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BY PHYSICS WALLAH

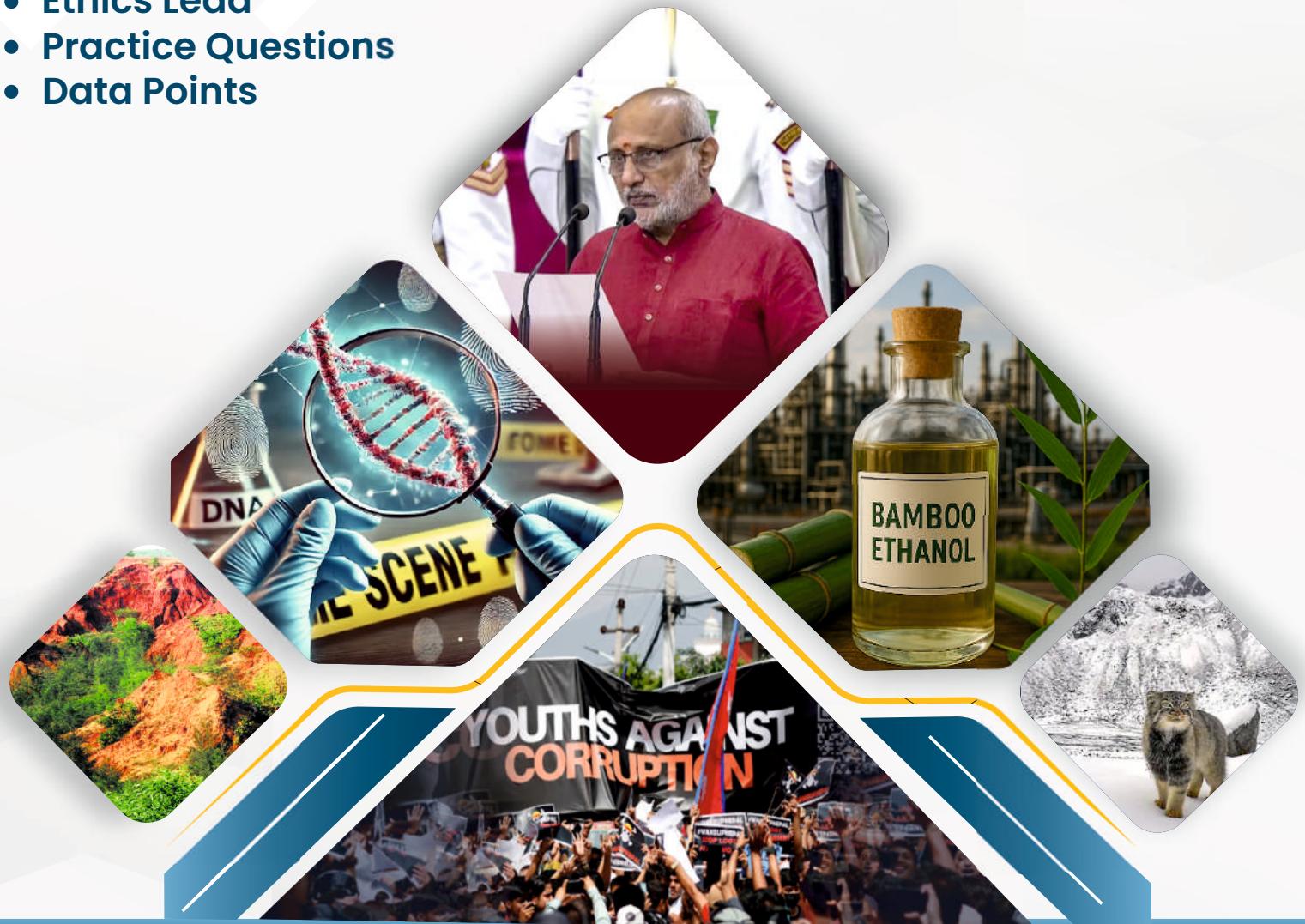
# MONTHLY CURRENT WALLAH

FOR UPSC CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION

## SEPTEMBER 2025

### ESSAY CONTEST

- Ethics Lead
- Practice Questions
- Data Points



• SCHEMES IN NEWS

• PLACES IN NEWS

• GUIDING ILLUSTRATIVE

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# 1

# Indian Art & Culture and History

## PRELIMS

### 1.1 Mahabodhi Temple

**Context:** Recently, Prime Minister of Bhutan, **Tshering Tobgay**, visited the Mahabodhi Temple, Bodhgaya in Bihar.

**About Mahabodhi Temple:**

- The Mahabodhi Temple Complex is **one of the four holy sites** related to the life of the Lord Buddha, and particularly to the **attainment of Enlightenment**.
  - **The other three sites:** **Lumbini** (Nepal): Birthplace of Buddha, **Sarnath** (Uttar Pradesh): Site of the first sermon (Dharma-Chakra-Pravartana), **Kushinagar** (Uttar Pradesh): Place of Buddha's Mahaparinirvana (death).
- **Construction:** It was Built originally by **Emperor Ashoka** (**3rd century BCE**), an Ashokan pillar still present.
  - The present brick temple dates back to **5th–6th century CE**, one of the **oldest brick structures in India**
- **Location:** It is located in **Bodhgaya, Gaya district, Bihar** and Situated on the banks of the **Niranjana (Phalgu) River**.
- **Historical & Spiritual Significance:** Lord Buddha attained **Bodhi (enlightenment)** under the **Bodhi Tree** here (~531 BCE).
  - **Bodhi Tree:** The sacred Bodhi Tree here is believed to be a direct descendant of the original tree.
- **UNESCO Recognition:** Declared a **UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2002**.



**Architectural Features:**

- **Style:** **Nagara style of temple architecture**, among the earliest Buddhist temples built entirely with brick.
  - Surrounded by smaller stupas and shrines, many from the **Pala period (8th–12th centuries CE)**.
- **Main Shikhara:** A 50-meter-high pyramidal tower, adorned with niches, arch motifs, and intricate carvings.
- **Corner Towers:** Four identical smaller towers at the corners, each crowned with an umbrella-shaped dome.
- **Vajrasana (Diamond Throne):** Stone platform marking the exact site of Buddha's meditation.

### 1.2 100th year of the Self-Respect Movement

**Context:** 2025 marks the centenary of the **Self-Respect Movement (1925–2025)**.

**About Self Respect Movement:**

- Periyar E.V. Ramasamy, a social reformer and later founder of Dravidar Kazhagam, launched the **Tamil weekly Kudi Arasu (Republic)** in **1925** in Tamil Nadu, which paved the way for the formal beginning of the Self-Respect Movement.
- It was a **radical social reform initiative** that **redefined political and social discourse in Tamil Nadu**, focusing on **caste, gender, and rationalist critique** of Hindu orthodoxy.

**Ideological Foundations:**

- The core ideals were **self-respect, social equality, and rationalism**. Periyar rejected caste hierarchy and Brahminical dominance.
- He opposed religious superstitions, rituals, and any claim of scriptural authority that reinforced social inequality.



**Key Features of Movement:**

- **Radical Social Reform:** Promoted self-respect marriages, widow and inter-caste marriages, divorce rights, and women's equality in property and reproductive choices.
- **Rationalism & Anti-Brahminism:** Challenged religious dogmas, caste rituals, and scriptural authority.
- **Mass Mobilisation:** Reached peasants, workers, and marginalized groups, giving non-Brahmins a distinct social identity.
- **Journalism as Tool:** Used Kudi Arasu to spread reformist ideas and counter Brahmin-dominated narratives.
- **Contributions & Legacy:**
  - **Periyar's Role:** Instilled self-respect, dignity, and awareness of rights among **non-Brahmins**; spread **rationalist thinking that influenced Dravidian politics**.
  - **Impact on Tamil Nadu:** Shifted politics from **pure nationalism to social justice**; laid the groundwork for Dravidian parties like **DMK and AIADMK**.
  - **Legal & Social Recognition:** Self-respect marriages gained legal status in Tamil Nadu and were upheld by courts, cementing their social legitimacy.

### 1.3 Guru Tegh Bahadur

**Context:** Indian Railways is to commemorate the **350th Martyrdom Day of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji.**

#### About Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji

- **Ninth Sikh Guru:** Served as Guru from 1664–1675, remembered for his spiritual depth and defense of justice.
- **Birth:** Born on **April 1, 1621**, in **Amritsar, Punjab**; youngest son of **Guru Hargobind (6th Guru)** and Mata Nanaki.
- **Early Name & Training:** Born as Tyag Mal; trained in **martial arts, archery, horsemanship, and spiritual learning** under Guru Hargobind.
- **'Tegh Bahadur':** Earned after his valor in battle against Mughal forces (Tegh = sword).
- **Son:** Gobind Rai, who later became **Guru Gobind Singh**, the 10th Sikh Guru.
- **Teachings & Contributions**
  - Advocated **truthful living, humility, high moral conduct, and human rights.**
  - Urged detachment from materialism and devotion to **One God.**
  - Composed **115 hymns**, enshrined in the **Guru Granth Sahib.**
  - Emphasized values of **Nirbhau (fearlessness)** and **Nirvair (without enmity).**
- **Martyrdom (Shaheedi Diwas)**
  - **Cause:** He opposed Aurangzeb's policy of forced conversion of Kashmiri Pandits to Islam.
  - **Execution:** He was publicly executed in **Delhi in November, 1675** (at Chandni Chowk, present site of Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib).
  - November 24 is commemorated as the **Shaheedi Divas.**



### 1.4 Kolhan's Manki-Munda System

**Context:** Recently, **Ho tribe in Jharkhand's West Singhbhum** protested against the interference in their **traditional Manki-Munda system.**

#### About the Manki-Munda System:

- A **traditional, decentralised self-governance model** followed by the **Ho tribe of Jharkhand's Kolhan region.**
- **Leadership Structure:**
  - **Munda:** Hereditary village head; Resolve disputes at the **village level.**
  - **Manki:** Head of a pidh (cluster of **8–15 villages**); Handled **appeals beyond the Munda's authority.**

#### About Ho Tribe:

- **Ethnic Group:** The Ho (also called Kolha, Hodoko, Horo) are an **Austroasiatic Munda ethnic group of India.**
  - Ho means "Human" in their own language.
- **Distribution:** Concentrated in the **Kolhan region of Jharkhand**, also found in **Odisha, West Bengal, and Bihar.**
- **Language:** They speak the Ho language
- **Livelihood:** Predominantly **agricultural community** engaged as **landowners, cultivators, and labourers**; some also **work in mining.**
- **Religious Functionaries:** A **deuri (village priest)** performs rituals, while a **deowa (spirit doctor)** conducts **sacrifices to deities and spirits.**

### 1.5 UNESCO's Tentative List of Natural Heritage Sites.

**Context:** Seven sites from India have recently been added to UNESCO's Tentative List of Natural Heritage Sites.

- As of August 2025, a total of 14 new sites have been added this year, bringing the current number of Indian sites on the tentative list to 69.

#### About UNESCO's Tentative List of Natural Heritage Sites

- The Tentative List is the first step in the process of gaining full World Heritage Site status.
- It serves as an inventory of natural and cultural heritage sites that a State Party considers to have potential Outstanding Universal Value to humanity.

#### List of New Entrants:

- **Deccan Traps at Panchgani & Mahabaleshwar, Maharashtra**
- **St. Mary's Island Cluster, Karnataka**
- **Meghalayan Age Caves, Meghalaya**
- **Naga Hill Ophiolite, Nagaland**
- **Erra Matti Dibbalu (Red Sand Hills), Andhra Pradesh**
- **Natural Heritage of Tirumala Hills, Andhra Pradesh**
- **Varkala Cliffs, Kerala**

### 1.6 Chhath Puja

**Context:** India has initiated a multinational nomination of Chhath festival for inscription on **UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.**

#### About Chhath Puja:

- Chhath is one of India's oldest festivals, **dedicated to the Sun God and Goddess Chhathi Maiya.**
- Predominantly celebrated in **Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal**, and among diaspora communities in Mauritius, Fiji, Suriname, UAE, and the Netherlands.
- **Cultural Significance**
  - Known for its **ecological ethos**, promoting reverence for **nature, water bodies, and sustainability.**

- Strongly **egalitarian** as it transcends caste, creed, and religion.
- Rituals emphasize **simplicity, self-discipline, devotion, and community spirit.**

#### About UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List:

- UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, adopted in 2003
- AIM:** It is an **international treaty** aimed at protecting and promoting intangible cultural heritage worldwide.
- UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritages of India: (15 as of September 2025)**
  - Nawrouz** (Persian New Year), **Garba** of Gujarat, **Durga Puja** in Kolkata, **Kumbh Mela**, **Yoga**, **Traditional brass and copper craft** of utensil making among (Punjab), **Sankirtana** of Manipur, **Buddhist chanting** of Ladakh, **Chhau dance**, **Kalbelia folk songs** and dances of Rajasthan, **Mudiyettu** of Kerala, **Ramman festival** and ritual theatre of the Garhwal Himalayas, **Kutiyattam**, **Sanskrit theatre**, Tradition of **Vedic chanting**, and **Ramlila** (traditional performance of the Ramayana).
- Significance:** Recognition helps preserve living traditions, promotes cultural diversity, and enhances global awareness of community practices.

#### 1.7 Mohenjodaro 'Dancing Girl'

**Context:** A replica of the Mohenjodaro 'Dancing Girl' was recently reported stolen from the National Museum, New Delhi.

##### About the 'Dancing Girl'

- The Dancing Girl is a **bronze figurine measuring 10.5 cm in height**, discovered at Mohenjodaro, one of the major **urban centers of the Indus Valley Civilization (IVC)**.
- Technique:**
  - Created using the lost-wax casting method, it reflects the advanced metallurgical skills of the Harappans.
  - This method involves coating a wax model with clay, melting out the wax, and then replacing it with molten metal to create intricate designs.



##### Physical Features and Artistic Expression

- The figure depicts a **young nude female, adorned with a necklace**.
- She wears **numerous bangles on one arm**, while the other rests confidently on her hip, **symbolizing poise and self-assurance**.

##### Cultural and Historical Significance

- The figurine is regarded as a **secular artistic creation**, unlike religious or ritual artifacts common in many ancient cultures.

- It demonstrates the Harappan community's **aesthetic sensibility, artistic innovation**, and emphasis on realism in sculpture.

#### About Mohenjodaro

- Mohenjodaro was one of the principal urban centers of the Indus Valley Civilization (c. 2500 BCE), located in present-day **Sindh province, Pakistan, near the Indus River**.
- It is renowned for advanced **urban planning, featuring grid-pattern streets**, covered drainage systems, standardized fired bricks, and monumental structures such as the **Great Bath**.
- Artifacts recovered, including seals, pottery, and figurines like the Dancing Girl, provide evidence of a highly organized, prosperous, and technologically advanced civilization.

#### 1.8 Gyan Bharatam

Prime Minister inaugurated the **International Conference on Gyan Bharatam** and launched the **Gyan Bharatam Portal**.

##### About Gyan Bharatam Conference & Gyan Bharatam Portal

- Gyan Bharatam Conference:** The First international platform that has invited **stakeholders** from across the **country** to discuss, deliberate, and chart the way forward for preserving and digitising India's manuscript heritage.
- Gyan Bharatam Portal:** A dedicated digital platform to accelerate manuscript digitisation, preservation, and public access

##### About Gyan Bharatam Mission

- It's a national initiative to **preserve, digitise, and disseminate India's vast manuscript heritage**, integrating **tradition with technology** for future generations.
- Announced in:** Union Budget 2025-26
- Aim:** To **survey, document, and conserve India's vast manuscript heritage**.
- Focus Areas:** This mission primarily targets manuscripts held by academic institutions, museums, libraries, and private collectors to ensure their systematic preservation.
- Objective:** To cover over **one crore manuscripts**, guaranteeing their **long-term preservation and accessibility** for future generations.
- Revival of NMM:** Through this initiative, the government is making a significant effort to revive the **National Manuscripts Mission (NMM)**, which was **launched in 2003** but remained largely inactive.
- Budget Allocation:** The financial allocation for the **National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM)** has seen a significant increase from ₹3.5 crore to ₹60 crore in the **Union Budget 2025-26** to accommodate the **Gyan Bharatam Mission**.
- Implementing Ministry:** The Ministry of Culture

# 2

# Society & Social Issues

## PRELIMS + MAINS

### 2.1 Supreme Court Questions Allocation of Disability Quotas

**Context:** Recently, the Supreme Court asked the Centre why PwD candidates qualifying on general merit are not counted in the unreserved list, thereby blocking reserved seats for others.

**Supreme Court's Observations:**

- **Upward Mobility Principle:** The Bench noted that denying such upward mobility defeats the purpose of **reservation** under the **Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016**.
- **Hostile Discrimination:** The Court noted that **OBC/SC/ST candidates** are granted upward movement on merit, but PwDs are not, creating "**hostile discrimination**".
- **Purpose of Reservation:** Reservation is meant to **mainstream PwDs**, not to **restrict them to fixed seats**.
- **Lens of Diversity:** Disability must be seen not as a **deficit**, but as a **test of inclusivity** of legal and institutional frameworks.
- **Project Ability Empowerment:** The SC also initiated "**Project Ability Empowerment**", entrusting eight **National Law Universities (NLUs)** to conduct a **nationwide monitoring** of care institutions housing persons with cognitive disabilities.

**Legal Framework in India:**

- **Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016:** The **Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016** was enacted to align India's disability laws with the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)**.
  - ◆ **India ratified UNCRPD in 2007.**
  - **RPwD Act** aims to ensure the **rights, equality, and inclusion of persons with disabilities** in all aspects of life.
  - The 2016 Act replaced the earlier **Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995**.

**Significance of Upward Mobility:**

- **Judicial Concern on Discrimination:** The Supreme Court flagged the absence of parity with other reserved categories.
  - **OBC, SC, and ST candidates** who qualify on merit are shifted to the general category, but **PwDs are denied this upward movement**, amounting to what the Court called "**hostile discrimination**".
- **Constitutional Equality:** Denying upward mobility undermines **Articles 14, 15, and 16**, which guarantee equality and equal opportunity, as well as **Article 21**, which safeguards dignity.
- **Quota Effectiveness:** Without upward mobility, the increased quota under RPwD Act remains underutilised.
  - Despite raising reservation from **3% to 4% in 2016**, actual representation has stagnated at **around 1%**, showing that **policy intent is not translating into outcomes**.

## DATA POINT



### Current Status of Disability Representation in India

- **Legal Mandate vs Reality:** 4% quota under RPwD Act, 2016, but only **1.1% in jobs**.
- **Employment (2022):** 21,874 PwDs in Central Ministries (1.15%).
- **By Groups:**
  - Group A – 1%
  - Group B – 1.53%
  - Group C (non-Safai Karmachari) – 1.1%
  - Group C (Safai Karmachari) – 1.93% (highest)
- **Slow Growth:** From **2011 to 2022, PwD employee strength** rose marginally from **15,747 to 22,000**, remaining well below the mandated **4% quota**.

## CHRONOLOGICAL EVOLUTION OF INDIA'S DISABILITY INITIATIVES



### 1995 – Persons with Disabilities Act

- First comprehensive law: 3% reservation in jobs & education; ensured equal opportunities.

### 2015 – Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan)

- Launched by DEPwD to make public spaces, ICT & transport accessible.

### 2016 – Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act

- Expanded disabilities from 7 → 21 categories; raised job reservation from 3% → 4%.

### 2016 – Unique Disability ID (UDID) Project

- National database & single ID card for PwDs to access benefits.

### 2022 – Supreme Court Judgment

- Upheld reservation in promotions for PwDs in government jobs.

- **Social Justice Mandate:** Upward mobility advances social justice as mandated by the Directive Principles.
  - **Articles 38 and 41** require the State to secure a **just social order and assistance for disabled persons**. Ensuring upward mobility makes reservation a **tool for empowerment rather than tokenism**.
- **Global Commitments:** India's obligations under international conventions require it to adopt inclusive policies.
  - As a signatory to the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)** since **2007**, India must guarantee **equal opportunity and non-discrimination**, making upward mobility a compliance requirement.
- **Persistent Underrepresentation:** PwDs remain grossly underrepresented in Central government employment despite legal provisions.
- **Skewed Representation in Higher Positions:** PwDs are concentrated in lower categories with negligible presence in senior roles.

#### About Disability-Based Discrimination:

- Disability-based discrimination refers to **unfair treatment, exclusion, or denial of rights** and opportunities to individuals based on their physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory disabilities.
- It occurs when a person with a disability is **treated differently or unfavorably** compared to others in similar situations
- It may lead to **inequality in access to education, employment, healthcare, public services, and other aspects of life**.

#### Challenges in Implementation:

- **Policy Ambiguity:** The rules on upward movement remain unclear in practice despite DoPT clarifications.
  - The **DoPT FAQ (2018)** allows PwDs to be treated as unreserved if they qualify without relaxed standards, but **ministries often fail to apply this consistently**.
- **Incomplete Data and Monitoring:** Lack of comprehensive disability employment data reduces accountability.
  - After **2018**, DoPT's annual reports excluded several ministries, leading to a reported fall in total government staff from **30 lakh to 20 lakh**, making PwD representation data unreliable.
- **Institutional Bias in Recruitment:** PwDs are disproportionately placed in low-skill posts.
  - The **highest concentration of PwDs** in the Central government is among **Group C sanitation workers**, showing lack of inclusion in higher administrative and technical posts.
- **Certification and Awareness Deficits:** A large section of PwDs is excluded from benefits due to low ID coverage and lack of awareness.
  - **With less than 40% of PwDs holding valid IDs**, many remain outside the quota system and **do not demand their right to upward mobility**.

#### Way Forward:

- **Policy Notification for Mobility:** The Union Government should issue a binding directive on upward movement in recruitment and promotions.
  - Joint action by the **DoPT and the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (MSJE)** can ensure that all ministries adopt the Supreme Court's mandate.
- **Rule Harmonisation Across Services:** Central and State service rules should be revised to align with RPwD Act provisions.
  - Amendments should ensure **PwDs receive parity with OBC/SC/ST upward mobility practices**, leaving reserved seats for others.
- **Data Transparency and Audits:** Disability representation data must be regularly published and verified.
  - The **DoPT Annual Report** should resume **full coverage across ministries**, with **independent audits** for compliance.
- **Universal Disability ID Coverage:** The UDID project must be accelerated to ensure all eligible PwDs get IDs.
  - Full-scale implementation of the **Unique Disability ID (UDID) scheme** can provide **100% certification**, enabling equal access to reservation benefits.

## Global Initiatives on Disability Inclusion

### United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD):

Provides a global legal framework for ensuring **non-discrimination, accessibility**, and equal participation of PwDs.

### United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR):

Monitors states for compliance with human rights obligations of PwDs.

### Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Disability Inclusion Framework:

Encourages governments to integrate PwDs into labour markets by reducing structural barriers.

- **Capacity Building and Sensitisation:** Training institutions must integrate disability rights in their curriculum.
- **Independent Oversight Mechanism:** Create a central body for monitoring PwD employment and mobility.

#### Conclusion:

The Supreme Court reaffirmed that **reservation is a ladder, not a cage**. With PwDs forming only **1% of the workforce against a mandated 4%**, ensuring upward mobility is vital for converting **formal equality into substantive empowerment**.

- “**The true measure of a society is how it treats its most vulnerable members**” — this judgment anchors India’s constitutional vision of equality, dignity, and justice for PwDs.

## 2.2 Protecting India’s Geriatric Population

**Context:** The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that **heat-related mortality** among the elderly has increased by **85 per cent globally since the 1990s**.

#### More on News:

- In India, deaths among people over **65 due to extreme heat rose by 55 per cent between 2000–2004 and 2017–2021**. In **10 Indian cities**, daily mortality among the **elderly rose by 14.7 percent**, attributed to extreme heat events.
  - **Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan** recorded the highest number of heatwave-related deaths in the country.
- The rising burden of extreme heat, compounded by the rapidly growing geriatric population, poses a serious challenge to human survival and well-being.

#### Who is Elderly?

- **National Policy on Older Persons, 1999, and the National Policy for Senior Citizens, 2011**, designate **persons aged 60 years and above** as elderly, focusing on their welfare, healthcare, financial security, and social inclusion.

#### Challenges Faced by the Elderly in India

##### • Health-Related Challenges

- **Rising Burden of Diseases:** **75%** of elderly suffer from one or more **chronic diseases**, and **23.3%** suffer from **multi-morbidity** (multiple co-existing conditions).
  - ◆ **Common illnesses:** Diabetes, hypertension, arthritis, dementia, cancer.
- **Limited Access to Healthcare:** **Only 18%** of the elderly have health insurance; majority incur **high out-of-pocket expenses (OOPE)**.
  - ◆ Geriatric care is largely confined to urban tertiary centers; rural access remains weak.
- **Limited Trained Workforce:** **Shortage of geriatricians**, geriatric-trained nurses, and physiotherapists.

##### • Social Challenges

- **Isolation and Abandonment:** Rise of **nuclear families** and **youth**
- **Elder Abuse:** At least **5%** of elderly have experienced **physical, emotional, or financial abuse**.
- **Poor Awareness of Rights and Schemes:** Only **12%** aware of the **Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act (2007)**.
  - ◆ **28%** aware of any senior citizen concession.

##### • Economic Challenges

- **Lack of Financial Security:** **78%** of elderly have **no pension coverage**.
  - ◆ Many continue unpaid work, especially in agriculture—**65% of elderly in rural areas** still work post-retirement.
- **High Healthcare Costs:** Mean OOPE for inpatient care: **₹31,933**—major reason for indebtedness (26% in urban India).

**DATA POINT**


  
**ONLYIAS**  
BY PHYSICS WALLAH

**Status of the Elderly Population in India (NITI Aayog Report, 2024)**

- ⌚ **12%** of the total population consists of elderly people and is projected to reach **319 million** by **2050**, growing at a rate of around **3% per year**.
- ⌚ The overall **sex ratio** in the elderly population is **1065**.
- ⌚ **58%** of the total number elderly are **women**, out of which **54%** are **widows**
- ⌚ The overall **dependency ratio** is **62 per 100 working-age population**
- ⌚ **7 out of 10** elderly persons reside in rural areas.

**Geriatric Care**


  
**ONLYIAS**  
BY PHYSICS WALLAH

**EXTRA EDGE**

⌚ **Geriatric Care** refers to the specialised **medical and non-medical care** provided to meet the health, functional, psychological, and social needs of older adults, typically those **aged 60 years and above**.

- **Highest CDR:** Odisha (8.3).
- **Lowest CDR:** Delhi (4.1).
- **Infant Mortality Rate (IMR):** National IMR stands at **25 per 1,000 live births**, a one-point decline from 2022 and a **7-point fall over the last five years**.
- **Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB):** Stood at **917 females per 1,000 males** in 2023, improving by three points over the previous year.
  - **SRB:** Highest in Chhattisgarh (974) and Kerala (971); lowest in Uttarakhand (868). Bihar's SRB declined from 964 (2020) to 897 (2023).

## KEY TERMS



- **CBR:** The number of live births per **1,000 people** in a given year. It reflects the **overall fertility level** of a population.
- **TFR:** The **average number of children a woman is expected to have** during her reproductive years (15–49), assuming current fertility patterns continue.
- **CDR:** The number of deaths per **1,000 people** in a given year. It indicates **mortality trends** in a population.
- **IMR:** The number of infants dying **before reaching one year of age per 1,000 live births**. It is a sensitive indicator of healthcare quality and socio-economic development.
- **SRB:** The number of **female births per 1,000 male births** in a population. A low SRB often reflects **gender bias and sex-selective practices**.
- **Elderly Population Share:** The proportion of people aged **60 years and above** in the total population. It highlights the **ageing trend** and the need for senior welfare measures.

### 2.5 Himachal Pradesh Declared Fully Literate

**Context:** Ministry of Education declared Himachal Pradesh the **fifth State/UT** to achieve **full functional literacy** with **99.30% literacy**, after Tripura, Mizoram, Goa, and Ladakh.

**About the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Test (FLNAT):**

- It is a **nationwide test to assess the foundational literacy and numeracy skills** of registered **non-literate learners aged 15 and above**.
- **Test Language:** Administered in the learners' **regional language**, supporting **multilingualism** as emphasised by **NEP 2020**.
- **Assessment Coverage:** Evaluates **Reading, Writing, and Numeracy**, with each section carrying **50 marks**, totalling **150 marks**.

**About New India Literacy Programme (NILP)**

- **Overview:** NILP, also known as **ULLAS (Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society)**, is a **centrally sponsored scheme** implemented during **FY 2022–27 (5 years)** by **Ministry of Education (MoE)**

- **Volunteer-driven:** It will leverage the support of student volunteers and community participation for teaching and learning.
- **Objective**
  - Target all **non-literate adults (15+ years)**, with emphasis on **women** and **educationally backward states**.
  - Educate **5 crore learners (1 crore per year)** through the **Online Teaching, Learning and Assessment System (OTLAS)**, developed with NIC, NCERT, and NIOS.
- **Five Components of NILP**
  - **Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN)** – Basic reading, writing, and arithmetic.
  - **Critical Life Skills** – Digital literacy, financial literacy, health awareness, and legal literacy.
  - **Basic Education** – Equivalent to Classes 3, 5, and 8.
  - **Vocational Skills Development** – Skill-building to enhance employability.
  - **Continuing Education** – Lifelong learning opportunities and community libraries.

## DEFINITION OF LITERACY AND FULL LITERACY



(As per the Ministry of Education (MoE))

01

**Literacy:** Ability to read, write, and compute with comprehension; includes digital literacy, financial literacy, and critical life skills.

02

**Full Literacy:** Achieving **95% literacy** in a State/UT (considered equivalent to 100%).

03

**Assessment:** Under **NILP**, a non-literate person is officially recognised as literate upon clearing the **Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Test (FLNAT)**.

### 2.6 UDISE+ 2024-25 Report

**Context:** Recently, The **Ministry of Education** released the **Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+)** 2024–25 report.

**About UDISE+**

- It is a **digital application** with the mandate of collecting information from all recognized schools imparting formal education from **Pre-primary to XII**.
- **Launch:** It was launched in **2018-2019** to speed up data entry, reduce errors, improve data quality and ease its verification.

- **Nodal Ministry:** Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education

## EXTRA EDGE



- ✓ **Pupil-Teacher Ratio:** Average number of (Pupil) students per teacher at a specific level of education in a given school-year
- ✓ **Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER):** Compares enrolment in a specific level of education to population of age group that is age-appropriate for that level of education.

### Major Highlights of the UDISE+ Report

- **Dropout Rates Declined Across Levels:** Preparatory (from 3.7% to 2.3%), Middle (5.2% to 3.5%), and Secondary (10.9% to 8.2%).
- **Improved Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR):** For the first time, the total number of teachers has crossed 1 crore, marking a 6.7% rise since 2022–23.
- **Pupil-Teacher Ratio:** PTR has significantly improved at all levels: Foundational (10), Preparatory (13), Middle (17), and Secondary (21), well within NEP's recommended ratio of 1:30.

- **Retention Rates Improved:** Foundational (98.9%), Preparatory (92.4%), Middle (82.8%), and Secondary (47.2%).
- **Gross Enrolment Ratio:** GER rose at Middle (from 89.5% to 90.3%) and Secondary (from 66.5% to 68.5%) levels; Reflects improved access and participation at higher grades.
- **Transition rates improved:** Foundational to Preparatory (98.6%), Preparatory to Middle (92.2%), and Middle to Secondary (86.6%), reflecting smoother student progression.
- **School Infrastructure Upgrades:**
  - **Schools with computers** rose to 64.7% from 57.2% last year.
  - **Internet connectivity** reached 63.5%, up from 53.9%.
  - **Electricity access** is available in 93.6% of schools; safe drinking water in 99.3%.
  - **Sanitation facilities** are nearly universal: girls' toilets (97.3%), boys' toilets (96.2%), handwashing stations (95.9%).
- **Inclusivity:** Schools with **ramps** and **handrails** increased to **54.9%**, enhancing accessibility for children with disabilities.

## NEWS IN SHORT

<b>Moran Community</b>	<p>The Moran community in Assam demanded <b>Scheduled Tribe (ST) status</b>.</p> <p><b>About Moran Community:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Morans are an <b>indigenous Assamese community</b>, historically agrarian and concentrated in <b>Upper Assam, especially Tinsukia and Dibrugarh districts</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Ethnicity:</b> Early settlers of the Brahmaputra Valley trace their ancestry to <b>Assamese tribal groups</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Language:</b> Assamese (with <b>Tai-Ahom linguistic influences</b>).</li> <li>• <b>Religious Affiliation:</b> In the 17th century, Aniruddhadeva converted them to Vaishnavism, sparking cultural and social regeneration. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ They belong to the Moamoria sect of Vaishnavism and have a small population in Arunachal Pradesh's Namsai district.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Maternal Mortality Ratio</b>	<p><b>Puducherry</b> has become the first Union Territory in India to achieve <b>zero maternal mortality</b> during 2024–25, earning a <b>Platinum Certificate</b> from the Union government.</p> <p><b>What is the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR)?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maternal mortality refers to the death of a woman <b>while pregnant or within 42 days</b> of termination of pregnancy, due to pregnancy-related causes, excluding accidental or incidental causes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>MMR</b> is the number of <b>maternal deaths per 1,00,000 live births</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>SDG Target:</b> Under Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3.1, India has committed to reduce MMR to <b>70 per 1,00,000 live births by 2030</b>.</li> </ul>

<b>Adi Sanskriti</b>	<p>The Ministry of Tribal Affairs launched world's first Digital Tribal University- Adi Sanskriti.</p> <p><b>About Adi Sanskriti</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Nature of Platform:</b> A digital academy and e-learning platform integrating an online marketplace for tribal arts, crafts, culture, and knowledge systems.</li> <li><b>Ministry:</b> Ministry of Tribal Affairs.</li> <li><b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To preserve and promote India's tribal heritage.</li> <li>To create sustainable livelihood opportunities for tribal communities.</li> <li>To integrate tribal culture with modern digital education and commerce.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Implementation:</b> Built in collaboration with State Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs) and implemented in phased stages.</li> </ul>												
<b>Adi Vaani</b>	<p>The Ministry of Tribal Affairs launched the <b>beta version</b> of its <b>Adi Vaani</b> Adivasi language translation application.</p> <p><b>About Adi Vaani:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>India's <b>first AI-powered translator</b> for tribal languages.</li> <li>It is designed to <b>bridge communication gaps</b> between tribal and non-tribal communities and also safeguard <b>endangered tribal languages</b> using advanced <b>Artificial Intelligence (AI)</b>.</li> <li><b>Developed under:</b> Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh</li> <li>Translates between <b>Hindi, English, and various tribal languages</b></li> <li><b>Developed by:</b> A team led by IIT Delhi with BITS Pilani, IIIT Hyderabad, IIIT Nava Raipur, and Tribal Research Institutes.</li> </ul>												
<b>National Annual Report and Index on Women's Safety (NARI)</b>	<p>The <b>National Annual Report &amp; Index on Women's Safety (NARI) 2025</b>, released by the <b>National Commission for Women (NCW)</b>.</p> <p><b>About National Annual Report &amp; Index on Women's Safety (NARI) 2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>It is a survey-based national safety index</b> that documents <b>lived experiences, unreported harassment, and perceptions of safety</b> beyond official crime data.</li> <li><b>Benchmark:</b> With a <b>national safety score</b> set at <b>65 per cent</b>, cities were rated as <b>performing 'much above', 'above', 'below', or 'much below'</b> this <b>benchmark</b>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Findings of the Report:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Safest cities:</b> Kohima, Visakhapatnam, Bhubaneswar, Aizawl, Gangtok, Itanagar, Mumbai.</li> <li><b>Least safe cities:</b> Patna, Jaipur, Faridabad, Delhi, Kolkata, Srinagar, Ranchi.</li> <li><b>Vulnerability:</b> <b>7% of women</b> reported <b>harassment</b>, with <b>younger women (under 24)</b> nearly <b>twice</b> as affected at <b>14%</b>.</li> <li><b>Most reported hotspots of harassment for women:</b> <b>Neighbourhoods (38 per cent)</b> and <b>public transport (29 per cent)</b></li> <li><b>Reporting rate:</b> Only 1 in 3 women report harassment</li> </ul>												
<b>NIRF India Rankings 2025</b>	<p>The Ministry of Education released the <b>National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) India Rankings 2025</b>.</p> <p><b>About National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>It is an initiative by the Indian government to assess and rank higher education institutions in the country</b></li> </ul> <table border="1" data-bbox="794 1740 1468 1987"> <thead> <tr> <th>Parameter</th><th>Weightage (in %)</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Teaching, Learning &amp; Resources</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr> <td>Research &amp; Professional Practice</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr> <td>Graduation Outcome</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr> <td>Outreach &amp; Inclusivity</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr> <td>Perception</td><td>10</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Parameter	Weightage (in %)	Teaching, Learning & Resources	30	Research & Professional Practice	30	Graduation Outcome	20	Outreach & Inclusivity	10	Perception	10
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Teaching, Learning & Resources	30												
Research & Professional Practice	30												
Graduation Outcome	20												
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Perception	10												

12

# Test Yourself

**1. The Mohenjodaro 'Dancing Girl' is significant in the history of Indian art because:**

- It is the earliest known stone carving depicting ritualistic dance.
- It provides evidence of advanced bronze casting techniques in Harappan culture.
- It is one of the first terracotta figurines produced in the Indus valley Civilisation.
- It represents a ritual idol of the Mother Goddess worshipped in Harappan religious practices.

**2. Consider the following statements regarding the Tripura Sundari Temple:**

- The temple is one of the 51 Shakti Peethas.
- The temple was built by the rulers of Ahom Kingdom in the 16th century.
- The Matabari Peda, offered as prasad at the temple, has been accorded a Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 and 2 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 1 and 3 only
- 1, 2 and 3

**3. Recently seen in the news, Tylenol refers to which of the following?**

- A preventive vaccine developed to reduce the risk of autism in newborn children.
- A widely used over-the-counter medicine prescribed for relief from fever and pain.
- An environmental pollutant recently linked in studies to increased incidence of autism among infants.
- A category of microplastics suspected of adversely affecting embryonic development during pregnancy.

**4. Consider the following statements regarding the Dadasaheb Phalke Award:**

- It is India's highest award in cinema, instituted in 1969.
- It is named after Dadasaheb Phalke, who is regarded as the "Father of Indian Cinema."
- The award consists of a Swarna Kamal (Golden Lotus), a cash prize, and a shawl.
- Shri Kamala Hasan, a leading actor of Tamil cinema, has been conferred this award in 2025.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1, 2 and 3 only
- 1, 2 and 4 only
- 1, 3 and 4 only
- 1, 2, 3 and 4

**5. Consider the following statements in respect of the World Archery Championships 2025:**

- The event was held in Gwangju, South Korea.
- India won its maiden gold medal in the men's compound team event by defeating France in the final.

**III. The Indian mixed team pair of Rishabh Yadav and Jyothi Surekha Vennam won gold by defeating the Netherlands in the final.**

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 and 2 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 1 and 3 only
- 1, 2 and 3

**6. Consider the following uranium mining/exploration sites with the respective States:**

<b>List I (Site)</b>	<b>List II (State)</b>
1. Jaduguda	A. Meghalaya
2. Tummalapalle	B. Jharkhand
3. Domiasiat (Wahkaji)	C. Andhra pradesh
4. Lambapur-Peddagattu	D. Telangana

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

- Only one
- Only two
- Only three
- All four

**7. With reference to the H-1B visa, consider the following statements:**

- It is a non-immigrant visa category for highly skilled workers.
- The annual quota for H-1B visas has remained fixed since 2004.
- Indian nationals account for more than two-thirds of H-1B recipients.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- Only one
- Only two
- All three
- None

**8. With reference to Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR), consider the following statements:**

- MMR is the number of maternal deaths during pregnancy or within 42 days of termination, due to pregnancy-related causes, per 10,000 live births.
- Under Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3.1, India has committed to reducing its MMR to 70 per 1,00,000 live births by 2030.

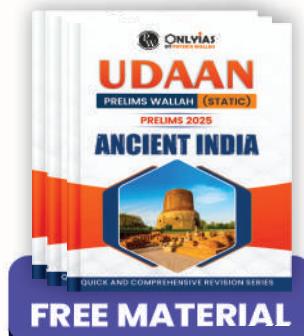
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

**9. With reference to the Bima Sugam Portal, consider the following statements:**

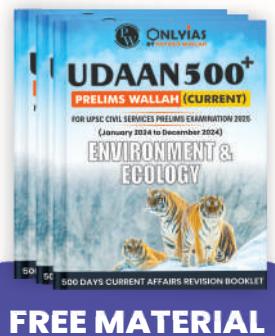
- It is a unified digital marketplace launched by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI).
- It is the world's first platform integrating life, health, general, and commercial insurance products under one digital public infrastructure model.

# OUR CONTENT



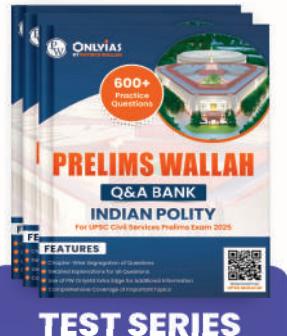
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**UDAAN  
(Static Revision)**



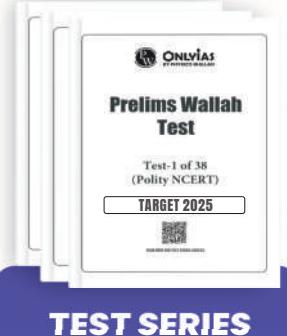
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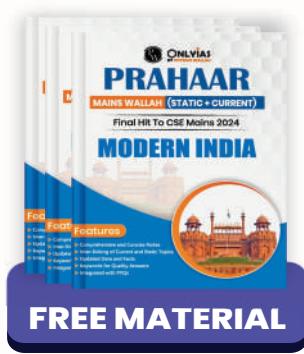
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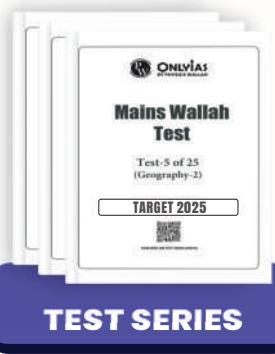
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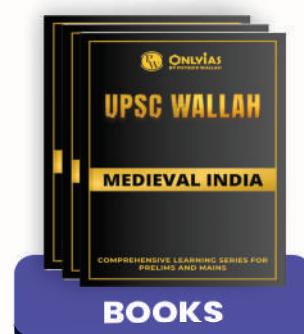
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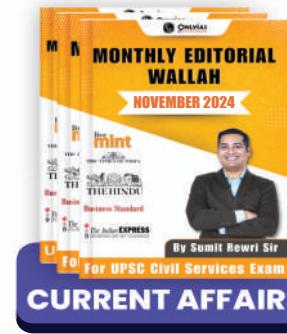
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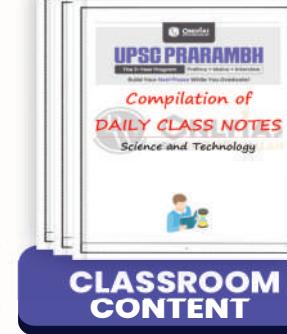
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