politics.
- Creating a supportive environment for women's participation will contribute to more inclusive and representative governance.

Development Must Go Hand-in-Hand with Environmental Responsibility: Lanka Dinakar

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: APPSC - Environment | Governance | Sustainable Development | Urban Planning

Important Key Words for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims:

- Article 48A, Article 51A(g), Article 21, Environment Protection Act 1986, Water Act 1974, Air Act 1981, Sustainable

Development, Amaravati

For Mains:

- Sustainable Development, Environmental Governance, Urban Planning, Climate Change, Resource Management, Ecological Balance

Why in News?

Lanka Dinakar, Chairperson of the Andhra Pradesh 20-Point Programme Implementation Committee, stressed the need to integrate environmental sustainability into development planning while addressing the HARIT-2 national conference at the School of Planning and Architecture, Vijayawada.



Source: *The Hindu*

Background and Context

- Andhra Pradesh is undergoing rapid urban expansion, particularly with the development of Amaravati as a planned capital city.
- At the same time, environmental concerns such as climate change, resource depletion, urban pollution, and loss of biodiversity have become increasingly visible across regions.
- Urban planning and infrastructure development therefore require integration of environmental safeguards to ensure long-term sustainability.



Key Observations

- Lanka Dinakar emphasised that infrastructure development in Andhra Pradesh must integrate environmental safeguards at the planning stage itself, particularly in emerging urban centres such as Amaravati.
- He pointed out that rapid economic growth over recent decades has resulted in environmental challenges including climate change, depletion of natural resources, rising pollution levels, and biodiversity loss.
- The need for designing cities with improved livability standards was highlighted, focusing on reducing environmental stress while supporting urban expansion.
- The importance of incorporating renewable energy, efficient building design, and green infrastructure into urban planning was stressed.
- Water conservation measures such as rainwater harvesting and recycling were identified as essential components of sustainable infrastructure.

Sustainable Urban Planning Measures

The approach discussed at the conference includes practical strategies for environmentally responsible development:

- Use of renewable energy sources such as solar and wind energy
- Construction of buildings with natural lighting and ventilation systems
- Development of urban green spaces such as parks, urban forests, and eco-corridors
- Implementation of water conservation systems including rainwater harvesting and wastewater recycling

These measures aim to reduce environmental

impact while improving urban living conditions.

Constitutional Framework of Environmental Protection

The Indian Constitution did not originally contain explicit provisions on environment, but over time a comprehensive framework has developed through Fundamental Rights, Directive Principles, Fundamental Duties, and judicial interpretation.

1. Fundamental Rights (Part III)

- Environmental protection has been read into Article 21, which guarantees the right to life. The Supreme Court has interpreted this to include the right to a clean and healthy environment, pollution-free air and water, and ecological balance. In *Subhash Kumar v. State of Bihar*, the Court held that the right to pollution-free water and air is part of the right to life.

2. Directive Principles of State Policy (Part IV)

- Article 48A, added by the 42nd Amendment, directs the State to protect and improve the environment and safeguard forests and wildlife. Although non-justiciable, it plays an important role in guiding environmental legislation and policy.

3. Fundamental Duties (Part IVA)

- Article 51A(g) imposes a duty on every citizen to protect and improve the natural environment, including forests, rivers, lakes, and wildlife, and to show compassion for living creatures. This provision emphasizes participatory environmental governance.

4. Seventh Schedule (Distribution of Powers)

- The 42nd Amendment shifted forests and wildlife from the State List to the Concurrent List, enabling both Parliament



and State Legislatures to make laws on environmental protection, ensuring coordinated action.

5. Judicial Interpretation and Activism

- The judiciary has significantly expanded environmental jurisprudence by evolving principles such as sustainable development, the polluter pays principle, and the precautionary principle. These were clearly articulated in *Vellore Citizens Welfare Forum v. Union of India*.

6. Other Relevant Provisions

- Article 47 directs the State to improve public health, which is closely linked to environmental quality. Article 253 empowers Parliament to enact laws to implement international environmental agreements.

Key Environmental Laws in India

India has developed a strong statutory framework for environmental protection, especially after the 1970s, influenced by global environmental movements and constitutional commitments.

1. Environment (Protection) Act, 1986

- This is an umbrella legislation enacted after the Bhopal Gas Tragedy. It empowers the Central Government to take measures to protect and improve environmental quality, regulate industrial pollution, and set standards for emissions and discharges. It provides wide-ranging powers including closure of polluting industries.

2. Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974

- This was the first major environmental law in India. It aims to prevent and control water pollution and maintain or restore the wholesomeness of water. It led to the

establishment of Central and State Pollution Control Boards.

3. Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981

- Enacted to control and reduce air pollution, this law authorizes Pollution Control Boards to monitor air quality and regulate industrial emissions. It was enacted following India's commitments at the Stockholm Conference.

4. Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980

- This Act restricts the de-reservation of forests and use of forest land for non-forest purposes without prior approval of the Central Government. It aims to check deforestation and preserve ecological balance.

5. Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972

- This law provides for the protection of wild animals, birds, and plants. It led to the creation of protected areas such as national parks and wildlife sanctuaries and forms the basis for biodiversity conservation in India.

6. Biological Diversity Act, 2002

- Enacted to conserve biological diversity, ensure sustainable use, and facilitate fair sharing of benefits arising from biological resources. It implements India's obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

7. National Green Tribunal Act, 2010

- This Act established the National Green Tribunal for effective and speedy disposal of environmental cases. It applies principles like sustainable development, precautionary principle, and polluter pays principle.



Concept of Sustainable Development

- Sustainable development refers to a model of development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This definition was popularized by the World Commission on Environment and Development in its 1987 report *Our Common Future*.
- It is based on the idea that economic growth, environmental protection, and social equity must go hand in hand. Development cannot be pursued at the cost of environmental degradation, nor can environmental protection ignore human development needs.
- The concept rests on three core pillars: economic sustainability (efficient and inclusive growth), environmental sustainability (conservation of natural resources and ecosystems), and social sustainability (equity, justice, and improvement in quality of life).
- In India, sustainable development has been recognized through judicial interpretation as part of the right to life under Article 21. The Supreme Court in *Vellore Citizens Welfare Forum v. Union of India* affirmed that sustainable development is a balancing concept between ecology and development and forms an integral part of environmental jurisprudence.
- Thus, sustainable development emphasizes inter-generational equity, responsible resource use, and long-term ecological balance while ensuring continuous human progress.

Implications for Andhra Pradesh

- Planned development of Amaravati can incorporate environmentally sustainable urban design
- Adoption of green infrastructure can improve long-term urban livability
- Integration of environmental considerations can reduce ecological degradation

Challenges

- Managing rapid urbanisation without environmental damage
- Ensuring effective implementation of environmental regulations
- Limited awareness and technical capacity in urban planning systems
- Financial and infrastructural constraints

Way Forward

- Strengthening environmental planning in urban development projects
- Promoting renewable energy and green infrastructure
- Enhancing coordination between departments
- Increasing awareness and capacity building

Conclusion

The emphasis on integrating environmental responsibility into development planning highlights the need for sustainable urbanisation in Andhra Pradesh. Proper planning and implementation can ensure balanced growth while protecting natural resources.

Illegal Sand Mining Near K. Pallepalem Beach Raises Environmental Concerns

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: APPSC - Environment | Geography | Coastal Regulation | Natural Resource Governance

Important Key Words for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims:

- Illegal Sand Mining, Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ), MMDR Act 1957, Minor Minerals, Sustainable Sand Mining Management Guidelines 2016, Coastal Erosion, Salinisation, Beach Sand Mining, Prakasam District, Kothapatnam

For Mains:

- Environmental Governance, Coastal Ecosystem Protection, Illegal Mining, Resource Management, Sustainable Development, Coastal Erosion, Administrative Regulation

Why in News?

- Large-scale illegal sand mining has been reported near K. Pallepalem beach in Kothapatnam mandal of Prakasam district in Andhra Pradesh.
- Locals and social activists have alleged that beach sand is being excavated using heavy machinery and transported through tractors despite strict legal restrictions under Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) rules.
- Concerns have been raised regarding coastal erosion, groundwater salinisation,

and threats to marine biodiversity.

- Similar illegal sand extraction has also been reported in the Bahuda River region near the Andhra Pradesh–Odisha interstate border.

This topic is highly important for aspirants preparing through best APPSC Group 1 coaching, best APPSC Group 2 coaching, and APPSC online coaching, as it relates to governance, economy, and administrative reforms—key areas in the APPSC Group 1 syllabus and APPSC Group 2 syllabus in Telugu PDF.



Source : [The Hindu](#)

Background of the Issue

- Sand is one of the most important natural resources used in construction activities such as buildings, roads, bridges, and infrastructure development. Increasing urbanisation and construction demand have led to excessive extraction of sand from rivers, beaches, and coastal zones.
- While legal mining is regulated through government permissions, illegal mining takes place without scientific assessment or environmental safeguards.
- In coastal areas, beach sand mining is particularly dangerous because beaches act as natural barriers against sea erosion and storms.



- At K. Pallepalem village, large quantities of beach sand were reportedly being removed for private construction purposes, including shrimp hatchery construction, raising serious environmental concerns.

For aspirants enrolled in best APPSC Group 1 coaching online or APPSC Group 2 coaching online, this reform is a classic example of governance transformation, often asked in APPSC Group 1 mains preparation and APPSC Group 2 mains preparation.

What is Illegal Sand Mining?

- illegal sand mining refers to the **unauthorised extraction of sand** from riverbeds, floodplains, coastal areas, or other natural sources without valid permits or in violation of environmental laws.
- It often involves removal of sand beyond permissible limits, mining in restricted zones, or extraction without environmental clearance.
- Sand is a crucial raw material for construction (concrete, roads, buildings), which drives high demand and leads to unregulated exploitation.
- Such mining causes **riverbank erosion, lowering of groundwater levels, destruction of aquatic habitats, and increased flood vulnerability.**
- It also affects infrastructure like bridges and embankments by destabilising riverbeds.
- In India, it violates laws such as the **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957**, Environment Protection Act, 1986, and rules related to sustainable sand mining.
- Illegal sand mining is often linked with organised networks, corruption, and weak

enforcement mechanisms, making it a serious governance challenge.

- It is a major environmental and socio-economic issue, especially in river-rich states, requiring strict regulation and sustainable alternatives.

Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Rules

The Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) framework regulates activities along India's coastal stretches to protect sensitive coastal ecosystems.

These rules were issued under the **Environment Protection Act, 1986.**

Main Objective

- Protection of beaches
- Conservation of sand dunes
- Prevention of coastal erosion
- Protection of mangroves and marine biodiversity
- Regulation of developmental activities near coastlines

Important Rule

- CRZ regulations strictly prohibit large-scale sand mining in coastal areas because removal of beach sand weakens the natural coastal defence system.
- In some villages, limited manual sand collection for local domestic needs may be informally tolerated, but mechanised commercial mining is prohibited.

Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and Sand as Minor Mineral

- The Act is the principal legislation governing the regulation of mining and development of minerals in India, providing a framework for licensing, leasing, and control over mineral resources.



- The Act classifies minerals into **major minerals and minor minerals**, with sand being notified as a **minor mineral**.
- The Act empowers State Governments to regulate minor minerals, including granting quarry leases, fixing royalty rates, and enforcing rules for extraction.
- The Act allows States to frame their own rules for minor minerals under Section 15, leading to state-specific sand mining policies.
- Sand, as a minor mineral, is primarily used in construction activities such as concrete, plastering, and infrastructure development, making it economically significant.
- The classification of sand as a minor mineral places responsibility on States for monitoring and preventing illegal mining activities.
- The Act has been amended multiple times, notably in 2015, to strengthen transparency, introduce auctions, and curb illegal mining.
- Illegal sand mining occurs when extraction is carried out without permits, beyond approved limits, or in ecologically sensitive zones, violating provisions of the Act.

These topics are important for those using APPSC study material, APPSC Group 1 study material PDF, and APPSC Group 2 study material, especially while practicing APPSC Group 1 previous papers with answers and APPSC Group 2 previous papers with solutions.

Sustainable Sand Mining Management Guidelines, 2016

The Government of India introduced the **Sustainable Sand Mining Management Guidelines (SSMMG), 2016** to prevent illegal and unscientific mining.

- Issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- Applicable to river sand mining and other minor minerals like sand.
- Mandates preparation of District Survey Report (DSR) before granting mining leases.
- Recommends scientific mining based on replenishment rate of sand.
- Prohibits mining near bridges, embankments, and riverbanks.
- Emphasises use of remote sensing and GIS technology for monitoring.
- Aims to curb illegal sand mining and environmental degradation.
- Forms the basis for Enforcement & Monitoring Guidelines, 2020.

These examples are frequently asked in exams and are well covered in APPSC Group 1 coaching Telugu, APPSC Group 2 online coaching Telugu, and APPSC coaching in Hyderabad.

Environmental Impact of Illegal Sand Mining

Illegal sand mining causes serious ecological damage, especially in coastal areas.

1. Coastal Erosion

- Removal of beach sand weakens the natural coastal barrier, making shorelines more vulnerable to sea erosion and cyclones.

2. Salinisation of Groundwater

- Beach sand helps prevent seawater intrusion. When sand is removed, saline water can enter groundwater systems, making water unsuitable for drinking and agriculture.

3. Threat to Marine Biodiversity

- Beach ecosystems support nesting grounds,



marine organisms, and coastal vegetation. Disturbance affects biodiversity and ecological stability.

4. Damage to Agriculture

- Saltwater intrusion and land degradation reduce agricultural productivity in nearby coastal villages.

5. River and Coastal Instability

- Unregulated extraction changes the natural sediment balance and damages long-term coastal sustainability.

Implications for Andhra Pradesh

Illegal sand mining affects not only the environment but also governance and public trust.

It reflects:

- Weak enforcement of mining laws
- Revenue loss to the State
- Environmental degradation of coastal districts
- Increased disaster vulnerability
- Administrative failure in regulating natural resources

Since Andhra Pradesh has a long coastline and major infrastructure growth, sustainable sand management is especially important.

This concept is critical for how to prepare for APPSC Group 1 at home and for candidates following best coaching for APPSC Group 1 and best coaching for APPSC Group 2.

Challenges in Controlling Illegal Sand Mining

- The problem is aggravated by **political patronage and organised mining mafia networks**, which undermine regulatory mechanisms.
- The issue is compounded by **weak enforcement at the local level**, including

shortage of staff and limited administrative capacity.

- The situation is worsened due to the **absence of regular and scientific monitoring** of mining activities across riverbeds and coastal zones.
- The challenge is intensified by **rapid urbanisation and high demand for construction materials**, leading to excessive and illegal extraction of sand.
- The problem persists due to **poor coordination among key agencies** such as revenue authorities, police, mining departments, and coastal regulatory bodies.

These points are essential for writing answers in APPSC Group 1 mains preparation and scoring high using APPSC Group 1 books and APPSC Group 2 preparation plan 3 months.

Way Forward

- There is a need for **strict enforcement of Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) norms and provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957.**
- The solution lies in adopting **technology-based monitoring systems**, including drones, satellite surveillance, and GIS tools for real-time tracking.
- Effective control requires **strong legal and penal action against illegal mining networks and mafias.**
- Better outcomes can be achieved through **institutional coordination among police, mining departments, and local administration.**
- Long-term sustainability demands **promotion of alternatives such as manufactured sand (M-sand)** to reduce dependence on natural sand resources.

Conclusion

Illegal sand mining near K. Pallepalem beach highlights the growing challenge of balancing construction demand with environmental protection.

Beach ecosystems are not merely land resources but critical natural barriers protecting coastal communities. Protecting them requires strict enforcement, scientific regulation, and responsible governance.

Without strong action, illegal mining can cause irreversible damage to Andhra Pradesh's coastline and long-term ecological security.

PM Surya Ghar Utsav Launched in Andhra Pradesh for Free Rooftop Solar Access

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: **GS Paper III - Economy | Energy | Renewable Energy | Inclusive Development | Welfare Schemes**

Important Key Words

For Prelims:

- PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, Rooftop Solar Programme, Net Metering, Renewable Energy, Solar Panels, SC/ST Subsidy, MNRE, Distributed Energy System, Solar Grid Connectivity

For Mains:

- Renewable Energy Transition, Energy Security, Inclusive Growth, Rooftop Solar Economy, Decentralised Energy Generation, Subsidy Model, Energy Access, Sustainable Development

Why in News?

- The Andhra Pradesh government launched the PM Surya Ghar Utsav in Banaganapalle of Nandyal district to provide subsidised rooftop solar power systems for households, especially targeting Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe families.
- Minister for Roads and Buildings B.C. Janardhan Reddy stated that Andhra Pradesh is providing 100% subsidy for rooftop solar panels to SC and ST beneficiaries, while other eligible social categories can receive subsidies of up to 40%.



Source: [The Hindu](#)

- The scheme aims to provide up to 300 units of free electricity per month and also allows households to sell surplus electricity back to the government.
- This initiative is being seen as an important step toward renewable energy expansion and social welfare integration.

This topic is highly important for aspirants preparing through best APPSC Group 1 coaching, best APPSC Group 2 coaching, and APPSC online coaching, as it relates to governance, economy, and administrative reforms—key areas in the APPSC Group 1 syllabus and APPSC Group 2 syllabus in Telugu PDF.



Background of the Scheme

- India has been focusing on expanding renewable energy to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, improve energy security, and lower electricity costs for households.
- Rooftop solar systems are an important part of this strategy because they allow decentralised electricity generation directly at the household level.
- Instead of depending entirely on large power plants and transmission networks, households can generate electricity from solar panels installed on rooftops.
- The PM Surya Ghar scheme supports this transition by combining clean energy goals with direct household-level benefits such as lower electricity bills and income from surplus power generation.
- Andhra Pradesh has further strengthened this model by extending full subsidy support to SC and ST families.

For aspirants enrolled in best APPSC Group 1 coaching online or APPSC Group 2 coaching online, this reform is a classic example of governance transformation, often asked in APPSC Group 1 mains preparation and APPSC Group 2 mains preparation

PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana

- The PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana is a centrally supported rooftop solar programme designed to provide free electricity benefits to one crore households across India.
- The scheme encourages installation of rooftop solar panels for domestic electricity consumption.
- Its major objective is to reduce electricity bills for households while promoting

renewable energy adoption.

- The programme also supports India's larger climate commitments and energy transition strategy.
- Under the scheme, households can receive subsidies for rooftop solar installations and benefit from net metering systems through which excess electricity can be sold to the grid.
- The scheme is implemented with the support of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE).

Such developments are frequently covered in APPSC test series, APPSC Group 1 test series, and APPSC Group 2 mock tests, making them crucial for APPSC Group 1 preparation strategy 2026.

Andhra Pradesh Implementation Model

- Andhra Pradesh has adopted an expanded welfare-oriented model for implementation of the PM Surya Ghar scheme.
- The State government has focused particularly on weaker sections and rural beneficiaries.
- In Banaganapalle constituency alone, more than 4,600 beneficiaries are being covered under the scheme, including more than 2,900 SC and ST households.
- In Panchamapeta village specifically, more than 300 beneficiaries are receiving support under the programme.
- The State has positioned the scheme not merely as an energy policy but also as a social justice and poverty reduction initiative.
- This model gives Andhra Pradesh a distinct place in scheme implementation.

Special Provision for SC and ST Beneficiaries

- One of the most important features of the Andhra Pradesh model is the provision of



complete 100% subsidy for SC and ST beneficiaries.

- This means eligible families can install rooftop solar systems without bearing installation costs.
- For beneficiaries belonging to other social categories, subsidy support is available up to 40%.
- This targeted subsidy approach ensures that access to renewable energy does not remain limited only to financially stronger households.
- It also supports inclusive development by bringing vulnerable communities into the clean energy transition.
- Such targeted energy welfare schemes are increasingly becoming important in social policy design.

These topics are important for those using APPSC study material, APPSC Group 1 study material PDF, and APPSC Group 2 study material, especially while practicing APPSC Group 1

Other Energy Schemes

previous papers with answers and APPSC Group 2 previous papers with solutions

Net Metering and Surplus Power Sale

- A major benefit of rooftop solar systems is the ability to generate additional income through net metering.
- Under this system, if a household produces more electricity than it consumes, the surplus electricity is supplied back to the government grid.
- In return, the household receives financial credit or payment.
- This transforms electricity consumers into small energy producers.
- It reduces pressure on conventional electricity supply systems and creates distributed energy security.
- For rural and middle-class households, this model reduces recurring electricity expenditure and improves household financial stability.

Scheme	Core Objective	Key Features
PM-KUSUM Scheme	Use solar energy in agriculture and reduce dependence on diesel irrigation	Provides solar pumps and enables farmers to install decentralized solar plants; allows sale of surplus electricity to the grid; supported through significant Central and State subsidies
Rooftop Solar Programme Phase II	Promote solar energy adoption at the household level	Implemented by Ministry of New and Renewable Energy; provides subsidy for residential rooftop systems; supports grid-connected solar and net metering
Andhra Pradesh Free Power Scheme	Reduce irrigation cost and support farmers	Provides free electricity for agricultural connections, especially benefiting small and marginal farmers
YSR Jala Kala Scheme	Improve irrigation access for marginalized farmers	Facilitates free borewell drilling for SC/ST and small farmers to ensure groundwater availability
Saubhagya	Achieve universal	Provides free electricity connections to poor



Scheme	Core Objective	Key Features
Scheme	household electrification	households and focuses on last-mile connectivity
UDAY Scheme	Improve financial and operational performance of power distribution companies	Involves state takeover of DISCOM debt and introduces measures to improve efficiency and reduce losses
National Bioenergy Programme	Promote renewable energy from organic and waste sources	Supports energy generation from biomass, biogas, and waste, contributing to alternative energy sources

These examples are frequently asked in exams and are well covered in APPSC Group 1 coaching Telugu, APPSC Group 2 online coaching Telugu, and APPSC coaching in Hyderabad.

Renewable Energy and Rural Development

- Renewable energy is increasingly becoming a tool of rural transformation.
- Solar power improves electricity access, reduces household expenditure, supports productive activities, and creates new income opportunities.
- In villages, reliable electricity supports education, health services, drinking water supply, and small enterprises.
- By linking rooftop solar with direct welfare benefits, the government improves both economic resilience and environmental sustainability.
- This also reduces dependence on fossil-fuel-based electricity and helps in achieving long-term climate goals.

This concept is critical for how to prepare for APPSC Group 1 at home and for candidates following best coaching for APPSC Group 1 and best coaching for APPSC Group 2.

Significance for Andhra Pradesh

- The scheme is particularly important for Andhra Pradesh because of its high solar potential and large rural population.
- It strengthens household energy security and reduces dependence on subsidised conventional power.
- It supports the State's efforts toward renewable energy expansion and climate-responsive development.
- For SC and ST communities, it acts as both an economic support measure and a tool of social inclusion.
- It also helps reduce future electricity shortages by promoting decentralised power generation.
- The policy demonstrates how welfare schemes can be combined with sustainable development goals.

These points are essential for writing answers in APPSC Group 1 mains preparation and scoring high using APPSC Group 1 books and APPSC Group 2 preparation plan 3 months.

Challenges

- High initial installation costs remain a challenge in many areas where subsidy coverage is limited.



- Awareness regarding rooftop solar systems and net metering remains low among rural households.
- Technical maintenance and after-installation support can become difficult in remote regions.
- DISCOMs may face operational challenges in managing decentralised grid integration.
- There is also a need to ensure transparency in beneficiary selection and subsidy delivery.
- Without proper implementation monitoring, scheme benefits may not reach intended households fully.

These challenges are often discussed in APPSC Group 1 exam date-based current affairs revisions and APPSC Group 1 eligibility stage preparation

Way Forward

- Greater awareness campaigns are needed to improve household participation in rooftop solar adoption.
- Technical support systems should be strengthened at the local level for maintenance and grievance redressal.
- DISCOM infrastructure must be upgraded to support efficient net metering and grid management.
- Targeted schemes for weaker sections should continue with transparency and accountability.
- Promotion of rooftop solar should be integrated with broader state energy planning and climate resilience policies.
- Long-term sustainability requires strong coordination between central and state governments.

Conclusion

- The PM Surya Ghar Utsav in Andhra Pradesh represents an important shift where renewable energy policy is directly linked with social welfare and inclusive growth.
- By providing 100% subsidy for SC and ST households and encouraging surplus power sale through net metering, the State has created a strong model of decentralised clean energy development.
- This initiative shows that renewable energy is not only about electricity generation but also about reducing inequality, strengthening rural livelihoods, and building sustainable economic growth.

Urea Use Stable Despite Sharp Rise in Cropped Area in Andhra Pradesh

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: **GS Paper III - Agriculture | Fertilizer Management | Sustainable Agriculture | Food Security | Digital Governance in Agriculture**

Important Key Words

For Prelims:

- Urea, e-Panta, Neem-Coated Urea, N:P:K Ratio, Nutrient Use Efficiency (NUE), Soil Health Card, Fertilizer Subsidy, Non-standard Fertilizer, Section 6A, Integrated Nutrient Management

For Mains:

- Balanced Fertilizer Use, Sustainable Agriculture, Fertilizer Governance, Nutrient Use Efficiency, Digital Agriculture, Soil Health, Fertilizer Subsidy Reform,

Agricultural Productivity

Why in News?

- During the Rabi 2025–26 season, Andhra Pradesh recorded a major change in fertilizer use patterns as urea consumption remained almost stable despite a 36% increase in cropped area.
- While the total land under cultivation expanded significantly, urea availability increased by only 3%, leading to a sharp decline in per-hectare urea availability from 513 kg to 338 kg, a reduction of nearly 34%.
- This change was mainly driven by the expansion of the e-Panta system, stricter monitoring of fertilizer supply, and stronger enforcement against diversion and illegal transportation.
- The development indicates a shift from excessive fertilizer dependence toward more efficient and monitored fertilizer use.

This topic is highly important for aspirants preparing through best APPSC Group 1 coaching, best APPSC Group 2 coaching, and APPSC online coaching, as it relates to governance, economy, and administrative reforms—key areas in the APPSC Group 1 syllabus and APPSC Group 2 syllabus in Telugu PDF.



Source: *The Hindu*

Background of Fertilizer Use in Andhra Pradesh

- For many decades, fertilizer consumption in Indian agriculture, especially urea, followed a simple assumption that higher fertilizer application would automatically lead to higher crop yields.
- Farmers often used large quantities of nitrogen-based fertilizers, particularly urea, because it was cheaper due to heavy government subsidy and easily available.
- This created a pattern of overdependence on urea and imbalance in nutrient application.
- Andhra Pradesh was no exception, where increasing agricultural productivity often meant increasing fertilizer input rather than improving nutrient efficiency.
- The Rabi 2025–26 season marks an important departure from this traditional approach.

What Changed in Rabi 2025–26

- The total cultivated area in Andhra Pradesh increased by 36%, but urea availability increased by only 3%.
- This meant farmers had to manage larger crop areas with significantly lower fertilizer availability per hectare.
- Per-hectare availability of urea declined from 513 kg to 338 kg, reflecting a 34% reduction.
- Despite this, crop coverage remained high, showing that farmers were able to use fertilizer more efficiently instead of depending on excess application.
- This shift reflects a move toward controlled fertilizer distribution and improved nutrient management rather than unrestricted consumption.



- It represents an important policy change in agricultural governance.

Role of e-Panta in Fertilizer Regulation

- The major driver behind this change was the expansion of the e-Panta digital crop mapping system.
- Farmer participation increased from 17.56 lakh to 35.51 lakh.
- The mapped crop area increased from 46.07 lakh acres to 73.55 lakh acres, showing nearly 60% growth.
- Under e-Panta, fertilizer allocation became directly linked to digitally recorded crop area and crop type.
- This reduced the possibility of unaccounted purchases and prevented excess fertilizer access outside official records.
- The Agriculture Department was able to regulate supply based on real crop data rather than estimation.
- This created what officials described as “forced efficiency” in fertilizer use.
- It also strengthened transparency and reduced leakage in fertilizer distribution.

Such developments are frequently covered in APPSC test series, APPSC Group 1 test series, and APPSC Group 2 mock tests, making them crucial for APPSC Group 1 preparation strategy 2026.

Urea Consumption and Nutrient Use Efficiency

- Urea is the most widely used fertilizer in India because it contains about 46% nitrogen and receives heavy subsidy support.
- However, only about 30–40% of applied nitrogen is actually absorbed by crops.
- The rest is lost through volatilization, leaching, and runoff.
- This makes excessive urea use economically

inefficient and environmentally harmful.

- Nutrient Use Efficiency (NUE) refers to the crop output obtained per unit of nutrient applied.
- Higher NUE means better productivity with less wastage.
- The Andhra Pradesh experience shows that stable urea consumption with increased cropped area indicates improved NUE.
- This is an important indicator of sustainable agricultural practices.

Ideal N:P:K Ratio and India's Fertilizer Imbalance

- For healthy crop growth and soil sustainability, the ideal nutrient application ratio is generally considered to be:
- **4 : 2 : 1**
- **Nitrogen : Phosphorus : Potassium**
- In India, actual fertilizer use is heavily skewed toward nitrogen because urea is highly subsidized compared to phosphatic and potassic fertilizers.
- This leads to distorted nutrient balance and poor long-term soil health.
- Excess nitrogen creates short-term yield gains but damages long-term productivity.
- The Andhra Pradesh case shows a gradual correction in this imbalance by controlling unnecessary urea consumption and improving distribution efficiency.
- Balanced fertilization is essential for both productivity and sustainability.

These topics are important for those using APPSC study material, APPSC Group 1 study material PDF, and APPSC Group 2 study material, especially while practicing APPSC Group 1 previous papers with answers and APPSC Group 2 previous papers with solutions.



Problems of Excess Urea Use

Soil Degradation

- Continuous overuse of nitrogen reduces soil microbial activity and causes depletion of important micronutrients such as zinc, boron, and iron.
- It also affects soil structure and causes acidification.

Water Pollution

- Excess nitrogen enters groundwater as nitrates and creates health risks such as Blue Baby Syndrome.
- It also causes eutrophication in lakes and water bodies.

Decline in Long-Term Soil Fertility

- Imbalanced fertilizer use reduces natural soil regeneration and increases dependence on chemical inputs over time.
- Organic carbon content also declines.

Economic Losses

- Farmers spend more money on fertilizers without proportional productivity gains because much of the nitrogen is lost instead of being absorbed.
- The AP model aims to reduce these problems through controlled fertilizer use.

These examples are frequently asked in exams and are well covered in APPSC Group 1 coaching Telugu, APPSC Group 2 online coaching Telugu, and APPSC coaching in Hyderabad.

Monitoring, Enforcement and Regulatory Action

- The shift was supported by strong monitoring and enforcement measures.
- The Agriculture Department issued regular bulletins, press updates, SMS advisories,

and conducted awareness programmes at the mandal level regarding fertilizer use and pricing.

- Special teams involving Vigilance, Police, and Revenue officials monitored fertilizer stock movement, illegal transportation, diversion, and stock availability.
- Inspection activity increased significantly.
- More than 18,500 fertilizer samples were collected during 2025–26, compared to around 15,000 in the previous year.
- Stocks worth over ₹58 crore were detained and illegal stocks worth more than ₹6 crore were seized.
- Licenses suspended increased sharply from 14 to 84, and criminal cases also rose significantly.
- This shows a stronger regulatory approach in fertilizer governance.

Significance for Andhra Pradesh Agriculture

- This development is important because it demonstrates that agricultural productivity does not always require increased fertilizer consumption.
- Efficient use of nutrients can improve sustainability without reducing cultivation.
- The e-Panta model shows how digital governance can improve agricultural input management.
- It supports long-term soil health, reduces environmental damage, and improves financial efficiency for farmers.
- It also reduces illegal diversion and strengthens trust in public distribution systems.
- For Andhra Pradesh, this model can become an example of sustainable fertilizer



governance.

These points are essential for writing answers in APPSC Group 1 mains preparation and scoring high using APPSC Group 1 books and APPSC Group 2 preparation plan 3 months.

Challenges

- Many farmers still believe that higher urea use automatically means better yield.
- Awareness regarding balanced fertilization remains limited in several regions.
- Heavy subsidy on urea continues to distort nutrient choices.
- Precision farming and scientific nutrient management are still not widely adopted.
- Digital systems such as e-Panta require regular updating and strong local implementation.
- Monitoring must continue consistently to prevent diversion and illegal trade.
- Without long-term behavioural change, short-term enforcement alone may not be enough.

These challenges are often discussed in APPSC Group 1 exam date-based current affairs revisions and APPSC Group 1 eligibility stage preparation.

Way Forward

- Greater promotion of neem-coated urea can reduce nitrogen loss and improve fertilizer efficiency. Soil Health Card recommendations should be actively linked to fertilizer supply decisions. Precision farming and fertigation methods should be expanded.
- Integrated Nutrient Management combining organic and inorganic inputs must be encouraged. Digital platforms such as e-Panta should be further strengthened

and integrated with farmer advisory systems.

- Fertilizer subsidy reforms should gradually support balanced nutrient use rather than excessive nitrogen dependence. Farmer awareness campaigns must remain continuous and practical.

Conclusion

The Andhra Pradesh experience during Rabi 2025–26 shows that agricultural efficiency can improve even without increasing fertilizer consumption.

Stable urea use despite a major rise in cropped area reflects better regulation, stronger monitoring, and improved Nutrient Use Efficiency.

The expansion of e-Panta and strict enforcement against illegal fertilizer practices show how digital governance can support sustainable agriculture.

This is an important step toward balanced fertilizer use, improved soil health, and long-term agricultural sustainability.

APSRTC Draws Roadmap to Shift to Electric Fleet

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: GS Paper III - Infrastructure | Transport | Energy | Environment | Sustainable Urban Development

Important Key Words

For Prelims:

- APSRTC, Electric Bus, Gross Cost Contract (GCC), FAME India Scheme, CNG Bus, Lithium-ion Battery, LFP Battery, Depot Charging, Fast Charging, Stree Shakti Scheme

For Mains:

- Public Transport Electrification, Sustainable Mobility, Green Transport, State Transport Undertakings, Urban Air Pollution, EV Policy, Energy Transition, Cost-efficient Public Transport

Why in News?

- The Andhra Pradesh government has prepared a roadmap to transform the Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC) into a modern electric mobility-driven public transport system.
- The plan focuses on the gradual replacement of ageing diesel buses with electric buses and the deployment of cleaner fleets to reduce operational costs, improve environmental performance, and make public transport financially sustainable.
- The government has approved the procurement of 5,746 electric buses and 500 CNG buses over the next five years, along with additional buses under the Stree Shakti scheme.
- This marks a major shift in Andhra Pradesh's public transport policy toward sustainable and green mobility.

This topic is highly important for aspirants preparing through best APPSC Group 1 coaching, best APPSC Group 2 coaching, and APPSC online coaching, as it relates to governance, economy, and administrative reforms—key areas in the APPSC Group 1 syllabus and APPSC Group 2 syllabus in Telugu PDF.



Source: *The Hindu*

Background of APSRTC Fleet Modernisation

- State Road Transport Corporations across India have traditionally depended on diesel buses due to lower upfront costs and the availability of fuelling infrastructure.
- However, diesel buses involve high fuel expenditure, frequent maintenance costs, and significant environmental pollution through emissions of particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, and carbon dioxide.
- Rising fuel prices and increasing urban pollution have made diesel-based transport economically and environmentally difficult to sustain.
- APSRTC has therefore initiated a structured transition toward electric mobility to improve long-term financial efficiency and reduce dependence on conventional fuels.
- The move also aligns with India's broader national goal of clean mobility and reduced transport-sector emissions.

For aspirants enrolled in best APPSC Group 1 coaching online or APPSC Group 2 coaching online, this reform is a classic example of governance transformation, often asked in APPSC Group 1 mains preparation and APPSC Group 2 mains preparation



Present Status of APSRTC Bus Fleet

At present, APSRTC operates a total fleet of 10,951 buses.

Out of these:

- 8,199 are RTC-owned buses
- 2,752 are hired buses
- Officials state that 2,630 buses, including 1,941 RTC-owned buses and 689 hired buses, will continue in operation because they will not complete either 15 years of service or their agreement period by 2030.
- This means these diesel buses must continue until the end of their approved lifespan.
- The remaining 8,321 buses are identified for gradual conversion into electric vehicles.
- This forms the core of the State's electric mobility roadmap.

Such developments are frequently covered in APPSC test series, APPSC Group 1 test series, and APPSC Group 2 mock tests, making them crucial for APPSC Group 1 preparation strategy 2026.

Government Roadmap for Electric Fleet Transition

The government has approved:

- Procurement of 5,746 electric buses
- Procurement of 500 CNG buses
- Proposal for 1,445 additional buses under the Stree Shakti scheme
- Procurement of 903 diesel buses for immediate operational needs
- The diesel buses are being procured because large-scale deployment of EVs requires time for charging infrastructure, depot readiness, and route planning.
- Officials estimate that APSRTC requires financial assistance of ₹382 crore for the first year alone to meet the capital expenditure

for diesel-to-electric bus conversion.

- This shows that the transition is planned as a phased and realistic reform rather than an immediate replacement.

Electric Buses in Public Transport

- Electric buses use battery-powered electric motors instead of internal combustion engines.
- Unlike diesel buses, they do not produce tailpipe emissions and therefore help reduce air pollution significantly.
- Most electric buses in India use Lithium-ion batteries, especially Lithium Iron Phosphate (LFP) chemistry because of better thermal stability and longer battery life.
- The typical operating range of an electric bus is around 150 to 300 kilometres per charge depending on battery capacity and route conditions.
- Electric buses are nearly 3 to 4 times more energy efficient than diesel buses because electric motors convert nearly 85–90% of input energy into motion.
- They also reduce operating costs by nearly 30–40% per kilometre over the long term.
- Charging systems generally include:
 - Depot-based slow charging (6–8 hours)
 - Opportunity or fast charging (1–2 hours or less)
- This makes them highly suitable for structured public transport operations.

Gross Cost Contract (GCC) Model

Most State Transport Undertakings in India deploy electric buses through the Gross Cost Contract (GCC) model.

Under this system:

- Private operators own and maintain the



buses

- The government or transport corporation pays per kilometre of service
- This model reduces the upfront capital burden on the government while ensuring professional maintenance and fleet management.
- It allows public transport corporations to expand electric fleets without bearing the

full cost of vehicle ownership.

- The GCC model is widely used under national EV programmes and helps improve financial sustainability.

These topics are important for those using APPSC study material, APPSC Group 1 study material PDF, and APPSC Group 2 study material, especially while practicing APPSC Group 1 previous papers with answers and APPSC Group 2 previous papers with solutions.

Diesel vs CNG vs Electric Buses

Aspect / Fact	Diesel Buses	CNG Buses	Electric Buses
Main Fuel	High-speed diesel derived from petroleum	Compressed Natural Gas mainly consisting of Methane (CH ₄)	Electricity stored in batteries
Pollution Level	Highest pollution among all three	Lower pollution than diesel	Zero tailpipe emission
Major Emissions	PM2.5, PM10, NO _x , SO _x , CO ₂	Lower PM and NO _x , but CO ₂ emissions and methane leakage concern	No direct PM, NO _x , or CO ₂ emission during operation
Greenhouse Gas Concern	Major contributor to global warming	Methane leakage is serious because methane is more potent than CO ₂ in the short term	Depends on electricity source; cleaner if powered by renewables
Initial Cost	Lowest procurement cost	Moderate procurement cost	Highest procurement cost
Long-Term Cost	Highest fuel and maintenance cost	Lower than diesel	Lowest operating and maintenance cost over time
Noise Pollution	High engine noise	Moderate noise	Very low and much quieter
Infrastructure Requirement	Existing fuel stations already available	Requires CNG stations and gas supply network	Requires charging stations and battery support system
Environmental Status	Least sustainable option	Considered a transition or bridge fuel	Long-term sustainable transport solution
Special Concern	High urban air	Methane leakage reduces	Battery disposal and



Aspect / Fact	Diesel Buses	CNG Buses	Electric Buses
	pollution and fuel import burden	climate benefits	recycling challenge (lithium, cobalt, nickel)
Government Policy Focus	Gradually being reduced	Used as an intermediate cleaner option	Strongly promoted under FAME India and PM e-Bus Sewa
Strategic Benefit	High dependence on imported crude oil	Cleaner than diesel but still fossil-fuel based	Improves energy security and supports Net Zero 2070 target

These examples are frequently asked in exams and are well covered in APPSC Group 1 coaching Telugu, APPSC Group 2 online coaching Telugu, and APPSC coaching in Hyderabad.

Policy Support for Electric Mobility

Electric bus adoption is supported by several national and state policies.

FAME India Scheme Phase II

- The Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles (FAME) Scheme promotes electric mobility, especially in public transport.
- It provides financial support for electric buses and charging infrastructure.

NITI Aayog E-Mobility Vision

- NITI Aayog promotes large-scale electrification of transport to reduce fuel imports and improve air quality.

Paris Agreement Commitments

- Transport is a major source of carbon emissions.
- Electric mobility supports India's climate commitments under the Paris Agreement by reducing fossil fuel dependence.

This concept is critical for how to prepare for APPSC Group 1 at home and for candidates

following best coaching for APPSC Group 1 and best coaching for APPSC Group 2.

Andhra Pradesh Mobility Goals

- APSRTC's electric transition aligns with the State's focus on green transport, urban sustainability, and efficient public service delivery.

Significance for Andhra Pradesh

- The transition to electric buses will reduce APSRTC's long-term fuel expenditure and improve operational sustainability.
- It will reduce urban pollution and improve air quality, especially in major transport corridors.
- Electric buses also improve passenger comfort through reduced noise and smoother travel.
- The policy supports cleaner cities and strengthens Andhra Pradesh's environmental commitments.
- The inclusion of additional buses under the Stree Shakti scheme also connects women-focused welfare with sustainable public transport expansion.
- This makes the reform both economically and socially significant.



Challenges in EV Transition

- The biggest challenge is the high initial capital cost of electric buses and charging infrastructure.
- Battery replacement and maintenance remain expensive.
- Charging stations require land, grid capacity, and technical planning.
- Long-distance and rural routes may face operational limitations due to charging range.
- Training of drivers, technicians, and depot staff is necessary.
- Financial sustainability depends on proper route planning and efficient contract management.
- The transition must also ensure that public transport services are not disrupted during fleet replacement.

These challenges are often discussed in APPSC Group 1 exam date-based current affairs revisions and APPSC Group 1 eligibility stage preparation.

Way Forward

- Charging infrastructure must be developed simultaneously with bus procurement.
- Depot modernisation and route-based planning should be prioritised.
- Use of renewable energy for charging can further improve sustainability.
- The GCC model should be strengthened with transparent contracts and performance monitoring.
- Financial assistance from the Centre and multilateral institutions should be leveraged.
- Battery recycling systems must be developed for long-term environmental

safety.

- A balanced transition using diesel, CNG, and EVs during the intermediate phase will ensure operational continuity.

Conclusion

APSRTC's roadmap for electric fleet transition represents a major structural reform in public transport.

- The shift from diesel dependence toward electric mobility reflects both economic necessity and environmental responsibility.
- With phased implementation, policy support, and infrastructure readiness, Andhra Pradesh can build a modern, cost-efficient, and sustainable transport system.
- Electric buses are not merely a technology change – they represent the future of public mobility and urban governance.

Amaravati Blue City Project: Flood Management, River Geography and Capital Region Planning

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: **GS Paper III - Geography | Environment | Urban Planning | Disaster Management | Andhra Pradesh Development**

Important Key Words

For Prelims

- Amaravati, Krishna River, Krishna River Basin, Kondaveeti Vagu, Pala Vagu, Gravity Canal, Neerukonda Reservoir, Penumaka Reservoir, Sakhamuru Reservoir, Floodplain, Navigable Waterways, Blue City Concept

For Mains

- Urban Flood Management, Sustainable Capital Planning, River Basin Management, Climate-Resilient Infrastructure, Water-Sensitive Urban Development

Why in News?

The Andhra Pradesh government is developing Amaravati under the Blue City concept through a major network of reservoirs, canals and flood-control systems designed to protect the capital region from flooding while improving urban planning and tourism.

- The project includes Kondaveeti Vagu, Pala Vagu, Gravity Canal and three major reservoirs—Neerukonda, Penumaka and Sakhamuru. Additional reservoirs are also planned at Lam, Pedaparimi and Vykuntapuram.
- The government is also planning navigable waterways, boating facilities, cycling tracks and eco-friendly recreational zones around these water bodies.
- Since Amaravati is located in the Krishna River floodplain, flood management is directly linked to the survival and sustainability of the capital city.

This topic is highly important for aspirants preparing through best APPSC Group 1 coaching, best APPSC Group 2 coaching, and APPSC online coaching, as it relates to governance, economy, and administrative reforms—key areas in the APPSC Group 1 syllabus and APPSC Group 2 syllabus in Telugu PDF.

Blue City Concept of Amaravati

- The Blue City concept means planning a city

around its natural water systems instead of treating them merely as drainage channels.

In Amaravati, streams, canals and reservoirs are being integrated into urban development for:

- flood control
- stormwater drainage
- water storage
- tourism and boating
- navigable waterways
- urban greenery
- public recreational spaces
- This model is based on the idea that water bodies must remain part of city planning rather than being encroached upon.
- Unlike many Indian cities where lakes and natural drains were blocked and later caused severe urban flooding, Amaravati is being designed by preserving and strengthening natural drainage channels.
- This makes the project both an engineering and environmental planning model.



Source: *The Hindu*



Amaravati and Krishna River

Amaravati:

1. **Capital of Andhra Pradesh:** Amaravati is the **proposed capital city** of the Indian state of **Andhra Pradesh**, situated on the banks of the **Krishna River**. It was chosen to be the state capital after the bifurcation of **Telangana** and **Andhra Pradesh** in 2014.
2. **Planned City:** The city was designed to be a **greenfield capital**, with plans for **modern infrastructure, sustainability, and world-class facilities**. The **Amaravati Capital City Master Plan** was developed with the help of global urban planning experts.
3. **Location:** Amaravati is located in the **Guntur district** of Andhra Pradesh, along the **Krishna River**, around **14 kilometers from Vijayawada**. The geographical location is key for its **economic activities**, including **agriculture** and **commerce**.
4. **Historical Significance:** The area around Amaravati has significant **historical and religious importance**. It was historically part of the **Satavahana dynasty** and has many Buddhist relics, including the **Amaravati Stupa**, making it a key archaeological site.

Krishna River:

1. **Origin and Course:** The **Krishna River** originates from the **Western Ghats** near **Mahabaleshwar** in **Maharashtra**. It is one of the **longest rivers in India**, spanning over **1,400 km**, and flows through **Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana, and Andhra Pradesh** before emptying into the **Bay of Bengal**.
2. **Drainage Basin:** The Krishna River basin covers an area of about **258,948 km²**, serving as an important **water source** for agriculture, drinking, and power generation in the states it flows through.
3. **Major Tributaries:** The main tributaries of the Krishna River include the **Bhima, Tungabhadra, Ghatprabha, and Musi** rivers, all of which contribute significantly to the flow of water in the basin.
4. **Water Scarcity and Disputes:** The river has been a source of significant **inter-state water disputes**, primarily between **Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Telangana**. Issues related to **water sharing and distribution** have often led to political and legal disputes, including the Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal (KWDT).
5. **Irrigation and Agriculture:** The Krishna River plays a vital role in **irrigating agricultural land** in the region, especially in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. It supports the **cultivation of crops** like **rice, sugarcane, cotton, and groundnuts**.
6. **Krishna River Basin Projects:** Several **irrigation projects** have been constructed on the Krishna River, including the **Nagarjuna Sagar Dam, Srisailem Dam, and Prakasam Barrage**. These projects are critical for **water supply, hydroelectric power generation, and irrigation**.



For aspirants enrolled in best APPSC Group 1 coaching online or APPSC Group 2 coaching online, this reform is a classic example of governance transformation, often asked in APPSC Group 1 mains preparation and APPSC Group 2 mains preparation

Kondaveeti Vagu and Canal System

- Kondaveeti Vagu is the most important natural drainage stream of the Amaravati capital region.
- In South India, the word “Vagu” refers to a seasonal stream or minor tributary that mainly carries runoff during monsoon periods.
- Kondaveeti Vagu originates near Perecharla village in Medikonduru Mandal of Guntur district.
- It collects floodwater from surrounding uplands and agricultural lands and flows through: Lam, Pedaparimi, Neerukonda, Penumaka before joining the Krishna River.
- Its developed stretch is about 23.5 km.
- This stream acts as the primary flood carrier channel of the Amaravati region.
- Instead of covering or diverting it, the government is strengthening and canalising it for controlled discharge.

Such developments are frequently covered in APPSC test series, APPSC Group 1 test series, and APPSC Group 2 mock tests, making them crucial for APPSC Group 1 preparation strategy 2026.

Pala Vagu

Pala Vagu extends for about 16.5 km from Harsichandrapuram to Krishnayapalem and supports floodwater movement toward Penumaka.

Gravity Canal

- The Gravity Canal is about 7.8 km long and extends from Pitchukulapalem to Vykuntapuram.

- It directly discharges water into the Krishna River using natural gravitational flow, reducing pumping dependency.
- Both Pala Vagu and Kondaveeti Vagu converge at Penumaka Reservoir, from where floodwaters are safely discharged.

These topics are important for those using APPSC study material, APPSC Group 1 study material PDF, and APPSC Group 2 study material, especially while practicing APPSC Group 1 previous papers with answers and APPSC Group 2 previous papers with solutions

Reservoir Network in Amaravati

Major Reservoirs

Reservoir	Capacity	Importance
Neerukonda Reservoir	0.4 TMC ft	Largest reservoir and major flood buffer
Penumaka Reservoir	0.1 TMC ft	Junction point where canals converge
Sakhamuru Reservoir	0.03 TMC ft	Local flood balancing and storage

- Neerukonda Reservoir is the largest and most important storage point.
- Penumaka Reservoir becomes critical because both Kondaveeti Vagu and Pala Vagu discharge into it before final water release toward the Krishna River.
- Sakhamuru Reservoir helps in localized flood management.

Future reservoirs planned at:

- Lam
- Pedaparimi
- Vykuntapuram

will further strengthen the capital region's flood



resilience.

Significance for Andhra Pradesh

The Blue City project gives Amaravati a long-term urban planning advantage.

It is significant because it:

- protects the capital from flood disasters
- preserves natural drainage systems
- improves groundwater recharge
- supports eco-tourism and water transport
- creates climate-resilient infrastructure
- strengthens Amaravati's identity as a planned capital
- Many Indian cities suffer repeated flooding because urbanization ignored river systems and natural drains.
- Amaravati is attempting to avoid that mistake by planning development according to geography rather than against it.
- This gives the project high importance for APPSC from geography, disaster management and state development perspectives.

Justice Lisa Gill appointed Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh High Court

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: GS Paper II - Polity | Judiciary | Constitutional Bodies | APPSC State Current Affairs

Important Key Words

For Prelims

- Article 214, Article 217, Article 222,

Article 215, Article 226, High Court, Chief Justice of High Court, Puisne Judge, Collegium System, Transfer of Judges, Writ Jurisdiction, Court of Record

For Mains

- Judicial Appointments, Independence of Judiciary, Collegium System, Federal Judicial Structure, High Court Administration, Constitutional Governance

Why in News?

President Droupadi Murmu has appointed Justice Lisa Gill as the Chief Justice of the Andhra Pradesh High Court.

- She will assume office on April 25, 2026, after the retirement of the present Chief Justice, Justice Dhiraj Singh Thakur, on April 24.
- Justice Lisa Gill was recently transferred from the Punjab and Haryana High Court to the Andhra Pradesh High Court and was serving as a puisne judge before her elevation as Chief Justice.
- Her appointment is significant because it reflects the constitutional process of judicial appointments and the recent practice of transferring judges in advance before their elevation as Chief Justice of a High Court.

This topic is highly important for aspirants preparing through best APPSC Group 1 coaching, best APPSC Group 2 coaching, and APPSC online coaching, as it relates to governance, economy, and administrative reforms—key areas in the APPSC Group 1 syllabus and APPSC Group 2 syllabus in Telugu PDF.



Constitutional Basis of High Court and Chief Justice Appointment

- High Courts are provided under Part VI, Chapter V of the Constitution of India, and Parliament can establish a common High Court for two or more states.
- Under Article 217, the Chief Justice of a High Court is appointed by the President of India.
- The appointment is made after consultation with the Chief Justice of India and the Governor of the concerned state; for other judges, the Chief Justice of that High Court is also consulted.
- A person is eligible if they are a citizen of India and have either served as a judicial officer for at least ten years or practiced as an advocate of a High Court for at least ten years.
- The collegium system, evolved through the Second Judges Case and the Third Judges Case, gives primacy to the judiciary in recommending appointments and transfers.
- Article 222 empowers the President to transfer High Court judges; in practice, judges are often transferred in advance when they are likely to be elevated as Chief Justice to ensure administrative continuity.
- By convention, the Chief Justice of a High Court is appointed from outside the state to reduce local influence and maintain judicial neutrality.
- High Court judges hold office till 62 years, take oath before the Governor, and can be removed only through impeachment by Parliament on grounds of proved misbehaviour or incapacity.

Appointment Process of Chief Justice of High Court

- The Chief Justice of a High Court is appointed under Article 217 of the Constitution of India by the President of India.
- The process begins with the collegium headed by the Chief Justice of India, which recommends a suitable senior High Court judge for elevation as Chief Justice.
- The collegium system, which gives primacy to the judiciary in appointments, has evolved through the Second Judges Case and the Third Judges Case.
- As a convention, the senior-most judge is generally considered for appointment as Chief Justice, subject to suitability and integrity.
- The Union Law Ministry processes the recommendation and forwards it to the President after obtaining the views of the concerned state Governor.
- It is a settled practice to appoint the Chief Justice from outside the concerned High Court to ensure independence and avoid local bias.
- In many cases, the judge is transferred earlier under Article 222 to the concerned High Court so that they gain administrative experience before assuming office as Chief Justice.
- The appointment becomes effective after the President issues the warrant of appointment, and the Chief Justice takes oath before the Governor of the state.

Transfer of Judges and Collegium System

- Article 222 of the Constitution of India provides that a High Court judge can be



transferred from one High Court to another by the President of India.

- Such transfer is made only after consultation with the Chief Justice of India, and this consultation is mandatory.
- The Constitution does not mention the collegium system; it has evolved through judicial decisions like the Second Judges Case and the Third Judges Case.
- Under the collegium system, the recommendation of the Chief Justice of India and senior Supreme Court judges has primacy in matters of transfer and appointment.
- The consent of the judge being transferred is not required.
- The Constitution allows payment of compensatory allowance to a transferred judge.
- Transfer of judges and appointment of Chief Justices from outside the state are used to reduce local influence and ensure judicial independence.
- The Constitution does not specify detailed grounds or procedure for transfer, making it largely dependent on judicial conventions.

Retirement Age

- High Court judges retire at the age of 62 years.
- This is different from Supreme Court judges, who retire at 65 years.

Removal of Judges

- The removal of a High Court judge is provided under Article 217(1)(b) read with Article 124(4) of the Constitution of India.
- A judge can be removed only on two grounds: **proved misbehaviour or incapacity**.
- The removal motion can be introduced in

either House of Parliament.

- The motion must be signed by **at least 100 members in Lok Sabha or 50 members in Rajya Sabha** before being admitted.
- The presiding officer (Speaker/Chairman) may admit or refuse the motion.
- If admitted, a **three-member inquiry committee** is constituted under the Judges Inquiry Act, 1968, consisting of:
 - A Supreme Court judge
 - A Chief Justice of a High Court
 - A distinguished jurist
- The judge has the **right to defend himself/herself** during the investigation.
- If the committee finds the judge guilty, the motion is taken up for voting in both Houses.
- The motion must be passed in each House by a **special majority** (majority of total membership + 2/3rd of members present and voting).
- After passage in both Houses, the order of removal is issued by the President of India.
- The Constitution does **not use the term "impeachment"** for judges.
- The same removal procedure applies to both Supreme Court and High Court judges

Control over Subordinate Courts - Article 235

- The High Court exercises administrative and disciplinary control over subordinate courts in the State.
- This ensures judicial discipline and independence of the lower judiciary.

Significance of the Appointment

The appointment of Justice Lisa Gill highlights the functioning of India's constitutional judicial structure.

It also brings attention to:



- federal nature of judicial administration
- independence of the judiciary
- importance of the collegium system
- constitutional role of the President in judicial appointments
- relationship between constitutional text and judicial conventions

Maharashtra Tiger “Explorer” Returns to East Godavari Again

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: **GS Paper III - Environment | Biodiversity | Wildlife Conservation | Andhra Pradesh Current Affairs**

Important Key Words

For Prelims:

- Papikonda National Park, Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve, NTCA, Godavari River, Eastern Ghats, Tiger Dispersal, Wildlife Protection Act 1972, Schedule I Species, Project Tiger, Core Area, Buffer Area

For Mains:

- Tiger Corridors, Human-Wildlife Conflict, Landscape Conservation, Protected Area Management, Inter-State Wildlife Movement

Why in News?

An adult male tiger named “Explorer,” which dispersed from Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve in Maharashtra, has again entered East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh after crossing the Godavari River.

- The tiger travelled across Maharashtra,

Chhattisgarh, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, covering more than 650 km in 53 days. It was tranquilised near Kurmapuram village on February 6, 2026 and released into Papikonda National Park on February 14 following directions of the National Tiger Conservation Authority.

- Since release, it has crossed the Godavari River twice and returned to East Godavari. Forest officials confirmed that it has not attacked any human during its entire movement.

This topic is highly important for aspirants preparing through best APPSC Group 1 coaching, best APPSC Group 2 coaching, and APPSC online coaching, as it relates to governance, economy, and administrative reforms—key areas in the APPSC Group 1 syllabus and APPSC Group 2 syllabus in Telugu PDF.

Key Facts :

Point	Fact
Origin of tiger	Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve, Maharashtra
Release site	Papikonda National Park, Andhra Pradesh
Tranquilised at	Kurmapuram village, East Godavari
Repeated movement area	Korukonda mandal near Munagala village
Distance travelled	More than 650 km
States covered	Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh
River crossed	Godavari River
Preferred habitat in summer	Streams and water bodies
Human attack reported	No



Special field fact	Tranquilisation avoided inside water bodies
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Papikonda National Park

- It is located in the **East Godavari and West Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh**.
- It spreads over an area of **1012.86 square kilometres**.
- It lies in the **Papikondalu hill range of the Eastern Ghats**.
- It is situated along both the **left and right banks of the Godavari River**.
- It is known for its **distinct river gorge landscape formed by the Godavari flowing through forested hills**.
- It was declared a **Reserved Forest in 1882**.
- It was later notified as a **Wildlife Sanctuary in 1978**.
- It was upgraded to a **National Park in 2008**.
- It is dominated by **tropical moist deciduous forests**.
- It supports important fauna such as **tiger, gaur, and mouse deer**.
- It forms part of the **Godavari riverine ecosystem within the Eastern Ghats**.
- It has been in recent news due to **tiger movement and release under guidelines of the National Tiger Conservation Authority**.

Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve

- Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve is located in Chandrapur district of Maharashtra and is one of India's oldest tiger reserves.
- It is named after Tadoba Lake and the Andhari River. It is famous for high tiger density, dry deciduous forests, and strong corridor connectivity.

Major Big Cats of India

Species	Scientific Name	IUCN Status	Key Habitat in India
Bengal Tiger	<i>Panthera tigris tigris</i>	Endangered	Central India, Sundarbans, Western Ghats, Northeast
Asiatic Lion	<i>Panthera leo persica</i>	Endangered	Gir region, Gujarat
Indian Leopard	<i>Panthera pardus fusca</i>	Vulnerable	Across India
Snow Leopard	<i>Panthera uncia</i>	Vulnerable	Himalayas – Ladakh, Himachal, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Arunachal
Clouded Leopard	<i>Neofelis nebulosa</i>	Vulnerable	Northeast India

Godavari River

- It originates from **Trimbakeshwar in Maharashtra** and flows eastward into the **Bay of Bengal**, forming a **large delta in Andhra Pradesh**.
- It flows through **Maharashtra, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, and Andhra Pradesh**, creating an **inter-state river basin**.
- In Andhra Pradesh, it passes through the **Papikondalu (Eastern Ghats) region** and the **Papikonda National Park** landscape.
- It forms a **riverine forest corridor** in the Papikondalu region, with **continuous forest cover along both banks**.
- It has been observed that a tiger has **crossed**



the river multiple times, indicating that wide rivers do not always act as absolute barriers.

- The tiger movement has been recorded **along water bodies and forest patches**, especially during **summer conditions**.
- The riverine stretch has facilitated **long-distance dispersal of the tiger across Maharashtra-Telangana-Chhattisgarh-Andhra Pradesh**.

Tiger Conservation Framework

- Tiger receives the highest legal protection in India.
- Under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, tiger is listed under **Schedule I**, which provides maximum legal protection.
- **Project Tiger** was launched in 1973 for ensuring viable tiger populations through habitat protection and scientific management.
- Tiger reserves follow a two-zone model:
- **Core Area** - strictly protected zone with minimal human interference
- **Buffer Area** - regulated-use zone around the core for coexistence with local communities

Tent Cities Planned at 21 Godavari Temples for Pushkarams

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: **GS Paper I - Indian Culture | Geography | Society**

Important Key Words

For Prelims:

- Godavari Pushkaram, Adi Pushkaram, Antya Pushkaram, Bridge Lanka,

Rajamahendravaram, Konaseema, Godavari Delta, Lanka Islands, Homestay Policy, Riverfront Development

For Mains:

- Religious Tourism, Pilgrimage Governance, River-Based Festivals, Crowd Management, Sustainable Tourism, Cultural Geography

Why in News?

- The Andhra Pradesh government has approved the establishment of **tent cities at 21 temple locations situated along the banks of the Godavari River** for the upcoming **Godavari Pushkarams 2027**.
- The largest tent city is planned at **Bridge Lanka in Rajamahendravaram**, which is being developed under the Godavari Riverfront Project.
- Alongside this, the State government has also set a target of identifying nearly **50,000 homestay rooms across Andhra Pradesh over the next five years**, beginning with the Konaseema region, to accommodate pilgrims and tourists during the Pushkaram period.

Godavari Pushkaram and its Religious Basis

- Godavari Pushkaram is one of the most important river festivals of South India and is celebrated when **Jupiter (Brihaspati)** enters the zodiac sign associated with the Godavari River.
- The festival follows a **12-year cycle**, corresponding to Jupiter's orbital movement through the zodiac signs.



- Unlike fixed calendar festivals, Pushkaram is determined by planetary transit and is therefore an astronomical-religious event.
- Devotees believe that taking a holy dip in the river during Pushkaram helps in spiritual purification, removal of sins, and blessings for ancestors through rituals such as tarpan and pind daan.
- The first twelve days are called **Adi Pushkaram**, considered the most auspicious period, while the last twelve days are called **Antya Pushkaram**, which also holds ritual significance.

For aspirants enrolled in best APPSC Group 1 coaching online or APPSC Group 2 coaching online, this reform is a classic example of governance transformation, often asked in APPSC Group 1 mains preparation and APPSC Group 2 mains preparation

Twenty-One Temple Locations Along the Godavari

- The government decision specifically focuses on creating temporary accommodation facilities near **21 major temples located on the banks of the Godavari River**, where pilgrim movement is expected to be highest.
- These temple zones are spread across major Pushkaram districts including East Godavari, West Godavari, Konaseema and surrounding Godavari belt regions.
- These temple locations are significant because pilgrims usually combine ritual bathing at river ghats with darshan at nearby temples.
- This creates concentrated crowd pressure not only at bathing ghats but also at temple complexes.

- Therefore, tent cities are being designed as integrated pilgrim accommodation zones rather than only temporary shelters

Bridge Lanka: Largest Tent City for Pushkaram

- The biggest tent city is proposed at **Bridge Lanka island in Rajamahendravaram**, which is one of the most important spiritual centres along the Godavari.
- Bridge Lanka is a riverine island formed due to sediment deposition in the Godavari delta system.
- It is strategically important because it lies close to major ghats, temple access points and transport routes.
- The location is being developed under the broader Godavari Riverfront Project to support tourism, pilgrim movement and riverfront infrastructure.
- Because of its size and location, Bridge Lanka is expected to become the central accommodation hub for Pushkarams 2027.

Homestay Model and Konaseema Region

- The government has launched a parallel **homestay initiative targeting 50,000 rooms** across the State.
- The process began from the **Konaseema region**, which is culturally and geographically one of the most important parts of the Godavari delta.
- Traditional houses and heritage homes are being identified and encouraged to function as tourism-based homestays.
- This model is especially useful in rural and semi-urban areas where hotel infrastructure is limited.



Godavari River

- Godavari River is the **second longest river in India after the Ganga** and is often called the **Dakshin Ganga**.
- It originates from **Trimbakeshwar in Nashik district of Maharashtra** in the Western Ghats.
- It flows eastward through Maharashtra, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh before draining into the Bay of Bengal.
- Its total length is approximately **1465 kilometres**.
- As it enters Andhra Pradesh, the river becomes central to irrigation, pilgrimage, inland fisheries and cultural identity.
- Because Pushkaram is river-specific, understanding the geography of Godavari is essential for prelims.

Tributaries and Delta Formation

- Important left-bank tributaries of the Godavari include **Indravati and Sabari**, while important right-bank tributaries include **Pravara, Purna and Manjira**.
- The Sabari River is particularly important because it joins the Godavari near tribal and forest regions of the Andhra-Odisha border.
- Before entering the Bay of Bengal, Godavari forms a broad and fertile delta in Andhra Pradesh.
- This delta supports extensive agriculture, especially paddy cultivation, aquaculture and coconut plantations.
- The delta also creates sediment-based islands called **Lanka**, which are common in East and West Godavari districts.
- Bridge Lanka is one such example.

Rajamahendravaram and Pushkaram Administration

- Rajamahendravaram is the principal administrative and pilgrimage centre

during Godavari Pushkarams.

- It serves as the main location for river ghats, crowd movement, tourism infrastructure and public administration.
- The city's location on the banks of the Godavari makes it the primary focal point for ritual bathing.
- Pushkaram management here requires coordination between tourism, police, irrigation, sanitation, health and transport departments.
- This makes Rajamahendravaram not just a pilgrimage site but also a major governance case study.

Lisa Gill Takes Charge as Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh High Court

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Relevance: **GS Paper II - Polity | Judiciary | Constitutional Bodies**
GS Paper II - Governance | High Courts | Judicial Appointments

Important Key Words

For Prelims:

- Article 214, Article 217, Article 222, Article 226, Article 215, Article 235, High Court Chief Justice, Puisne Judge, Collegium System, Warrant of Appointment, Transfer of Judges

For Mains:

- Judicial Independence, Collegium System, High Court Administration, Federal Judiciary, Judicial Appointments and Transfers

Why in News?

- Justice Lisa Gill has assumed charge as the Chief Justice of the Andhra Pradesh High Court after being sworn in by Governor S. Abdul Nazeer at Lok Bhavan.
- She took office following the retirement of the previous Chief Justice, Justice Dhiraj Singh Thakur. Her appointment is significant because it reflects the constitutional process of appointment of High Court Chief Justices and also highlights the judicial convention of transferring judges in advance before elevation as Chief Justice.
- This development is important for prelims because questions are frequently asked on High Court appointments, tenure, retirement age, transfer of judges, and writ jurisdiction.

Constitutional Position of High Courts

- The Constitution of India provides for a High Court for each State under Article 214.
- A High Court is the highest judicial authority at the State level and functions as the principal civil and criminal court of original and appellate jurisdiction.
- Some High Courts may serve more than one State or Union Territory. For example, the Punjab and Haryana High Court serves both Punjab and Haryana as well as Chandigarh.
- The Andhra Pradesh High Court functions as the highest constitutional court for the State of Andhra Pradesh.
- High Courts are an essential part of India's integrated judicial system and act as the link between the Supreme Court and subordinate courts.

Appointment of the Chief Justice of a High Court

Aspect	Key Points
Constitutional Provision	Article 217 of the Constitution of India
Appointing Authority	President of India
Consultation	Chief Justice of India (CJI) and Governor of the State
Actual Practice	Collegium System (CJI + senior Supreme Court judges recommend names)
Final Step	President issues Warrant of Appointment
Eligibility	Citizen of India; 10 years as High Court judge OR 10 years as High Court advocate
Tenure	Till 62 years of age
Removal	Only through impeachment by Parliament
Key Idea	Ensures judicial independence through consultative appointment process

Oath of Office

- After appointment, the Chief Justice takes the oath of office and secrecy before entering office.
- The oath is administered by the Governor of the State.

The Chief Justice swears to:

- bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution
- uphold the sovereignty and integrity of India
- duly and faithfully perform duties without fear or favour, affection or ill will



- This oath is prescribed under the Third Schedule of the Constitution.
- In the present case, Governor S. Abdul Nazeer administered the oath to Justice Lisa Gill.

Transfer of Judges and Article 222

- Before becoming Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh High Court, Justice Lisa Gill had been transferred from the Punjab and Haryana High Court.
- This transfer is governed by Article 222 of the Constitution.
- Under Article 222, the President may transfer a judge from one High Court to another after consultation with the Chief Justice of India.
- A recent judicial convention is that a judge likely to become Chief Justice of a High Court is transferred in advance so that the incoming Chief Justice becomes familiar with the administration and functioning of that court.
- This is not a constitutional requirement but an important administrative practice.

Meaning of Puisne Judge

- Before assuming office as Chief Justice, Justice Lisa Gill served as a puisne judge.
- A puisne judge means a regular judge of a High Court who is not the Chief Justice.

Tenure and Removal

- A judge of a High Court, including the Chief Justice, holds office until the age of 62 years.
- This is an important prelims fact because Supreme Court judges retire at the age of 65 years.
- A High Court judge can resign by writing to the President of India.
- Removal is possible only through

impeachment by Parliament on grounds of proved misbehaviour or incapacity.

The removal process is the same as that of a Supreme Court judge and ensures judicial independence.

Powers and Functions of the Chief Justice

The Chief Justice of a High Court performs both judicial and administrative functions.

Judicial Functions include:

- allocation of cases to benches
- constitution of division benches and full benches
- hearing of important constitutional and public interest cases
- supervision of judicial discipline within the High Court

Administrative Functions include:

- control over High Court administration
- management of judicial roster
- supervision of registry and court administration
- administrative control over subordinate courts under Article 235
- coordination of judicial reforms and digitalisation
- The Chief Justice therefore acts as both a senior constitutional judge and the administrative head of the State judiciary.

Writ Jurisdiction under Article 226

One of the most important powers of the High Court is its writ jurisdiction under Article 226.

The High Court can issue writs for:

- enforcement of Fundamental Rights
- and also for other legal rights
- This makes Article 226 broader than Article 32 of the Supreme Court, which is limited mainly to Fundamental Rights.



Court of Record and Supervisory Role

Under Article 215, every High Court is a Court of Record.

This means:

- its records have evidentiary value
- it has the power to punish for contempt of itself

Under Article 235, the High Court exercises control over subordinate courts in the State.

This includes posting, promotion, discipline, and supervision of district and subordinate judiciary.

Strategic FDI, Ease of Doing Business, Technology Corridors, Digital Sovereignty, Coastal Infrastructure-led Development

Why in News?

- Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu laid the foundation stone for Google's 1-Gigawatt hyperscale AI data centre at Tarluvada near Visakhapatnam.
- The project involves an investment of ₹1.35 lakh crore across 601.4 acres and is considered one of the largest single Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) projects in India.
- The project forms part of Google's larger \$15 billion investment commitment to Andhra Pradesh and is expected to transform Visakhapatnam into a major international digital gateway.
- The State government has described it as a major milestone in making Andhra Pradesh a national leader in AI, cloud computing, and digital infrastructure.

This topic is highly important for aspirants preparing through best APPSC Group 1 coaching, best APPSC Group 2 coaching, and APPSC online coaching, as it relates to governance, economy, and administrative reforms—key areas in the APPSC Group 1 syllabus and APPSC Group 2 syllabus in Telugu PDF.

Chandrababu Naidu Lays Foundation for Google's ₹1.35 Lakh Crore AI Data Centre in Visakhapatnam

Source: **The Hindu**

Relevance: **GS Paper III - Economy | Infrastructure | Science and Technology**

GS Paper III - FDI | Digital Economy | Data Centres | Artificial Intelligence

GS Paper II - Centre-State Investment Cooperation

Important Keywords for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims:

- Hyperscale Data Centre, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), Submarine Cable Landing Station, Cloud Infrastructure, Raiden Infotech, AdaniConneX, Airtel Nextra, Make in India, South Coast Railway Zone, Visakhapatnam Port City

For Mains:

- Digital Infrastructure, AI Economy,

What is the Google AI Data Centre Project?

- The project is a 1-Gigawatt hyperscale AI data centre being developed at Tarluvada on the outskirts of Visakhapatnam.
- It will be managed by Google's subsidiary Raiden Infotech in partnership with Adani Infra.



- Other associated partners include AdaniConneX and Airtel Nxtra as part of the wider Google-Adani-Airtel digital infrastructure ecosystem.

The project will provide:

- large-scale cloud infrastructure
- AI computing support
- hyperscale data storage
- cybersecurity systems
- advanced server networks
- global digital connectivity support
- It is designed to support India's growing artificial intelligence ecosystem and high-volume digital operations.
- The State government plans to build a larger 6.5-Gigawatt digital hub over the long term, with this project acting as the anchor investment.

For aspirants enrolled in best APPSC Group 1 coaching online or APPSC Group 2 coaching online, this reform is a classic example of governance transformation, often asked in APPSC Group 1 mains preparation and APPSC Group 2 mains preparation

Why Visakhapatnam was Chosen?

- Visakhapatnam has major geographical and strategic advantages for such a project.
- It is a major coastal city on the Bay of Bengal with strong port connectivity and available industrial land.
- Its coastal location makes it ideal for an international submarine cable landing station, which is critical for global internet connectivity and large-scale cloud operations.
- Unlike inland cities, coastal cities can directly connect undersea digital communication networks with global markets.

The city also offers:

- stable power availability
- water supply for cooling systems
- industrial infrastructure
- proximity to ports
- connectivity to Southeast Asia and global digital routes

This makes Visakhapatnam suitable for becoming a global AI and data infrastructure hub.

Such developments are frequently covered in APPSC test series, APPSC Group 1 test series, and APPSC Group 2 mock tests, making them crucial for APPSC Group 1 preparation strategy 2026.

Strategic Importance of Submarine Cable Landing Station

- A submarine cable landing station is the point where undersea fibre optic cables connect a country to the global internet network.

The proposed undersea cable landing system in Visakhapatnam will directly connect the city to:

- Australia
- U.S. West Coast
- West Asia
- Cape of Good Hope route

This reduces dependence on existing digital gateways like Mumbai and Chennai.

It improves:

- international data transfer speed
- cloud reliability
- cybersecurity resilience
- global internet redundancy
- strategic digital sovereignty

This is one of the most important prelims aspects of the news

Hyperscale Data Centres: Meaning and Significance

- A hyperscale data centre is an extremely large data centre designed for massive



computing, storage, and cloud services.

- These are used by companies like Google, Amazon, Microsoft, and Meta.

They support:

- artificial intelligence models
- cloud computing
- search engines
- digital payments
- government digital systems
- cybersecurity infrastructure

A 1-Gigawatt data centre is exceptionally large and places the Visakhapatnam project among the biggest in Asia.

Such centres require:

- very high electricity supply
- advanced cooling systems
- reliable fibre connectivity
- strong cyber defence
- uninterrupted operational reliability

This is why energy infrastructure becomes central to AI growth.

As Jeet Adani stated: "AI may be written in code, but it runs on electricity."

These topics are important for those using APPSC study material, APPSC Group 1 study material PDF, and APPSC Group 2 study material, especially while practicing APPSC Group 1 previous papers with answers and APPSC Group 2 previous papers with solutions

Economic and Employment Impact

The project is expected to create thousands of direct and indirect jobs.

Major employment areas include:

Sector	Likely Employment Area
Artificial Intelligence	AI engineers, model operations
Cloud Operations	Server management, cloud administration
Cybersecurity	Network protection and

	digital security
Data Science	Data handling and analytics
Power Systems	Energy infrastructure management
Cooling Technology	Thermal systems and maintenance
Server Manufacturing	Hardware ecosystem
Networking	Fibre systems and digital infrastructure

These examples are frequently asked in exams and are well covered in APPSC Group 1 coaching Telugu, APPSC Group 2 online coaching Telugu, and APPSC coaching in Hyderabad.

Andhra Pradesh as an Emerging Digital Hub

- The State government is positioning Andhra Pradesh as India's next major technology corridor.
- Visakhapatnam is being projected as:
- "Steel City to AI Hub City"
- Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw compared this transition to the earlier development of Cyberabad in Hyderabad and stated that Visakhapatnam could become "AI-patnam."
- This reflects a shift from traditional industrial growth to digital infrastructure-led development.
- The project also strengthens North Andhra's regional development and supports balanced state-level economic growth.

FDI and Make in India

This project is one of the largest single FDI investments in India.

It reflects:

- investor confidence in Andhra Pradesh



- strategic global technology partnerships
- trusted supply chain development
- digital infrastructure localisation

It also supports the Make in India programme by encouraging:

- server manufacturing
- electronics ecosystem growth
- digital infrastructure manufacturing
- trusted technology supply chains

Andhra Pradesh to Launch First-of-its-Kind Mushroom Mission

Source: [BusinessLine / The Hindu](#)

Relevance: **GS Paper III - Agriculture | Economy | Rural Development | Agri-value Chains**

Important Keywords for Prelims and Mains

For Prelims:

- Milky Mushroom, Paddy Straw Mushroom, Button Mushroom, Self Help Groups (SHGs), Agri Diversification, High-Value Crops

For Mains:

- Agricultural Diversification, Rural Livelihoods, Value Chain Development, Export-Oriented Agriculture, Women Empowerment

Why in News?

- The Government of Andhra Pradesh, led by N. Chandrababu Naidu, is preparing to launch a “Mushroom Mission” with an estimated investment of ₹13,000 crore.
- The initiative aims to transform the State

into India’s largest mushroom producer and create a new agri-based economic ecosystem focused on high-value crops.

What is the Mushroom Mission?

- The Mushroom Mission is a large-scale agricultural diversification programme designed to promote mushroom cultivation as a commercial activity across Andhra Pradesh.
- The mission proposes the establishment of around **1.62 lakh mushroom production units**, primarily small and medium-scale units spread across approximately 5,000 sq ft each.
- The initiative is structured to promote decentralised production, linking cultivation with processing, storage, and marketing.
- The government also proposes to classify mushrooms as agricultural produce, which will enable farmers to access subsidies, institutional credit, and market support systems.

Production Targets and National Context

- The mission aims to increase annual mushroom production in Andhra Pradesh to **67,500 tonnes**, surpassing the current leading producer state.
- At present, **Bihar** is the largest mushroom producer in India with approximately 45,000 tonnes of annual output.
- This shift indicates a strategic move by Andhra Pradesh to enter high-value agricultural markets and compete at the national level.

Institutional and Financial Framework

The total investment proposed under the mission is ₹13,000 crore.



Out of this, approximately ₹5,184 crore will be provided as subsidy support, accounting for nearly 40% of the total cost.

This subsidy will be jointly funded by the Central and State governments.

The mission will involve:

- development of production infrastructure
- support for small and medium enterprises
- establishment of processing units
- strengthening supply chains

This reflects a model similar to earlier successful sectoral missions like aquaculture and millets.

Role of SHGs and Rural Economy

The mission plans to leverage Andhra Pradesh’s strong network of **Self Help Groups (SHGs)**.

SHGs will play a central role in:

- promoting mushroom cultivation at the grassroots level
- enabling women participation in agriculture
- facilitating micro-enterprises
- improving rural household incomes

This aligns the mission with broader goals of women empowerment and inclusive rural development.

Mushroom Varieties and Agro-Climatic Suitability

The mission focuses on commercially viable mushroom varieties suitable for Indian climatic conditions:

Mushroom Type	Key Feature	Suitability
Milky Mushroom	Heat-resistant	Ideal for tropical climates like Andhra Pradesh
Paddy Straw Mushroom	Fast-growing	Suitable for paddy-growing regions
Button Mushroom	High market	Requires controlled

demand	environment
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These varieties ensure both climatic adaptability and market viability.

Agricultural Significance of Mushroom

Aspect	Key Fact (Prelims-Oriented)
Nutrient Recycling	Mushrooms decompose lignin and cellulose → convert agro-waste into humus
Waste Utilization	Grown on paddy straw, wheat straw, bagasse, sawdust (low-cost substrates)
Soil Health	Spent mushroom substrate (SMS) improves soil organic carbon and microbial activity
Biofertilizer Role	Certain fungi enhance nutrient availability (especially phosphorus solubilization)
Climate Resilience	Requires less land, water, and time compared to traditional crops
Crop Diversification	Ideal for small and marginal farmers; indoor cultivation possible
Income Source	High value crop with short production cycle (30–60 days)
Nutritional Security	Rich in protein (20–30% dry weight), vitamins (B-complex), and minerals
Integrated Farming	Can be linked with poultry, dairy, and vermicomposting systems
Export Potential	Button mushroom dominates global trade; In