



ASPIRE with RAM IAS

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Guiding Dreams, Empowering Future
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EXCLUSIVE CURRENT AFFAIRS BULLETIN

INDIA–SEYCHELLES RELATIONS

Background

- Prime Minister's State Visit to Seychelles marked 50 years of diplomatic relations and strengthened cooperation in maritime security, digital connectivity, development partnership and the Blue Economy.



Historical Relations

- Diplomatic relations were established in 1976.
- India and Seychelles share close historical, cultural and people-to-people ties.
- Seychelles is an important partner in India's Indian Ocean strategy.

Strategic Importance of Seychelles

- Located in the western Indian Ocean.
- Lies close to important Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs).
- Important for maritime surveillance, anti-piracy operations and regional security.

Major Outcomes of Recent Engagement

- Agreements in digital payments, health, education, maritime cooperation and capacity building.
- Development assistance and infrastructure support.



- Cooperation in renewable energy and disaster resilience.
- Strengthening defence and coast guard cooperation.

Areas of Cooperation

- Maritime Security
- Blue Economy
- Defence and Capacity Building
- Digital Public Infrastructure
- Trade and Investment

- Tourism
- Healthcare
- Education
- Space and Climate Cooperation

Defence Cooperation

- Joint maritime surveillance.
- Hydrographic cooperation.
- Training of Seychelles defence personnel.
- Supply of patrol vessels, aircraft support and coastal surveillance assistance.

Blue Economy

- Sustainable fisheries.
- Marine biodiversity conservation.
- Ocean-based economic development.
- Climate-resilient island development.

Importance for India

- Supports SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region).
- Advances MAHASAGAR vision.
- Strengthens India's role in the Indo-Pacific.
- Counters piracy and maritime threats.

- Enhances regional connectivity.

Challenges

- Climate change impacts on island nations.
- Maritime security threats.
- Geopolitical competition in the Indian Ocean.
- Limited trade volume.

Way Forward

- Expand economic cooperation.
- Strengthen maritime domain awareness.
- Promote renewable energy and climate



resilience.

- Enhance digital connectivity and people-to-people exchanges.

Conclusion

India–Seychelles relations have evolved into a comprehensive strategic partnership centred on maritime security, sustainable development and the Blue Economy. The partnership strengthens India's vision of a secure, prosperous and inclusive Indian Ocean Region while supporting Seychelles' devel-

opment priorities.

Prelims PYQ

Q. Which of the following best describes the significance of Seychelles for India?

- (a) It is located in the Arctic Ocean.
- (b) It is strategically located in the Indian Ocean and is important for maritime security.
- (c) It shares a land boundary with India.
- (d) It is a member of BIMSTEC.

Answer: (b)

Background

- Venezuela experienced a rare seismic doublet in June 2026 when two powerful earthquakes of magnitude 7.2 and 7.5 struck only about 39 seconds apart.
- The event occurred along the Caribbean Plate–South American Plate boundary and highlighted the importance of earthquake science and disaster preparedness.

What is a Doublet Earthquake?

- A seismic doublet is a rare event in which two earthquakes of nearly equal magnitude occur close together in both time and location.
- Unlike a normal earthquake sequence,

the second event is not merely an aftershock but another major earthquake.

Why Do Doublet Earthquakes Occur?

- Stress released by the first earthquake rapidly transfers to a nearby fault.
- The neighbouring fault ruptures before crustal stress stabilises.
- Usually associated with complex fault systems.

Tectonic Setting of Venezuela

- Located along the boundary of the Caribbean Plate and South American Plate.
- Dominated by strike-slip faulting.
- Highly earthquake-prone region.

Difference Between Mainshock–Aftershock & Doublet

- Aftershocks are smaller than the main earthquake.
- In a doublet, both earthquakes are of comparable magnitude.
- Both contribute significantly to destruction.

Impacts

- Greater structural damage due to repeated strong shaking.
- Increased casualties and infrastructure losses.
- More difficult rescue operations.
- Higher probability of landslides and secondary hazards.
- Economic disruption and displacement.

Doublet Earthquake in Venezuela



Disaster Management Lessons

- Earthquake-resistant construction.
- Seismic microzonation.
- Early warning and public awareness.
- Rapid search and rescue.
- Community preparedness.

India and Earthquake Preparedness

- National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA).
- Bureau of Indian Standards seismic building codes.
- National Centre for Seismology.
- Earthquake zoning map.

Important Geological Concepts

- Epicentre
- Focus (Hypocentre)
- Strike-slip fault
- Plate boundaries
- Seismic waves



- Liquefaction
- Aftershocks

Way Forward

- Improve earthquake monitoring.
- Promote resilient infrastructure.

- Strengthen international cooperation in seismology.
- Enhance public awareness and preparedness.

Conclusion

The Venezuela doublet earthquake demonstrates how complex tectonic interactions can generate two destructive earthquakes within seconds. It highlights the need for scientific monitoring, resilient infrastructure and effective disaster management to reduce loss of life and property.

Prelims PYQ

Q. Which one of the following is the primary cause of earthquakes?

- (a) Ocean currents
- (b) Movement of tectonic plates
- (c) Volcanic ash
- (d) Atmospheric pressure

Answer: (b) Movement of tectonic plates

Background

- The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched the SUMAN Roadmap 2030 to accelerate improvements in maternal and newborn healthcare.
- The roadmap aims to reduce preventable maternal and neonatal deaths and help India achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 by 2030.
- It builds upon the Surakshit Matritva Aashwasan (SUMAN) initiative and adopts a data-driven, outcome-oriented approach.

About SUMAN

- SUMAN stands for Surakshit Matritva Aashwasan.
- Launched by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- Ensures respectful, dignified and free healthcare services to every pregnant woman, newborn and sick infant in public health facilities.

Objectives of SUMAN Roadmap 2030

- Improve maternal survival.
- Reduce neonatal mortality.
- Ensure universal access to quality maternal and newborn care.
- Strengthen referral systems and emergency obstetric care.
- Improve accountability and

grievance redressal.

- Promote equitable healthcare across States and UTs.

Major Components

- Data-driven planning and monitoring.
- Identification of high-burden districts.
- Centres of Excellence for maternal and newborn care.
- Strengthened referral transport.
- Digital monitoring systems.
- Centralised SUMAN Call Centre.
- Capacity building of healthcare workers.
- Better quality assurance in public health facilities.

Need for the Roadmap

- Persistent maternal and neonatal deaths.
- Regional disparities in healthcare.
- Shortage of skilled health personnel.
- Need for timely referral and emergency care.
- Improved monitoring and accountability.

Related Government Initiatives

- Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA).
- Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY).





- Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK).
- POSHAN Abhiyaan.
- LaQshya Programme.
- Ayushman Bharat.

Importance

- Strengthens public healthcare.
- Supports SDG 3 targets.
- Promotes institutional deliveries.
- Improves newborn survival.
- Enhances quality of care.
- Reduces health inequalities.

Challenges

- Uneven healthcare infrastructure.
- Human resource shortages.
- Rural accessibility issues.
- Financial and administrative constraints.
- Data quality and implementation gaps.

Way Forward

- Strengthen primary healthcare.
- Improve digital health systems.
- Expand skilled birth attendance.
- Increase community awareness.
- Improve nutrition and antenatal care.

- Enhance Centre-State coordination.

Conclusion

SUMAN Roadmap 2030 provides a comprehensive framework to improve maternal and newborn health through better infrastructure, skilled healthcare, digital monitoring and accountability. Successful implementation will strengthen India's public health system and accelerate progress towards universal, equitable and quality healthcare.

Prelims PYQ

Q. Which of the following schemes aims to provide assured, dignified and quality healthcare services to pregnant women, mothers and newborns in public health facilities?

- (a) Ayushman Bharat
- (b) Surakshit Matritva Aashwasan (SUMAN)
- (c) National Health Mission
- (d) Janani Suraksha Yojana

Answer: (b)

Rakhigarhi Skeletons Transferred for Scientific Research

Background

- Human skeletal remains excavated from Rakhigarhi, Haryana, have been transferred by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to the Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI) under a Memorandum of Understanding for advanced multidisciplinary scientific research.

About Rakhigarhi

- Located in Hisar district, Haryana.
- Largest known Harappan (Indus Valley) site in India and among the largest in South Asia.
- Represents Early Harappan and Mature Harappan phases.
- Excavations revealed planned settlements, drainage systems, craft production, cemeteries and burial practices.

Recent Development

- During the 2025–26 excavation season, eight burials were discovered at Mound No. 7.
- Three complete skeletons and skeletal fragments have been transferred to AnSI's ancient human skeletal repository for detailed analysis.



Scientific Studies to be Conducted

- Ancient DNA (aDNA) analysis.
- Stable isotope analysis.
- Osteological examination.
- Palaeopathology.
- Environmental reconstruction.
- Facial reconstruction and ancestry studies.

Importance of Research

- Understand ancestry and population genetics.
- Trace migration patterns.
- Study diet and nutrition.
- Identify diseases and health conditions.
- Examine burial customs and social organisation.
- Improve understanding of the Indus Valley Civilization.

Institutions Involved

- Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).
- Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI).
- Ministry of Culture.

About Anthropological Survey of India

- Established in 1945.
- Headquarters: Kolkata.
- Conducts anthropological and bio-cultural research in India.

Importance for India

- Promotes scientific archaeology.
- Preserves cultural heritage.
- Encourages interdisciplinary research.
- Enhances understanding of ancient

civilizations.

Challenges

- Preservation of fragile remains.
- DNA degradation due to climate.
- Need for advanced laboratory infrastructure.
- Ethical handling of human remains.

Conclusion

The transfer of Rakhigarhi skeletons for advanced scientific research marks an important step in understanding the biological, cultural and social history of the Harappan Civilization. Modern techniques such as ancient DNA and isotope analysis can provide valuable evidence on ancestry, migration, health and lifestyle

while strengthening India's archaeological research ecosystem.

Prelims PYQ

Q. Consider the following Harappan sites:

1. Rakhigarhi
2. Dholavira
3. Lothal

Which of the above are located in India?

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

Answer: (d) 1, 2 and 3

FCRA Amendment Rules, 2026



Background

- Ministry of Home Affairs notified the FCRA Amendment Rules, 2026 to strengthen transparency and compliance for organisations receiving foreign contributions.
- The amendments introduce stricter disclosures, activity-wise reporting and expanded accountability of office bearers.

About FCRA

- Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 regulates acceptance and utilisation of foreign contributions.

- Objective: Protect sovereignty, integrity, security of the State, public interest and democratic institutions.
- Administered by Ministry of Home Affairs.
- Registration remains valid for 5 years and requires renewal.

Important Amendments

- Detailed declaration of activities.
- Mandatory disclosure of States/UTs where foreign funds will be utilised.
- Expanded definition of Key Functionary.
- Disclosure of websites, social media handles and publications.

- Improved reporting and monitoring of foreign-funded activities.

Importance

- Prevents misuse of foreign funds.
- Improves transparency.
- Enhances accountability.
- Strengthens national security.
- Builds confidence in the NGO sector.

Concerns

- Higher compliance burden.
- Reduced flexibility for NGOs.
- Need to balance regulation with freedom of association.

Way Forward

- Risk-based regulation.
- Simplified digital compliance.
- Capacity building.
- Transparent approvals.
- Balanced regulation.

Conclusion

The FCRA Amendment Rules, 2026 seek to improve transparency and accountability in the use of foreign contributions while safeguarding national interests. Their long-term success depends on balancing regulatory oversight with an enabling environment for genuine civil society organisations.

Prelims PYQ

Q. Which Ministry administers the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010?

- (a) Ministry of Home Affairs
- (b) Ministry of Finance
- (c) Ministry of Corporate Affairs
- (d) Ministry of Law and Justice

Answer: (a) Ministry of Home Affairs

Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar (PMRBP)

Background

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development invited nominations for the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar (PMRBP) 2026.
- The award recognises exceptional achievements of children and encourages excellence, innovation and social responsibility.

About PMRBP

- India's highest civilian honour for children.
- Administered by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- Recognises children with outstanding achievements at the national and international level.

Objectives

- Encourage excellence among children.
- Recognise talent and innovation.
- Promote leadership and social responsibility.
- Inspire other children to contribute positively to society.

Eligibility

- Open to children who satisfy the prescribed age criteria notified by the Government.
- Individuals as well as institutions may submit nominations through the official portal.

Areas of Recognition

- Bravery
- Social Service
- Environment
- Innovation
- Science and Technology
- Sports
- Arts and Culture

Selection Process

- Online nominations.
- Scrutiny by the Ministry.
- Evaluation by a National Level Committee.
- Final approval by the Government of India.

Importance

- Encourages holistic development.



- Promotes child participation in nation-building.
- Recognises extraordinary talent.
- Supports India's demographic dividend.

Constitutional & Legal Linkages

- Article 21A – Right to Education.
- Article 39(f) – Protection and development of children.
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- National Policy for Children.

Challenges

- Need for wider awareness.
- Equal access for rural and tribal children.
- Transparent evaluation.
- Better outreach to disadvantaged groups.

Way Forward

- Increase awareness in schools.
- Promote digital access for nominations.
- Encourage inclusive participation.
- Strengthen mentorship for awardees.

Conclusion

The Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar celebrates the achievements of young citizens and promotes a culture of innovation, courage and public service. It also reflects India's commitment to nurturing child talent and inclusive development.

Prelims PYQ

Q. Which Ministry administers the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar?

- (a) Ministry of Education
- (b) Ministry of Women and Child Development
- (c) Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
- (d) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

Answer: (b) Ministry of Women and Child Development

Passport is Not Proof of Citizenship

Background

- Recent judicial observations reiterated that possession of an Indian passport does not by itself constitute conclusive proof of Indian citizenship.
- A passport is primarily a travel document issued under the Passports Act, 1967.

Meaning of Passport

- Official travel document issued by the Government of India.
- Facilitates international travel and establishes identity for travel purposes.
- Issued by the Ministry of External Affairs.

Why Passport is Not Conclusive Proof of Citizenship

- Passport is issued based on documents submitted by the applicant.
- If citizenship claims are later found to be incorrect, the passport may be cancelled or impounded.
- Determination of citizenship is governed by the Citizenship Act, 1955 and the Constitution, not merely by possession of a passport.

Citizenship in India

Constitutional Provisions

- Articles 5 to 11 deal with citizenship at the commencement of the

Constitution.

- Parliament has power to regulate citizenship.

Citizenship Act, 1955

Modes of acquiring citizenship:

- By birth
- By descent
- By registration
- By naturalisation
- By incorporation of territory

Loss of Citizenship

- Renunciation
- Termination
- Deprivation

Passports Act, 1967

- Regulates issue, refusal, impounding and revocation of passports.
- Does not itself confer citizenship.

Importance of the Issue

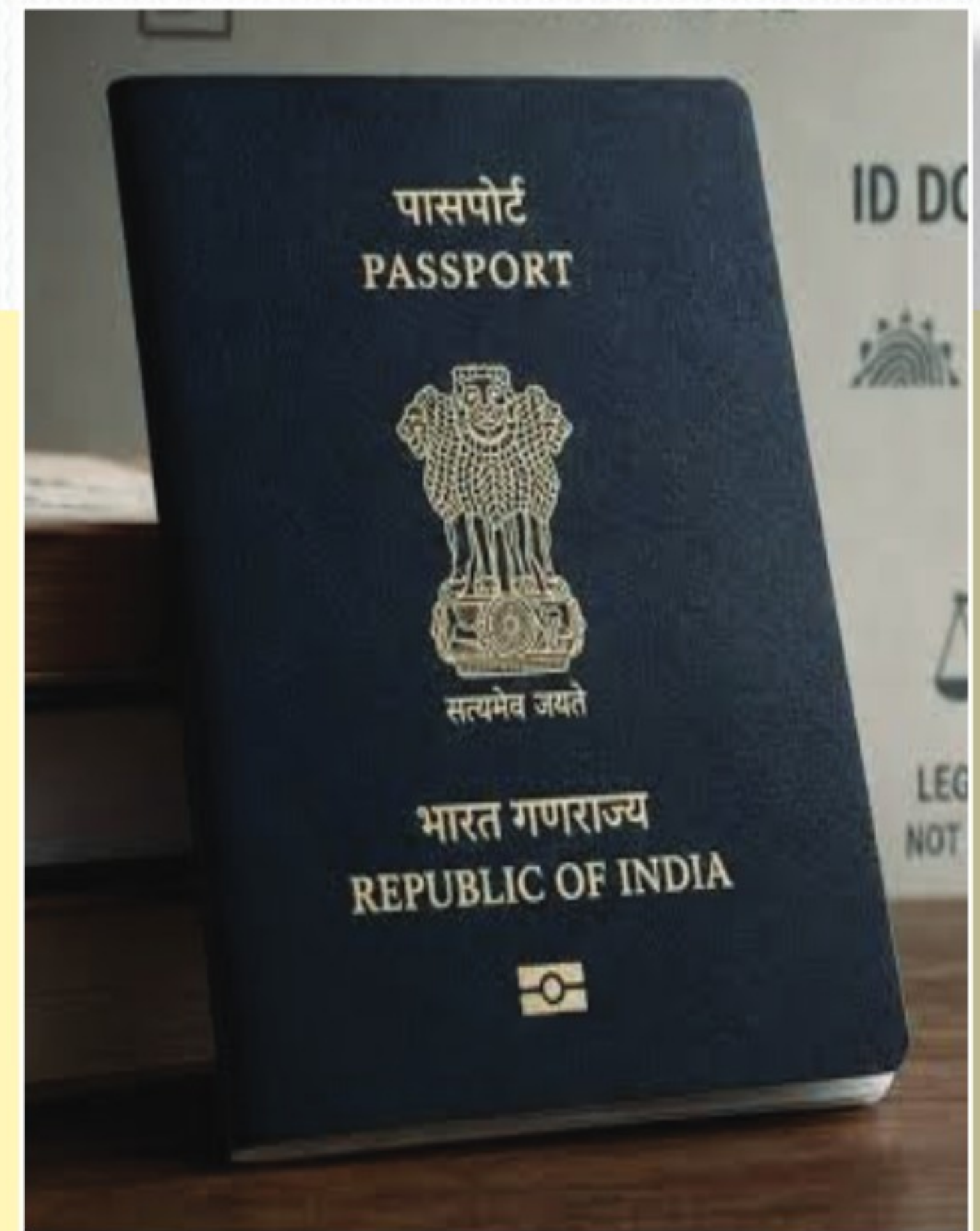
- Prevents misuse of travel documents.
- Strengthens integrity of citizenship determination.
- Ensures lawful verification in immigration and national security matters.

Challenges

- Documentation gaps.
- Fraudulent identity documents.
- Balancing national security with individual rights.

Conclusion

A passport is an important travel



document but not conclusive evidence of citizenship. Citizenship is determined by constitutional provisions and the Citizenship Act, 1955, supported by due legal verification.

Prelims PYQ

Q. Which of the following are modes of acquiring Indian citizenship under the Citizenship Act, 1955?

1. By birth
2. By descent
3. By naturalisation
4. By incorporation of territory

Select the correct answer:

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

Answer: (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4





India's First 3D-Printed Artificial Reefs



Background

- Tamil Nadu is deploying India's first 3D-printed artificial reef modules off the Ramanathapuram coast under Phase-II of the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY).
- The pilot project will evaluate six innovative reef designs for restoring degraded marine habitats and improving fishery resources.

About the Project

- Location: Ramanathapuram coast, Tamil Nadu.
- Developed by Tvasta (IIT Madras-incubated startup) in collaboration with the Visakhapatnam Regional Centre of ICAR-CMFRI.
- Each module weighs about one tonne and will be deployed around two nautical miles offshore.
- Uses advanced 3D-printing technology without iron reinforcement.

What are Artificial Reefs?

- Human-made underwater structures designed to mimic natural reefs.
- Provide habitat, shelter, breeding and feeding grounds for marine organisms.
- Help restore degraded marine ecosystems.

Features of 3D-Printed Reefs

- Complex geometry with crevices and folds.
- Greater surface area for coral, sponge and algae attachment.
- Higher porosity and biodiversity support.
- Faster fabrication and site-specific design flexibility.

Importance

- Coral reef restoration.
- Marine biodiversity conservation.
- Sustainable fisheries.
- Coastal livelihood support.
- Climate resilience and coastal protection.
- Scientific innovation in marine conservation.

Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana

- Flagship fisheries development scheme.
- Focuses on sustainable fisheries, infrastructure, value chains and marine ecosystem restoration.

Challenges

- Climate change and coral bleaching.
- Ocean pollution.
- Ocean acidification.
- Long-term ecological monitoring.
- Cost and maintenance.

Way Forward

- Expand habitat restoration.
- Strengthen scientific monitoring.
- Integrate Blue Economy principles.
- Involve coastal communities.
- Promote research and innovation.

Conclusion

India's first 3D-printed artificial reefs represent a major step in combining advanced manufacturing with marine conservation. If successful, the technology can strengthen coastal ecosystems, improve fisheries and contribute to India's Blue Economy and sustainable ocean management.

Prelims PYQ

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. Artificial reefs are human-made underwater structures created to support marine biodiversity.
2. Coral reefs support nearly one-fourth of all marine species despite occupying a very small area of the ocean.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (c) Both 1 and 2.