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Weekly  
Current Affairs  
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for UPSC  
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Guiding Dreams, Empowering Future  
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**EXCLUSIVE CURRENT AFFAIRS BULLETIN**

## UN IGME 2025 REPORT ON CHILD MORTALITY

### WHY IN NEWS...?

The United Nations Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME) released its 2025 report in March 2026. The report highlights a concerning slowdown in global progress in reducing child mortality since 2015. At the same time, it recognises India as a global exemplar due to its sustained and significant reduction in child, neonatal, and infant mortality rates over the past decades.

### Global Highlights

According to the report, around 4.9 million children died before the age of five in 2024, including about 2.3 million newborns within the first 28 days of life. Additionally, around 2.1 million deaths were recorded among children and youth aged 5–24 years. A large share of these deaths is concentrated in Sub-Saharan

Africa (58%) and Southern Asia (25%). Although under-5 mortality has declined by more than half since 2000, the rate of decline has slowed significantly by over 60% after 2015 due to reduced funding, unequal healthcare access, and socio-economic disparities.

The report also brings new attention to malnutrition, particularly Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM), which directly caused over 100,000 deaths and indirectly increased mortality by weakening immunity. The leading causes of death among newborns include preterm complications and delivery-related issues, while pneumonia, diarrhea, and malaria remain dominant causes among children aged 1–59 months.

### Indicators

Key mortality indicators include Neonatal Mortality Rate (NMR), Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), and Under-5 Mortality Rate

(U5MR), along with Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR). NMR refers to deaths within the first 28 days per 1,000 live births, IMR covers deaths under one year, and U5MR includes deaths up to five years of age. As per NFHS-5, India's NMR is 24.9, IMR is 35.2, and U5MR is 41.9. The Maternal Mortality Ratio stands at 97 per 1,00,000 live births (2018–20), showing significant improvement.

### India's Performance

India has demonstrated a remarkable long-term decline in child mortality indicators between 1990 and 2024. The Under-5 Mortality Rate declined from 127 to 27 per 1,000 live births, while the Neonatal Mortality Rate fell from 57 to 17. The Infant Mortality Rate stands at around 23.3 per 1,000 live births. Due to these achievements, India has been recognised globally as an exemplar country for reducing child mortality.

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► From P3

## India's Success

India's success is attributed to multiple policy interventions and programmes. Institutional deliveries increased significantly due to schemes like Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) and Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK). The expansion of Special Newborn Care Units (SNCUs) and digital initiatives such as Tele-SNCU improved neonatal care. Immunization coverage improved through the Universal Immunization Programme and Mission Indradhanush.

At the community level, programmes like IMNCI, implemented by ASHA and Anganwadi workers, enabled early diagnosis and treatment of childhood illnesses. Nutrition-focused initiatives such as POSHAN Abhiyaan, Anemia Mukt Bharat, ICDS, PM-MVY, and the MAA programme significantly contributed to improving child health outcomes by addressing malnutrition and promoting breastfeeding.

## Challenges

Despite progress, several challenges remain. Neonatal deaths constitute a major share of child mortality, largely due to prematurity, birth asphyxia, and infections. Malnutrition continues to act

as a silent multiplier, with high levels of anemia among women and pregnant mothers. Regional disparities are evident, with states like Kerala performing well, while Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Madhya Pradesh lag behind.

Healthcare infrastructure gaps in rural and tribal areas result in delayed emergency care. Diseases such as pneumonia and diarrhoea persist due to poor sanitation and hygiene conditions. Additionally, the quality of care during childbirth remains inconsistent despite high institutional delivery rates. India also faces pressure to meet SDG 3.2 targets by 2030, requiring accelerated progress.

## Way Forward

To sustain progress, India must focus on the first 28 days of life by strengthening intrapartum care, newborn screening, and emergency neonatal services. Expanding interventions such as Kangaroo Mother Care, Early Essential Newborn Care, and breast milk banks is crucial. Improving delivery quality through programmes like LaQshya and ensuring neonatal resuscitation can reduce early deaths.

Breaking the malnutrition cycle through POSHAN Abhiyaan 2.0 and focusing on the first 1,000 days of life is essential.

Targeted interventions in high-burden regions, along with the use of digital tools like U-WIN for real-time monitoring, can enhance outcomes. Strengthening front-line workers through better training and incentives will improve community-level healthcare delivery.

## Conclusion

India's progress in reducing child mortality is commendable and positions it as a global exemplar. However, challenges such as neonatal mortality, malnutrition, inequality, and quality of care remain critical. A coordinated and data-driven approach focusing on healthcare, nutrition, and sanitation, particularly in high-burden areas and early life stages, is essential to achieve SDG targets by 2030.

## Prelims Question

Q. Which of the following statements are correct?

1. Neonatal Mortality Rate refers to deaths within 28 days.
  2. Infant Mortality Rate includes deaths up to 5 years.
  3. Under-5 Mortality Rate includes deaths from birth to 5 years.
- a. 1 and 3 only   b. 1 and 2 only  
c. 1 only   d. None of the above

Answer: (a) 1 and 3 only

# India–China Border Trade via Lipulekh Pass

## Why in News?

- Border trade via Lipulekh Pass (Uttarakhand) to resume in June 2026 after ~6-year halt (since 2019–20).
- Suspension due to COVID-19 and India–China border tensions.



- 1994: Shipki La opened.
- 2006: Nathu La opened.
- Earlier trade via mules/sheep - slow, costly.

## Diplomatic Context

- August 2025 agreement to reopen: Lipulekh, Shipki La, Nathu La.
- Seen as limited economic confidence-building amid strategic mistrust.

## Geography & Significance

- High-altitude pass in Kumaon (Pithoragarh), near India–Nepal–China trijunction.
- Connects Uttarakhand (India) with Tibet (China).
- Part of Kailash–Mansarovar Yatra route.
- Located in Vyas Valley; historic trade and pilgrimage route.

## Evolution of Trade

- 1992: Lipulekh opened (first India–China trade post).

## Infrastructure Boost

- Motorable road completed in 2020.
- Reduces logistics cost and travel time.
- Expected to increase trade volume and support local economies.

## India–Nepal Dispute

- Nepal claims Kalapani–Lipulekh–Limpiyadhura region.
- Based on Treaty of Sugauli (1816): Kali River as boundary.
- Nepal: river origin at Limpiyadhura - claims area.
- India: origin near Kalapani - claims area.

## Broader Implications

- Strategic sensitivity: trijunction region.
- Boosts border infrastructure and connectivity.
- May strain India–Nepal relations.
- Benefits local border communities

economically.

- Trade volume still small compared to major ports.

## Conclusion

The resumption of India–China trade via Lipulekh signals limited economic rapprochement but also revives the territorial dispute with Nepal. It highlights the tight balance India must maintain between Himalayan connectivity, sovereignty, and regional diplomacy.

## Prelims Practice Question

Q. With reference to the India–China border trade routes, the pass that is located in the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand, near the India–Nepal–China trijunction, and was the first Indian border post opened for trade with China in 1992 is:

- (a) Nathu La  
(b) Shipki La  
(c) Lipulekh Pass  
(d) Jelep La

Answer: (c) Lipulekh Pass.

# BRICS Presidency 2026

## Science, Technology & Innovation (STI)



### Why in News?

- India has assumed BRICS Presidency in 2026.
- Theme: 'Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability'.
- Focus on Science, Technology & Innovation (STI) cooperation among Global South nations.
- Emergence of BRICS+ strengthens multipolar global governance.

### About BRICS

- Original members: Brazil, Russia, India, China; South Africa joined in 2010.
- BRICS+ expansion: Egypt, UAE, Ethiopia, Iran, Indonesia.
- Covers ~49.5% global population, ~40% GDP, ~26% global trade.
- Key pillars: Political, Economic, People-to-People cooperation.
- New Development Bank (NDB) headquartered in Shanghai for infrastructure financing.

### Evolution of STI Cooperation

- 2011 Sanya Declaration: Recognized role of STI in development.
- 2015 MoU on STI cooperation formalized collaboration.
- BRICS Young Scientist Forum for networking and innovation.
- 2017–2020 Action Plan: Technology Transfer Centres and startup linkages.
- 2021–2024 Innovation Action Plan: Focus on emerging technologies.

### Milestones

- Annual BRICS S&T Ministers Meetings set research priorities.
- India's CSIR & DBT leading collaborative projects.
- BRICS Remote Sensing Satellite Constellation for data sharing.
- Shift to deep-tech: AI, space tech, biotech.
- Kazan & Rio Declarations: AI governance emphasized.

### India's Strategic Opportunities

- Leverage Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI): Aadhaar, UPI, DigiLocker.
- Propose BRICS Mega-Science Projects (e.g., LIGO-India model).
- Lead climate-tech cooperation via ISA and Global Biofuel Alliance.
- Promote digital health, telemedicine, AI governance frameworks.
- Strengthen National Innovation Systems (NIS) in Global South.
- Position India as bridge between developed and developing nations.

### Challenges in BRICS STI

- R&D asymmetry: China dominates GERD and innovation capacity.
- Geopolitical tensions: India–China disputes affect cooperation.
- BRICS+ heterogeneity complicates consensus-building.
- Absence of permanent secretariat leads to discontinuity.
- Limited funding for STI (NDB focuses mainly on infrastructure).
- Weak private sector and startup integration.

### Needed Reforms

- Establish permanent BRICS STI Secretariat.
- Create BRICS Technological Alliance.
- Launch mega-science missions (AI, climate tech, space).
- Develop common AI governance & data standards.
- Harmonize Intellectual Property (IP) frameworks.
- Create dedicated STI Innovation Fund.
- Promote startup ecosystem via iBRICS network.

### Conclusion

India's BRICS 2026 presidency provides a strategic opportunity to drive inclusive innovation, equitable technology sharing, and institutional reforms tailored to Global South priorities. By strengthening STI cooperation, it can foster a resilient, multipolar global system that counters asymmetries and builds sustainable development pathways.

### Prelims PYQ

Q. Consider the following statements: (2016)

1. New Development Bank has been set up by APEC.

2. The headquarters of the New Development Bank is in Shanghai.

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

Ans: (b)

# PRADHAN MANTRI Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY)

## Why in News?

- PM-JAY launched in September 2018 under Ayushman Bharat.
- Provides health cover up to ₹5 lakh per family per year for secondary and tertiary hospitalization.
- Covers over 10 crore vulnerable families.
- Recent expansion: Universal coverage for all senior citizens aged 70+.
- Benefits ~6 crore elderly across ~4.5 crore families.
- Special Ayushman Vay Vandana Cards introduced.

## Scheme Coverage

- Cashless treatment at 27,000+ empanelled hospitals (public & private).
- Covers 1,949 procedures across 27 specialties.
- Includes cardiology, oncology, orthopaedics, etc.
- Pre-hospitalization: 3 days; Post-hospitalization: 15 days.
- No cap on family size, age, or gender.



## Expansions

- September 2024: Universal access for all citizens aged 70+ irrespective of income.
- Existing PM-JAY families receive additional 5 lakh top-up for senior citizens.
- As of February 2026: 43.52 crore Ayushman cards issued.
- Delhi became the 35th State/UT with full implementation.

## Funding & Implementation

- Funding pattern: 60:40 (Centre:State); 90:10 for hilly states/UTs without legislature.
- Implemented by National Health Authority (NHA).
- Uses AI-based fraud detection systems.
- Biometric verification for beneficiaries.
- Real-time claims processing.
- Integrated with ABHA (Ayushman Bharat Health Account).

## Achievements

- Saved 1.25 lakh crore in out-of-pocket expenditure.

- 50 crore+ treatments authorized worth 1 lakh crore.
- Prevented 3 crore+ cases of catastrophic health expenditure.
- Highest usage: Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Gujarat.
- Women and children constitute ~60% beneficiaries.

## Challenges

- Limited hospital empanelment in rural and remote areas.
- Claim rejection rate around 10–15% due to documentation issues.
- Uneven implementation across states.
- Quality concerns in private healthcare facilities.
- Disputes over coverage of pre-existing diseases despite no waiting period.

## Conclusion

- PM-JAY expansion reflects India's commitment to Universal Health Coverage (UHC).
- Enhances health equity by reducing financial burden on vulnerable populations.
- Digital integration and fraud control improve efficiency and scalability.
- Critical for addressing rising non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

**Q. With reference to the National Rural Health Mission, which of the following are the jobs of 'ASHA', a trained community health worker? (2012)**

1. Accompanying women to the health facility for antenatal care checkup
2. Using pregnancy test kits for early detection of pregnancy
3. Providing information on nutrition and immunization.
4. Conducting the delivery of baby

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

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

**Ans: (a)**



# BHARAT AUDYOGIK VIKAS YOJNA (BHAVYA)



## Why In News ...?

- The Union Cabinet approved the scheme with a total outlay of Rs. 33,660 crore to establish 100 plug-and-play industrial parks across India.

## Objective

- To provide ready-to-use industrial infrastructure (pre-approved land and utilities) enabling industries to move from “intent to production” without delays in land acquisition and regulatory approvals.

## Features

- **Plug-and-Play Ecosystem:** Parks will be developed on land parcels ranging from 100 to 1,000 acres, with pre-existing approvals and ready infrastructure.

- **Financial Support:**
- **Centre’s Contribution:** Up to Rs. 1 crore per acre for core infrastructure (internal roads, drainage), value-added facilities (testing labs), and social infrastructure (worker housing).
- **External Connectivity:** 25% of project cost provided for linking parks to external infrastructure (roads, railways, etc.).
- **Selection Mechanism:** Projects selected via a “Challenge Mode”, encouraging states/UTs to propose high-quality, investment-ready projects.

## Strategic Integration & Implementation

- **Alignment:** Incorporates PM GatiShakti principles for multi-modal connectivity, green energy adoption, and integrated underground utility corridors (“no-dig” infrastructure).
- **Nodal Agency:** Implemented under the National Industrial Corridor Development Programme (NICDP) by the National Industrial Corridor Development Corporation (NICDC) (under DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce & Industry), in partnership with states and the private sector.

## Beneficiaries

- **Primary:** Manufacturing units, MSMEs, startups, and global investors.
- **Secondary:** Workers, logistics providers, service enterprises, and local communities.

- **Secondary:** Workers, logistics providers, service enterprises, and local communities.

## CONCLUSION

BHAVYA marks a game-changing shift in India's industrial strategy—from fragmented approvals to pre-cleared, plug-and-play parks. Backed by massive funding, PM GatiShakti synergy, and competitive selection, it slashes setup time, costs, and hurdles for MSMEs, supercharging manufacturing, FDI, and global competitiveness.

## PREVIOUS YEAR

### QUESTION (2018)

**Q.** With reference to the governance of the National Industrial Corridor Development and Implementation Trust (NICDIT), which of the following statements is/are correct

1. It is an autonomous body under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).
  2. It coordinates the development of industrial corridors across India.
  3. It functions as a special purpose vehicle for the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) only.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Answer: (b) 1 and 2 only**

# WORLD TB DAY



## Background

- World Tuberculosis (TB) Day is observed annually on March 24.
- It commemorates Dr. Robert Koch’s discovery of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* in 1882.
- The discovery enabled scientific diagnosis and treatment of TB.
- WHO Theme 2026: “Yes! We can End TB!” - Emphasizes country leadership, innovation, and community participation.
- **Economic Insight:** Every \$1 invested in TB yields up to \$43 in returns (health + economic benefits).

## India TB Status

- India accounts for ~25% of global TB cases (WHO Global TB Report 2025).
- **Treatment Coverage:** - Increased from 53% (2015) to 92% (2024).
- **Mortality Rate:** - Declined from 28 to 21 per lakh population.
- **Treatment Success Rate:** - 90% under PM TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyan (global average: 88%).
- **However:** - India contributes ~28% of global TB deaths.



# World Water Day 2026



## Why in News?

- World Water Day Conclave 2026 held by Ministry of Jal Shakti on March 24.
- Focus on circular water economy amid declining water availability in India.
- Theme: 'Industry for Water' emphasizing industrial responsibility.
- Highlights India's push towards sustainable and climate-resilient water management.

## Concept: Circular Water Economy

- Shift from linear model (take-use-dispose) to circular model (reduce-reuse-recycle).
- Wastewater treated as a resource.
- Decouples economic growth from water consumption.

- Promotes industrial water efficiency and reuse.
- Supports climate adaptation and sustainability goals.

## Major Announcements

- 7th Minor Irrigation Census.
- 2nd Census of Water Bodies.
- 1st Census of Springs.
- Census of Major & Medium Irrigation Projects.
- National Water Data Policy 2026 for open access and governance.
- **Industry commitments (FICCI, ASSOCHAM, CII):**
  - -Water audits by 2027.
  - - Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) by 2030.
  - - 50% reduction in water footprint by 2030.

- NRSC-ISRO collaboration:
  - - GLOF (Glacial Lake Outburst Flood) monitoring.
  - -Bhuvan platform for geospatial mapping.
  - - AI and IoT for precision water governance.

## World Water Day Overview

- Observed annually on March 22 by United Nations.
- Coordinated by UN-Water.
- 2026 Theme: 'Water and Gender'.
- Slogan: 'Where water flows, equality grows'.
- Origin: 1992 Rio Earth Summit; first observed in 1993.
- Linked to SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation.

▶ Continued on P8

## ▶ From P5

- Nearly 1 lakh undiagnosed cases persist.
- Leads to ~8.8% global detection gap.

## Elimination Efforts

- Programme renamed:
  - RNTCP -National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP) in 2020.
- Target:
  - Eliminate TB by 2025 (less than 1 case per million).
  - Ahead of global WHO target (2030).
- Strategy: Detect – Treat – Prevent – Build (NSP 2017–2025).
- Progress:
  - 21% decline in incidence (2015–2024).
  - 28% decline in mortality.
- Gap:
  - Below WHO 2030 targets (80% incidence, 90% mortality reduction).

## Advancements

- Largest TB laboratory network globally.
- 92% patients receive upfront Rifampicin resistance testing.
- BPaLM Regimen:
  - Reduces MDR-TB treatment duration: 18–24 months -6 months.
  - Drugs: Bedaquiline, Pretomanid, Linezolid, Moxifloxacin.
- Healthcare Expansion:
  - 1.78 lakh+ Ayushman Arogya Mandirs.
- Community Support:
  - Ni-kshay Mitras initiative.
- Nutrition Support:
  - Ni-Kshay Poshan Yojana:

- Rs 1000/month (Rs 3000–6000 total).
- New Initiatives (2026):
  - TB Mukht Bharat 100-day campaign.
  - TB Mukht Bharat App (tracking).
  - TB Mukht Urban Ward Initiative.

## Major Challenges

- MDR/RR-TB:
  - India has 32% of global burden.
  - Treatment success: 77% (vs 90% in drug-sensitive TB).
- Social Determinants:
  - Malnutrition contributes ~35% cases.
  - High burden in Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh.
- Comorbidities:
  - Diabetes-linked TB cases: 3.2 lakh (2024).
  - HIV co-infection.
- Detection Issues:
  - Stigma, under-reporting.
  - Rural diagnostic gaps (Truenat, CBNAAT).
  - 1 lakh "missing cases" in private sector.
- Systemic Issues:
  - Drug supply disruptions.
  - Migration, poverty, slum conditions affect DOTS adherence.
- R&D Gap:
  - No effective adult vaccine beyond BCG.

## Strengthening Measures

- Early Detection:
  - AI-based chest X-rays.
  - Active screening of asymptomatic individuals.

- Prevent Drug Resistance:
  - Rapid Rifampicin testing.
- Target High-Risk Areas:
  - Use District Mineral Foundation funds in tribal areas.
- Nutritional Integration:
  - Link Poshan Yojana with Public Distribution System (PDS).
- Community Involvement:
  - Expand Ni-kshay Mitras.
- Preventive Strategy:
  - TB Preventive Treatment (TPT) for contacts.
- Digital Monitoring:
  - Upgrade TB Mukht Bharat App.

## . Conclusion

TB is more than a disease, it's poverty's cruel marker. Victory needs diagnostics, nutrition, tech, and community drive. Long-term: superior housing, healthcare, and social progress. TB-free India fuses health and socio-economic policy.

## Prelims PYQ

- Q. Consider the following statements with respect to Tuberculosis (TB):**
1. Tuberculosis is caused by *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and mainly affects lungs.
  2. All infected individuals have a very high risk of developing active TB.
  3. MDR-TB is resistant to at least isoniazid and rifampicin.

**Answer: (c) 1 and 3 only**



# BHARAT ELECTRICITY SUMMIT 2026

**Introduction:** Bharat Electricity Summit 2026 highlights India's transition towards becoming a global renewable energy leader.

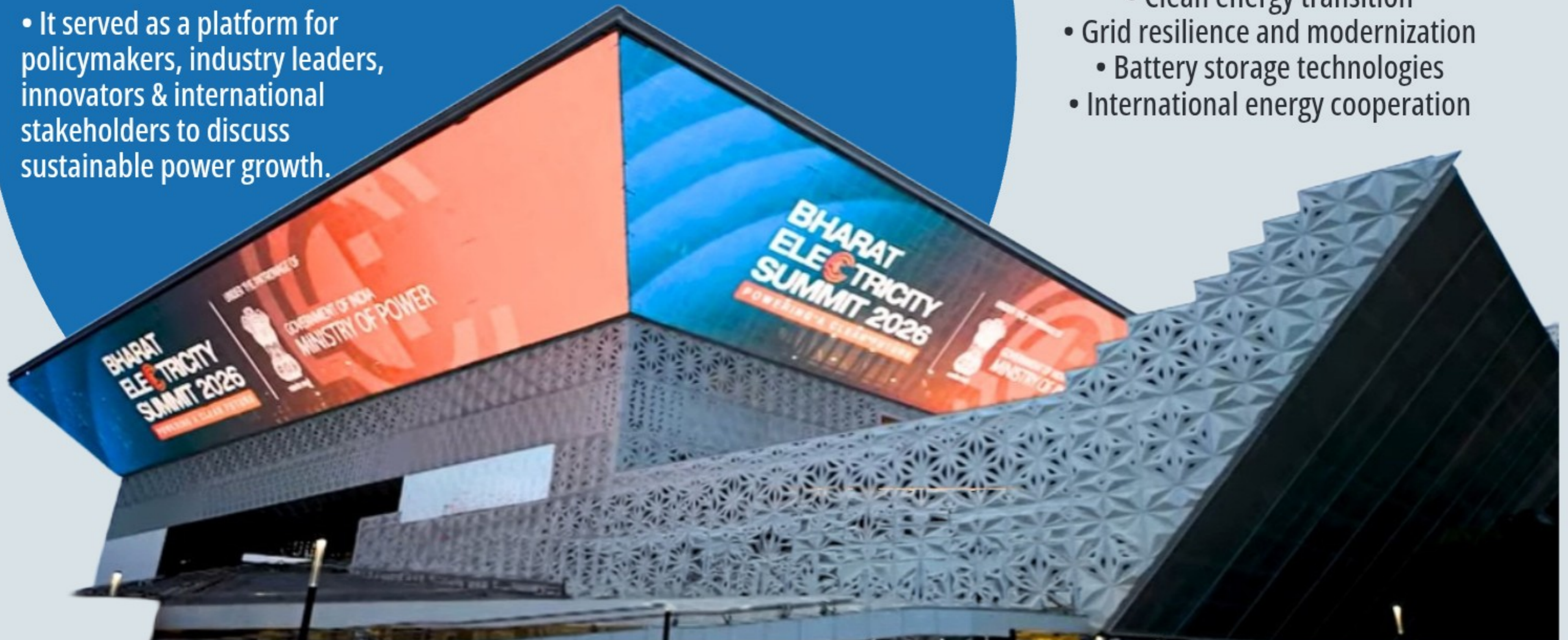
- It served as a platform for policymakers, industry leaders, innovators & international stakeholders to discuss sustainable power growth.

## Summit Overview

- Event Duration: March 19–22, 2026
- Venue: Yashobhoomi, Dwarka, New Delhi
- Organized by: Ministry of Power
- Theme: "Electrifying Growth. Empowering Sustainability. Connecting Globally"

## Focus Areas

- Clean energy transition
- Grid resilience and modernization
  - Battery storage technologies
- International energy cooperation



## Participation

- 25,000+ attendees
- Representation from 80+ countries
- 500+ exhibitors
- 100+ startups showcasing innovative technologies

## India's Power Capacity Status

- Total Installed Capacity: 520 GW (January 2026)
- Addition in FY 2025–26: 52,537 MW
- Share of Renewables: ~75% of new capacity
- Solar Capacity: 140 GW

## Global Standing

- India ranks 4th globally in renewable energy capacity (IRENA 2025)

## Power Sector Progress

Reduction in Power Deficit

- FY 2013–14: 4.2%
- December 2025: 0.03%
- Peak Demand Met: 242 GW

## Renewable Contribution (July 29, 2025)

- Total Share: 51.5% of demand
- Solar: 44.5 GW
- Wind: 29.89 GW
- Hydro: 30.29 GW

## Transmission Infrastructure

- Current Grid Length: 5 lakh circuit km

- Target by 2032: 6.48 lakh circuit km
- Investment: Rs 9.15 lakh crore

## Rural Electrification

- Supply increased from 12.5 hours to 22.6 hours/day
- Villages electrified: 18,374
- Households electrified: 2.86 crore
- Total Investment: Rs 1.85 lakh crore

## DISCOM Reforms

- Profit: Rs 2,701 crore (FY 2024–25)
- Smart Meters Installed: 5.62 crore
- Outstanding Dues reduced to Rs 4,109 crore
- Key Scheme: Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS)

## Major Government Initiatives

- PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana
- Outlay: Rs 75,021 crore
- Rooftop solar installed: 31.04 lakh households
- Target: 1 crore households by FY 2026–27

## Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS)

- Total Outlay: Rs 3.03 lakh crore
- Focus: Smart metering, efficiency, financial sustainability

## National Electricity Plan (2023–32)

- Projected Peak Demand: 458 GW by 2032

## Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2026

- Reduction of cross-subsidies
  - Promotes direct power procurement
  - Enhances competition and efficiency
- ## POWERGRID Reform
- Equity investment limit increased to Rs 7,500 crore per subsidiary
- ## Investment Outlook
- Estimated investment: Rs 50 lakh crore by 2032

## Conclusion

Policy reforms plus investments accelerate renewables, efficiency, and private buy-in. The summit positions India as a global energy hub—fusing policy, innovation, and cooperation for low-carbon progress.

## UPSC PYQ (2025)

Q. Consider the following statements about 'PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana':

1. It targets installation of one crore solar rooftop panels in the residential sector.

Select the correct answer:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither

Answer: (c) Both 1 and 2

### Why in News?

- INS Taragiri is set to be commissioned under Project 17A stealth frigates.
- Enhances India's naval capability and defence indigenisation.

### About INS Taragiri

- Nilgiri-class stealth guided missile frigate.
- Constructed by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited.
- ~75% indigenous content; strong MSME participation.
- Advanced stealth features with low radar signature.
- Multi-role warfare capability (air,

# INS Taragiri

surface, submarine).

- CODOG propulsion system for speed and endurance.

### Project 17A Overview

- Successor to Project 17 (Shivalik class).
- 7 stealth frigates planned.
- Improved stealth, automation and combat systems.
  - Named after mountain ranges.
- Strategic Significance
  - Strengthens Indian Ocean Region dominance.
  - Counters China's naval expansion.
  - Secures maritime trade routes (SLOCs).
- Supports Aatmanirbhar Bharat.
- Enhances blue-water navy

capability.

### Challenges

- High cost of naval platforms.
- Dependence on imported components.
- Need for constant upgrades.
- Geopolitical maritime competition.

### Way Forward

- Boost indigenous R&D.
- Enhance shipbuilding ecosystem.
- Increase strategic partnerships.
- Modernise naval infrastructure.

### Conclusion

INS Taragiri's commissioning under Project 17A marks a milestone in India's 75% indigenous defence manufacturing, enhancing stealth capabilities, multi-role warfare, and maritime security against regional threats.

### » From P6

## Indian Water Governance Framework

- Constitutional Aspect: Water is a State subject (Entry 17, State List).
- Inter-state rivers under Union List (Entry 56).
- Key Acts: Water Act 1974; Environment Protection Act 1986.
- Policy: National Water Policy 2012.
- Institutions: Central Water Commission, Central Ground Water Board.

## Major Schemes and Initiatives

- Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0: Functional tap water to rural households.
- Atal Bhujal Yojana: Groundwater management.
- PM Krishi Sinchayee Yojana: 'Per Drop More Crop'.
- Namami Gange Programme: River rejuvenation.
- AMRUT Mission: Urban water supply and sewerage.

## Role of Civil Society & Traditional Systems

- Tarun Bharat Sangh: Revival of Arvari River.
- Arghyam Foundation: Water security initiatives.
- Paani Panchayat: Community water governance.
- Traditional systems: Johads, Baolis, Ahar-Pynes, Tanks.
- Importance of decentralised water

management.

## Global Water Challenges

- 2.2 billion people lack safe drinking water.
- 1.4 million deaths annually due to water-related diseases.
- Climate change - droughts, floods (~\$300 billion losses/year).
- 60% freshwater in transboundary basins - conflicts (Indus, Nile).
- Pollution causes eutrophication and ecosystem damage.
- 70% aquifers depleted; major lakes shrinking globally.

## India-Specific Water Issues

- Largest groundwater extractor globally.
- Per capita availability declined from 5200 (1950) to ~1500 (2024).
- Projected to 1191 by 2050 - water stress threshold.
- Inter-state disputes: Cauvery, Krishna, Ravi-Beas.
- Water contamination: arsenic, fluoride affecting ~90 million.
- 70% surface water polluted.
- Urban crises: Bengaluru, Chennai facing 'Day Zero' risk.
- Glacier melt threatens perennial rivers (Ganga, Indus).

## Way Forward

- Agricultural reforms: drip irrigation, crop diversification, millets.
- Urban reforms: STPs, wastewater reuse, dual plumbing.

- Promote circular water economy in industries.
- Revive traditional systems and wetlands (Ramsar sites).
- Introduce water pricing and regulation.
- Water Credits concept for sustainability.
- Public participation through Jan Andolan.
- Use of technology: AI, IoT, remote sensing.

## Conclusion

- India's shift to a circular water economy is vital for sustainable growth. Success hinges on blending policy, tech, community action, and industry duty—tackling scarcity, pollution, and inequality for lasting water security.

## Prelims PYQ

**Q. With reference to 'Water Credit', consider the following statements: It puts microfinance tools to work in the water and sanitation sector. It is a global initiative launched under the aegis of the World Health Organisation and the World Bank. It aims to enable the poor people to meet their water needs without depending on subsidies. Which of the statements given above are correct?**

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

**Answer: (c) .**