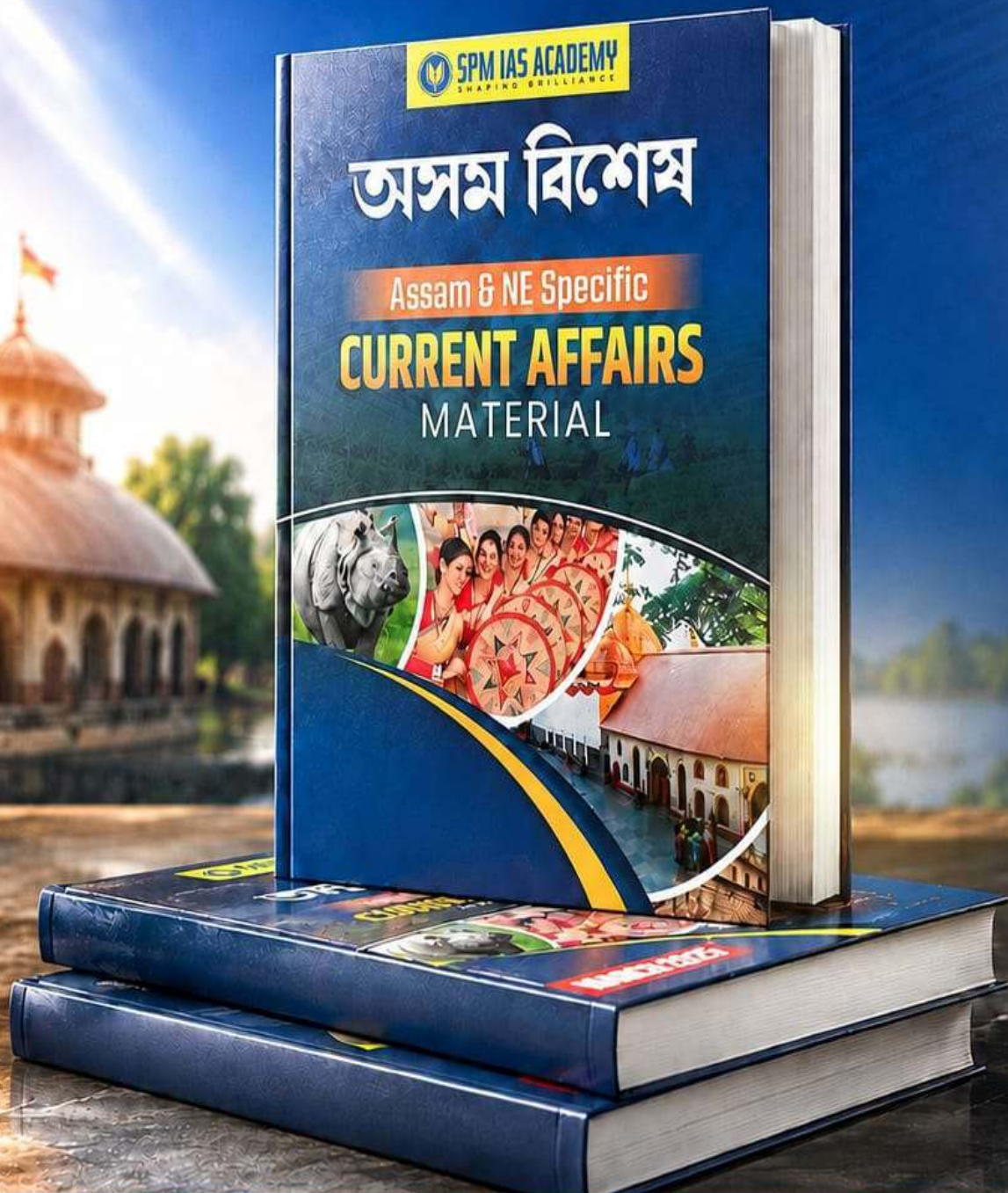




**SPM IAS ACADEMY**  
SHAPING BRILLIANCE

# ASSAM CURRENT AFFAIRS

January 2026 – May 2026



SPMIASAcademy



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# JANUARY MONTH

## 8th Pay Commission in Assam

### Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper V

#### Context

- Assam is set to become the first State in India to constitute the 8th State Pay Commission.
- The decision marks a major administrative and welfare milestone.
- Aimed at:
  - Improving employee welfare
  - Strengthening administrative efficiency
  - Ensuring fair and transparent pay structures



### 8th Pay Commission in India



#### Salaries are a part of Revenue Expenditure:

- Revenue Expenditure includes:
  - Salaries and wages
  - Pensions
  - Welfare schemes
  - Subsidies
  - Interest pay

#### What is a State Pay Commission?

- A Pay Commission is a body constituted by governments to:
  - Review and recommend salary structure, allowances and service conditions of government employees.
  - Ensure parity with cost of living, inflation and economic capacity of the State.

- Since 1947, there have been 7 Pay Commissions so far.



- The 8th Central Pay Commission is headed by Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai, a former Supreme Court judge and the Chairperson of the Press Council of India.
- Apart from Justice Desai, the Commission will have IIM Bangalore Professor Pulak Ghosh as Member (part-time), and Petroleum Secretary Pankaj Jain as Member-Secretary.
- The Commission will submit its report in 18 months (by Apr 2027)

#### Objectives of the 8th State Pay Commission

- Revision of:
  - Pay scales
  - Dearness Allowance (DA)
  - Other allowances and benefits
- Addressing:
  - Inflationary pressures
  - Cost of living variations
- Enhancing:





- 2.57 (optimistic)
- The higher the fitment factor, the bigger the salary hike.
- The 8th Central Pay Commission (CPC) is expected to bring a 20–25% salary hike.



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Consider the following statements regarding the 8th Central Pay Commission:

- Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai, a former Supreme Court judge, has been appointed as its Chairperson.
- The Commission includes a part-time member from the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore.
- The Commission is mandated to submit its report within 12 months of its constitution.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Ans: a

## RBI on Assam Economy

### Syllabus - GS Paper V

#### Context

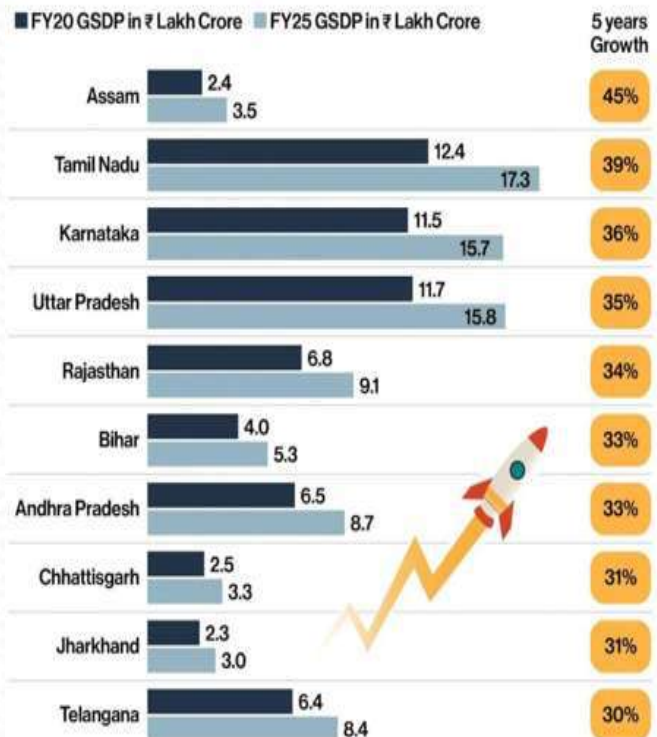
- Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma (Jan 1, Guwahati)
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) data recognises Assam as India's fastest-growing State economy over the last five years

#### Key Economic Highlights:

- GSDP Growth (RBI Estimates)**  
Assam GSDP growth (FY20–FY25): ~45%  
National average growth: ~29%

**Fastest-growing State in India** during this period

### Top 10 fastest growing major state economies in India over five years



GSDP: GROSS STATE DOMESTIC PRODUCT (Constant Prices); Source: RBI

### GSDP at Current Prices

Year	GSDP
2021–22	₹4.10 lakh crore
2025–26 (Projected)	₹7.41 lakh crore

- **CAGR:** ~16%  
☑ Indicates sustained, broad-based economic momentum.

#### 3. Per Capita Income

- Growth rate: **54%**
- Increased from ₹1,03,371 (2021–22) to ₹1,59,185 (2024–25)
- ☑ Reflects improvement in living standards and income levels.

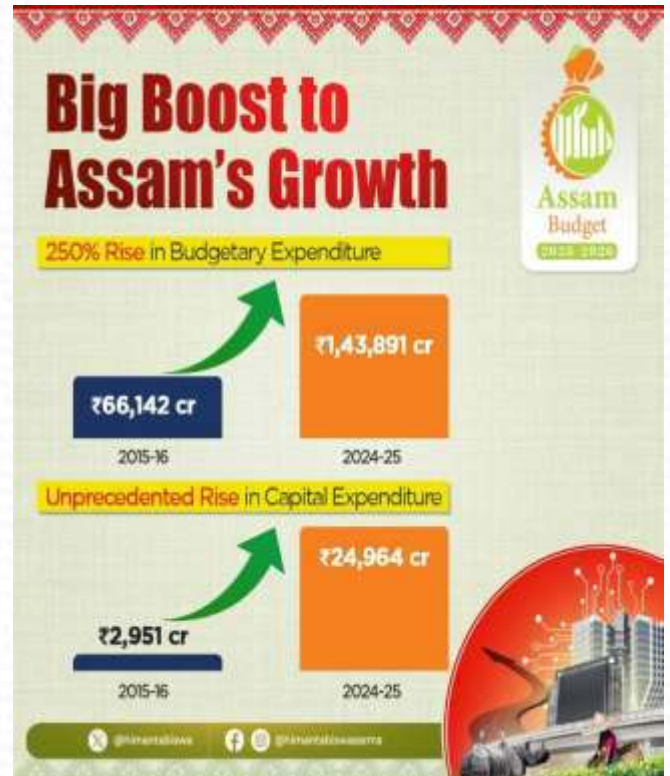




### Revenue & Fiscal Performance

- **State revenue increased by 53%**
- Capital outlay increased as a share of total expenditure.
- Supported by:
  - Higher **Central transfers**
  - Better **fiscal discipline**
  - Improved **Ease of Doing Business**

*Capital outlay (or capital expenditure) refers to funds a company or government spends to acquire, upgrade, or maintain long-term physical assets like buildings, machinery, equipment, or land, aiming to increase production capacity or extend an asset's useful life, rather than for day-to-day operations.*



### Sector-wise Growth Drivers

#### 1. Infrastructure-led Transformation

- Massive public investment in:
  - Roads & National Highways
  - Bridges over Brahmaputra (e.g., Dhola-Sadiya Bridge)
  - Railways (new lines & gauge conversion)
  - Inland waterways (NW-2: Brahmaputra)
  - Airports (Guwahati, Silchar, etc.)
  - Urban infrastructure (housing, water, sanitation)
- Reduced logistics cost and improved regional connectivity.

#### 2. Agriculture & Allied Sectors

- Average annual growth: **4–5%**
- Key drivers:
  - Improved irrigation
  - Credit access
  - Diversification into:
    - Fisheries (strong performer)
    - Horticulture
    - Animal husbandry

#### 3. Services Sector

- **Largest contributor (>50% of GSDP)**
- Growth rate: **7–8% annually**
- Key segments:



- Trade & transport
- Tourism (post-pandemic rebound)
- Communication
- Public administration

#### 4. Energy Sector

- Revival of **oil & gas ecosystem**
- Expansion of power generation & transmission
- Improved electricity availability supporting industry & services

#### Strategic & Geopolitical Advantage

- **Gateway to Southeast Asia**
- Assam as:
  - **India's Gateway to Southeast Asia**
  - **Expressway to ASEAN**
- Aligned with **Act East Policy**
- Strengthened role as:
  - Logistics hub
  - Trade & transit centre



#### Investment & Industrial Growth Key Developments

- **Investment & Infrastructure Summit 2.0**
  - Commitments worth several thousand crores
- **Tata Group's Semiconductor OSAT Unit**
  - Places Assam on India's **semiconductor manufacturing map**
  - Shift towards **high-value, technology-driven industry**

#### Prelims Practice Question

**Q1.** With reference to Assam's economic growth (FY 2020–FY 2025), consider the following statements:

1. RBI data shows Assam recorded a higher cumulative GSDP growth than the national average.
2. Services sector contributes less than 40% of Assam's GSDP.
3. Assam's per capita income grew by more than 50% during this period.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: b

**Sol: Statement 2 False** (Services contribute over 50%)

### Some other Indicators

#### Syllabus -

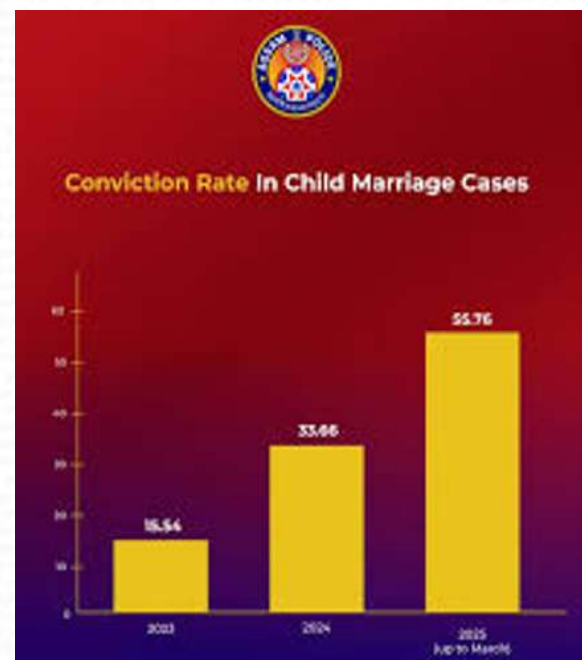
#### Crime & Justice Indicators

Indicator	2021	2025
Total cases registered	1.33 lakh	43,748
Chargesheet filing	—	81%
Conviction rate	6%	26.38%
National conviction avg	—	35%

#### New Criminal Laws

- Assam became **1st State to implement:**
  - **BNS (Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita)**
  - **BNSS**
  - **BSA**
- Ranked **No.1 in implementation** by MHA
  - Score: **78.13%**
  - National average: **53.69%**

Significant improvement in law & order ecosystem.



## Batadrava Satra

### Syllabus - GS Paper V

#### Context

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the Batadrava Than Redevelopment Project on December 29.
- Location: Batadrava Than, Nagaon district, Assam.
- Batadrava is the birthplace of Mahapurush Srimanta Sankardeva, pioneer of the Ekasarana Vaishnavite movement.

#### Official Name

- The historic site has been formally named: “Mahapurush Srimanta Sankardeva Abhirbhav Kshetra”



### Batadrava: Spiritual & Cultural Significance

#### Birthplace of Srimanta Sankardeva

- Sankardeva (1449–1568):
  - Saint, reformer, poet, philosopher
  - Founder of **Ekasarana Nama Dharma**
  - Architect of **Assamese cultural and spiritual consciousness**

#### Civilizational Outlook

- Sankardeva connected Assam to the broader Indian civilizational idea of **Bharatvarsha**
- Scholar **Birinchi Kumar Barua**:

- Sankardeva envisioned **India as motherland** centuries ago
- Works reflect reverence for Bharat:
  - *Bhakti Ratnakar* → Chapter: “**Bharat Bhu-Prashansa**”
  - Lines praising **Bharatvarsha** and human birth in India.



#### Objectives of the Project

- To transform Batadrava Than into a **world-class spiritual and cultural tourism destination**
- To preserve and showcase:
  - Vaishnavite heritage
  - Sattriya culture
  - Sankardeva's philosophy and contributions
- To promote **cultural tourism and heritage conservation**





### Key Features

- **World's tallest Guru Asana**
- Guest houses inspired by **Sattriya culture**
- **Art Centre** shaped like a traditional cymbal (Taal)
- **Research Centre** modelled after a Khol (Vaishnavite drum)
- **Skill Development Centre** designed like a boat
- **Theatre** inspired by traditional **Assamese Japi**
- Integration of:
  - Bhaona
  - Gayan-Bayan
  - Sattriya dance
  - Vaishnavite aesthetics



### Crisis to Assamese Cultural Identity

#### Encroachment Issue

- Over decades:
  - Illegal encroachment on satra & namghar lands
  - Cultural centres threatened

#### Impact

- Loss of heritage institutions
- Threat to:
  - Assamese identity
  - Language
  - Cultural continuity

#### Assam Sattra Land Review Commission Findings

- **15,289 bighas** of satra land encroached across Assam
- **Barpeta alone:** 7,137 bighas
- Other affected districts:
  - Nagaon
  - Majuli
  - Bajali
  - Lakhimpur
  - Dibrugarh
  - Kamrup
  - Bongaigaon
  - Dhubri

**Q. Batadrava (Bordowa) occupies a central place in the cultural and spiritual history of Assam. Discuss the role of Mahapurush Srimanta Sankardeva in shaping Assamese cultural identity and explain the civilizational significance of Batadrava in the context of India's Bhakti tradition. (250 words)**

#### Model Points:

- **Batadrava (Bordowa)** is the birthplace of **Mahapurush Srimanta Sankardeva**, the pioneer of Assamese cultural and spiritual identity.
- Sankardeva founded **Ekasarana Nama Dharma**, emphasizing devotion, equality and ethical living over ritualism and caste divisions.
- By using the **Assamese language**, he democratized religion and unified society.
- He laid the foundation of Assamese cultural expressions such as:
  - **Borgeet**
  - **Bhaona**
  - **Sattriya dance**



- Sankardeva was deeply influenced by the **pan-Indian Bhakti movement** and through his pilgrimages integrated Assam with the broader Indian civilizational ethos.
- His writings frequently praised **Bharatvarsha**, fostering an early sense of national consciousness.
- **Batadrava** thus represents a civilizational confluence where regional culture harmonized with Indian spiritual traditions.
- The site continues to symbolize Assam's cultural continuity, social harmony and spiritual heritage.

## Mulai Kathoni 2.0 destruction

### Syllabus - GS Paper V

#### Fire at Mulai Kathoni 2.0

##### Context

- **Date & Place:** ORHAT, Majuli – Dec 29
- **Incident:** Massive fire at **Mulai Kathoni 2.0**, a community-led afforestation site on a **sapori (sandbar)** of the **Brahmaputra**
- **Forest Division:** Majuli Forest Division
- **Adjacent to:** Original **Mulai Kathoni (Molai Forest)** created by **Padma Shri awardee Jadav Payeng**



#### Details of the Fire Incident

- **Time:** Around **11:25 am**
- **Estimated area affected:** **~5 bighas**
- **Trees destroyed:** **>5,000 saplings**
- **Age of plants:** **1–5 years**
- **Wildlife impact:**
  - Death of birds, insects and nesting damage
- **Cause:** Suspected **deliberate act (arson)** by miscreants

#### About Mulai Kathoni & Mulai Kathoni 2.0

##### Mulai Kathoni (Molai Forest)

- Man-made forest on Brahmaputra sandbar
- Created single-handedly by **Jadav Payeng**
- Global example of:
  - Community-based conservation
  - Riverine ecosystem restoration
- **Mulai Kathoni 2.0**
- Initiated by **Munmuni Payeng** (daughter of Jadav Payeng)
- Objective:
  - Restore greenery along Brahmaputra riverbanks
  - Extend Payeng's conservation legacy
- Managed by **NGO: Sustainable Green Initiative (since 2022)**



#### Afforestation & Regeneration Data

- **Saplings planted (2022–2024):** **~10 lakh**
- **Long-term target:**
  - **10 lakh saplings**
  - Across **1,300 hectares**
- **Ecosystem supports:**
  - Elephants
  - Buffaloes
  - Deer
  - Tigers
  - Vultures
  - Birds





**Response & Rescue Efforts**

- Fire spread rapidly due to:
  - Dry vegetation
  - Riverine conditions
- **Immediate response:**
  - Munmuni Payeng
  - Village volunteers (~70)
  - Students (30-member team from Titabar)
- Firefighting:
  - Manual methods using branches and shrubs
  - Accessed by crossing ~100-metre-wide river

**Prelims Practice Question**

**Q1.** With reference to Mulai Kathoni 2.0, consider the following statements:

1. It is a community-led afforestation project located on a sapori of the Brahmaputra River.
2. The project was initiated by Jadav Payeng under the Majuli Forest Department.
3. It aims at riverbank stabilisation and biodiversity restoration.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: b

**Sol: Statement 2** (Initiated by Munmuni Payeng, not the Forest Department)

**Pratima Barua Pandey Award**

**Syllabus - GS Paper V**

**Context**

- **Event:** Conferment of *Pratima Barua Pandey Award*
- **Date & Place:** December 27, Chandmari, Guwahati (near statue of Pratima Barua Pandey)
- **Occasion:** 23rd death anniversary of Pratima Barua Pandey (Goalparia Lok Geet maestro)



**About the Award**

- **Instituted by:** All Assam Students' Union (AASU)
- **Purpose:** Recognition of outstanding contribution to preservation and promotion of Assam's folk culture
- **Award Components:**
  - Citation
  - Memento
  - Xorai
  - Eri chador
  - Traditional jacket
  - **Cash award:** ₹25,000

**Awardee: Ratneshwar Moran**

- **Background:**
  - Renowned exponent of Assam's folk culture
  - Hails from **Bormesai Shimoluguri, Kakopathar**, Tinsukia district
- **Contribution:**
  - Over **50 years** of silent service to indigenous folk traditions



- Played a role in teaching **Bihu songs** to legends:
  - Dr Bhupen Hazarika
  - Jayanta Hazarika
  - Archana Mahanta
- **Significance:**
  - Symbol of grassroots cultural preservation
  - Represents inter-generational transmission of folk heritage



- **Nature of Scheme:**
  - **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)** type monthly stipend
  - Social welfare + education support scheme



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q1.** Consider the following statements regarding the Pratima Barua Pandey Award:

1. The award is instituted by the All Assam Students' Union (AASU).
2. The award carries a cash prize of ₹25,000.
3. It is conferred exclusively by the Government of Assam.

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

## Babu Asoni

### Context

A student welfare initiative announced by **Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma**.

Aimed at **financial support for male students** from economically weaker sections.

From 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2026

### Key Features of Babu Asoni Scheme

- **Beneficiaries:**
  - **Boy students** belonging to families with **annual income below ₹4 lakh**.
- **Financial Assistance:**
  - **₹2,000 per month** – for **Post Graduate (PG) students**
  - **₹1,000 per month** – for **Graduate (UG) students**

## Jyoti-Bishnu Antarjatik Kala Mandir

Inaugurated the world-class **Jyoti-Bishnu Antarjatik Kala Mandir** with the capacity for an audience of **5,000**.

Named after two legendary figures of Assam, **Jyoti Prasad Agarwala Ji** and **Bishnu Prasad Rabha Ji**, the auditorium built with the cost of **₹291 crore** will become Assam's launchpad to go global with international events, fulfilling **Modi Ji's vision** for a developed Assam.



## Kaziranga goes Global



## Kulsi Dolphins

Syllabus – Prelims / GS Paper V

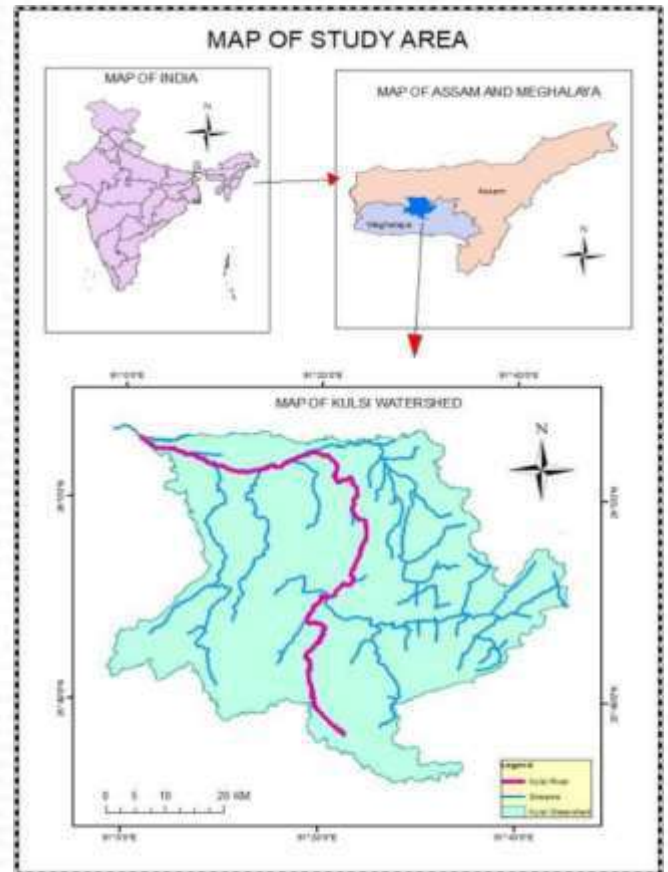
Date: 25.12.2025

### News in Brief

- The **Kulsi River–Dorabeel wetland channel**, a crucial ecological corridor in Assam, is facing severe degradation, threatening the survival of the **Gangetic river dolphin**, India's **National Aquatic Animal**.

### Geographical Context

- Kulsi River** flows through **Kamrup district** of Assam.
- It connects the **Dorabeel wetland** with the **Brahmaputra River**.
- The channel length is approximately **700 metres**.
- This channel is vital for:
  - Fish migration
  - Dolphin movement
  - Nutrient exchange between river and wetland



### Ecological Importance of the Channel

- Acts as a **lifeline** for **Gangetic river dolphins**.
- Enables **seasonal migration** of fish from wetland to river.
- Ensures **year-round food availability** for dolphins.
- Dolphins are often sighted at the **confluence**, especially during fish movement.

### Key Environmental Issues Highlighted

#### 1. Shrinking Channel Depth

- During rainy season: depth ~ **4 metres**
- During lean season: depth reduces to **2 metres**
- Reduction disrupts dolphin movement and fish migration

#### 2. Sedimentation

- Channel is **choked by silt deposition**
- Sediments originate from:
  - Kulsi river
  - Dorabeel wetland
- Excess sedimentation blocks natural water flow



### 3. Human Interference

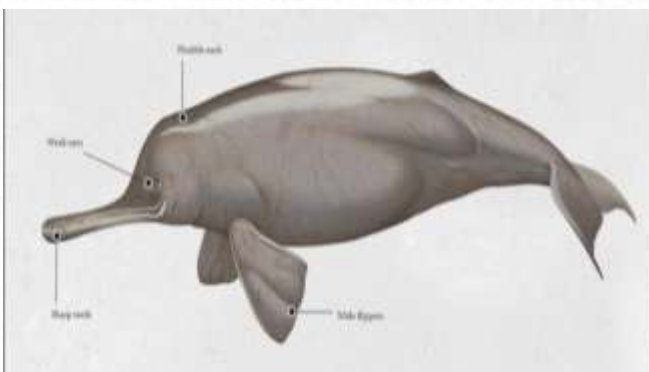
- Unscrupulous traders block the channel during lean season
- Purpose:
  - Easy movement of **dumpers and earth movers**
- Violates **environmental laws**

### 4. Disruption of Fish Migration

- Fish movement from wetland to river has **almost stopped**
- Directly impacts dolphin food availability
- Threatens entire **aquatic food chain**

### About Gangetic River Dolphin

- **Scientific name:** *Platanista gangetica*
- **Status:**
  - IUCN: Endangered
  - Schedule I species (Wildlife Protection Act)
- Declared **National Aquatic Animal of India**
- Indicator species of **healthy river ecosystems**
- Uses **echolocation** due to poor eyesight



### DEEP DIVE



### Types of Dolphins

#### 1. Gangetic Dolphin (*Platanista gangetica gangetica*)

- **Physical Characteristics**
- **Snout and Eyes:** The **long, narrow snout** aids in catching prey in the muddy waters of the river. The **small, underdeveloped eyes** are indicative of the species' **blindness**, which is an adaptation for life in murky waters.
- **Skin:** The **smooth, hairless** skin of the Gangetic dolphin is typically **grayish-brown**, which helps it camouflage in the riverbed.
- **Size and Weight:** Adult dolphins can grow up to **2.5 meters** in length and weigh around **100-150 kg**.

#### 2. Indus River Dolphin (*Platanista minor*)

- **Physical Characteristics**
  - **Snout and Eyes:** The **long, pointed snout** aids in reaching the riverbed to hunt for fish. The **non-functional eyes** are typical of river dolphins, indicating their **blindness** in murky waters.
  - **Body Shape:** Smaller and more compact compared to the **Gangetic dolphin**, with a **length of 2.5 meters** and a weight of about **90 kg**.
  - **Coloration:** Light gray to brownish with a paler belly, adapted for blending into the riverbed.

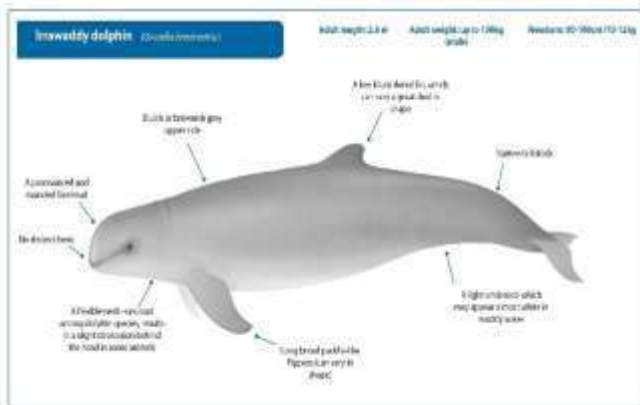


#### 3. Irrawaddy Dolphin (*Orcaella brevirostris*)

- **Physical Characteristics**
  - **Head and Body:** The **round, melon-shaped head** distinguishes it from other dolphins. Its **beakless** face gives it a distinct appearance, and its **small dorsal fin** is another notable feature.



- **Size:** Irrawaddy dolphins typically grow to about **2.5-3 meters** in length.
- **Color:** They have **grayish-white** skin, with **dark patches** around the head and face.
- **Behavior and Biology**
  - **Habitat:** Primarily found in **estuarine waters** and **lakes**, such as **Chilika Lake**, and are tolerant of **brackish water**.
  - **Diet:** Their diet mainly consists of **small fish, crustaceans, and mollusks**. They are also known to forage cooperatively with local fishermen in **Chilika Lake**.
  - **Group Size:** Tends to live in **small pods**, usually 2-4 individuals, often forming temporary alliances with other species.



### Way Forward

- **Conservation Measures**
  - Ensure **uninterrupted water flow** in the channel
  - Regular **desiltation** using scientific methods
  - Strict enforcement of environmental laws
  - Prevent illegal earth-moving activities
- **Institutional Actions**
  - Declare the channel as an **eco-sensitive zone**
  - Integrate conservation under:
    - National Mission for Clean Ganga
    - Wetland (Conservation and Management) Rules

- Community participation in monitoring
- **Sustainable Development**
  - Promote **eco-tourism** linked to dolphin conservation
  - Balance development with ecological sustainability

**PROJECT DOLPHIN**  
PRESERVING OUR UNDERWATER FRIENDS

- 10-YEAR PROJECT TO FOCUS ON BOTH RIVER AND SEA DOLPHINS**
- AIM TO STRENGTHEN BIODIVERSITY, CREATE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND ATTRACT TOURISM**
- KILLING, HABITAT FRAGMENTATION BY DAMS AND BARRAGES AND INDISCRIMINATE FISHING HAS REDUCED THE GANGES RIVER DOLPHIN POPULATION FROM TENS OF THOUSANDS TO AROUND 3,700 OVER THE LAST CENTURY**
- GANGES RIVER DOLPHIN, A SPECIES OF FRESHWATER DOLPHINS, IS PRIMARILY FOUND IN GANGA AND BRAHMAPUTRA RIVERS, AND THEIR TRIBUTARIES IN INDIA, BANGLADESH AND NEPAL**
- IN INDIA, THESE DOLPHINS ARE SIGHTED IN DEEP RIVERS IN ASSAM, BIHAR, JHARKHAND, MADHYA PRADESH, RAJASTHAN, UTTAR PRADESH AND WEST BENGAL**
- GANGES RIVER DOLPHIN, OFFICIALLY DISCOVERED IN 1801, CAN LIVE ONLY IN FRESHWATER**

### Prelims Practice Question

**Q. With reference to the Kulsri River–Dorabeel wetland channel, consider the following statements:**

1. The Kulsri River flows through the Kamrup district of Assam and connects the Dorabeel wetland with the Brahmaputra River.
2. The channel plays a crucial role in fish migration, dolphin movement, and nutrient exchange between the river and the wetland.
3. The Gangetic river dolphin depends on this channel mainly because it provides deep-water habitats throughout the year.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only



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

Ans: a

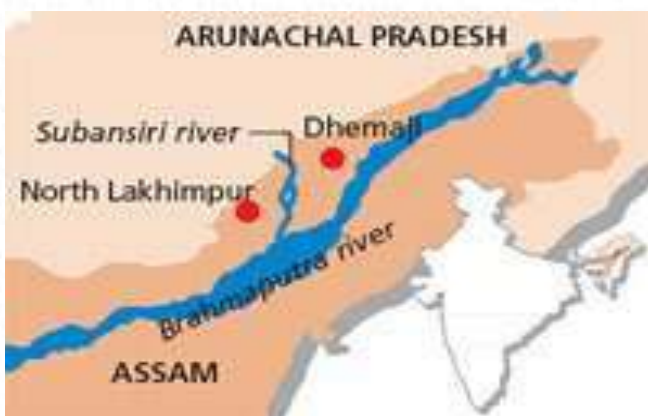
**Sol: Statement 3 is incorrect:** The channel depth reduces significantly during the lean season (to about 2 metres), so it does not provide deep-water habitats year-round.

## Subansiri Flood Basin

### Syllabus – Prelims / GS Paper V

#### Subansiri River:

- **Origin:** Kangig Glacier, Tibet
- **Total length:** ~375 km
  - China: 49 km
  - Arunachal Pradesh: 236 km
  - Assam: 90 km
- **Basin area:** ~37,000 sq km
  - 40% in Tibet
  - 60% in India
- **Rainfall:** ~1,300 mm annually
- **Snowmelt contribution:** ~13.6%
- **Average annual flow:** ~44 BCM



## Why in News

- Recent flood events (2022–2025) demonstrated the **flood moderation role of the Subansiri Lower Hydroelectric Project**.
- Controlled releases, reservoir storage, and Early Warning Systems (EWS) helped **reduce downstream flood impacts in Assam**, especially during peak monsoon inflows.

Shri Manohar Lal Inaugurates Commercial Operation of the first Unit of Country's Largest Hydropower Project



## Commercial operation of Unit-2 (250 MW) inaugurated :

- Shri Manohar Lal, Union Minister of Power, Housing & Urban Affairs, inaugurated the commercial operation of Unit-2 (250 MW) of the 2000 MW (8×250 MW) Subansiri Lower Hydroelectric Project through virtual mode.
- Mode: **Virtual**
- Project size: **2000 MW (8 × 250 MW)**
- Remaining units:
  - **3 units shortly**



- Remaining 4 units during 2026–27



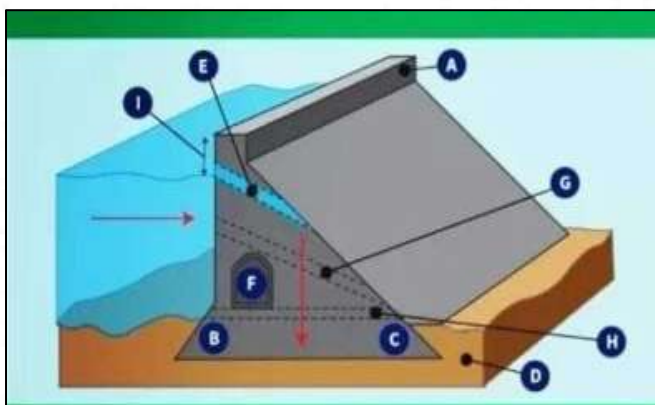
- The gross storage capacity of the reservoir will be 1.37 km<sup>3</sup>.
- The powerhouse will comprise eight Francis-type turbines capable of generating 250 MW of electricity each.

**Issues Faced :**

- Originally sanctioned in 2003, the construction began in 2005, the journey since has been anything but smooth.
- By 2011, the project was brought to a grinding halt following widespread protests from environmental groups, local communities, and civil society organizations.
- Construction resumed in Oct 2019, and NHPC has since made steady progress.
- However, the delays came at a steep cost. The project’s budget ballooned from initial estimates of Rs 6,285 crore, to Rs 26,075 crore — a more than fourfold increase from its original estimate.

**Lower Subansiri Hydroelectric Project Features**

- It is a 2000 MW run-of-the-river hydro project being constructed on the Subansiri River, a tributary of the Brahmaputra.
- It is located at Gerukamukh on the Arunachal Pradesh–Assam border.
- It will be the single largest hydroelectric plant in India when completed.
- The project is being developed by the state-run National Hydro Power Corporation (NHPC).
- The construction of the project has been underway since 2005. The project cost was met through 70% equity and 30% debt financing by the provision of a term loan.
- The central government is providing budgetary support as part of the equity component.



- It consists of a **concrete gravity dam**, which will be 116 m high from the riverbed level and 130 m from the foundation.
- The length of the dam will be 284 m.

**2. Hydrological Behaviour of Subansiri**

- **Main discharge source:** Monsoon rainfall (April–September)
- **Flood threshold:** ~7,000 cumec
- **Historic flood peaks:**
  - 18,790 cumec at Chouldhowaghat (1972)



- 13,800 cumec at Gerukamukh (2011)
- **100-year flood:** ~19,600 cumec
- **Probable Maximum Flood:** ~37,500 cumec



### 3. Geomorphological Characteristics

- Enters Assam plains near **Gerukamukh** (~80 m elevation)
- Spreads into **braided channels**
- **High silt load** due to:
  - Himalayan erosion
  - Steep gradient in Arunachal
- Highly prone to:
  - Channel migration
  - Bank erosion
  - Floodplain instability



### 4. Impact of the 1950 Assam Earthquake on Subansiri

- Magnitude **8.6 earthquake**
- Landslides temporarily dammed the Subansiri
- Sudden breach after 3 days caused:
  - Massive floods
  - Heavy silt deposition
  - Raised riverbeds
- **Channel shift:**
  - ~5 km eastward
- **Migration rate (1984–2014):**
  - ~200 metres per year (satellite data)

### 5. Subansiri Lower Hydroelectric Project (SLHEP)

#### Location & Structure

- **Location:** Gerukamukh (Arunachal–Assam border)
- **Dam type:** Concrete gravity dam
- **Height:** 116 metres
- **Reservoir capacity:** 1,365 MCM
- **Installed capacity:** 2,000 MW

#### Engineering & Technology Firsts (High Prelims Value)

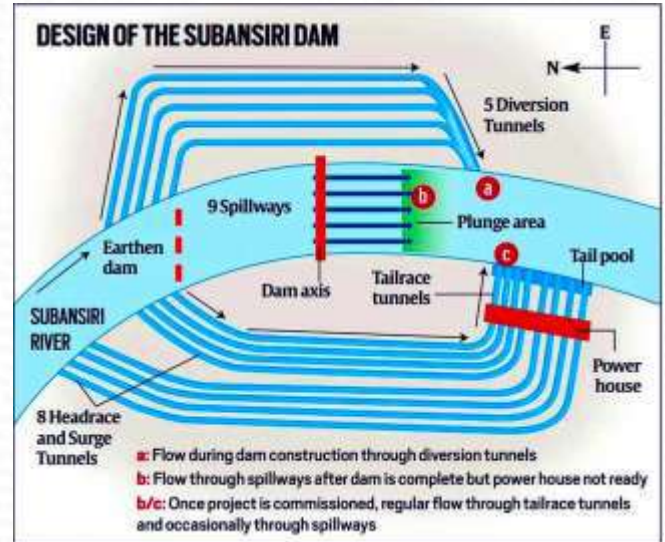
- India's:
  - **Heaviest hydro generator rotors**
  - **Largest stators**
  - **Biggest main inlet valves**
- First-ever use in India:
  - **Rotec's Tower Belt** for dam concreting
- Largest aggregate processing & batching plants

#### Flood Control Provisions

- **First cascaded dam on Subansiri River**
- During floods:
  - **One-third of reservoir kept empty**
- Purpose:
  - Absorb excess monsoon inflow
  - Protect downstream Assam
- **Flood cushion:**
  - 15 metres
  - 442 MCM storage
- **Designed for:**



- 24-hour moderation of a **10-year return flood**



### 6. Demonstrated Flood Moderation

- Inflows rose from 3,200 to 7,861 cumec
- Excess water stored: ~201 MCM
- Outflow limited to 7,050 cumec
- **Result:**
  - Peak reduced by ~10%
  - Flood delayed by ~15 hours downstream

### Subansiri Cascade Projects

- **Subansiri Lower:** 2,000 MW (commissioning stage)
- **Subansiri Middle & Upper:** Proposed
- **Potential benefits:**
  - Basin-wide flood moderation
  - Enhanced hydropower generation
  - Improved regulation of monsoon flows

### 9. Climate Change (Subansiri Basin)

- Rising temperatures → higher evapotranspiration
- Reduced snowmelt share
- Increased dependence on monsoon rainfall
- Likely increase in:
  - Peak flows
  - Sediment load
- Makes **regulated storage on Subansiri increasingly critical**

### What exactly happened?

- NHPC Limited has **started commercial operation of the 3rd unit (250 MW)** of the Subansiri Lower Hydroelectric Project.



### Why is this news important?

#### 1. Boost to India's Energy Security

- Adds reliable power to the national grid (unlike intermittent solar/wind).
- Strengthens baseload capacity, especially in eastern and northeastern regions.
- Hydropower helps in grid balancing as renewable energy share rises.



## 2. Clean Energy Transition

- Hydropower is renewable and low-emission.
- Contributes to India's Net Zero targets and reduces coal dependence.
- Provides peak load support, unlike many other renewables.

## 3. Strategic Importance of Northeast.

- Northeast holds nearly 40% of India's hydropower potential.

### Major Concerns and Controversies

#### Environmental Concerns

- Impact on Subansiri river flow and biodiversity
- Risk of downstream flooding in Assam

#### Social Issues

- Protests related to displacement and livelihood impacts

#### Seismic Risk

- Located in an earthquake-prone Himalayan region
- Raises dam safety concerns



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q. With reference to the Subansiri River and the Subansiri Lower Hydroelectric Project, consider the following statements:**

- The Subansiri River originates from the Kangig Glacier in Tibet and flows through Arunachal Pradesh before entering Assam near Gerukamukh.
- The Subansiri Lower Hydroelectric Project is a concrete gravity dam with partial flood control provision through a dedicated flood cushion.
- The average annual discharge of the Subansiri River is primarily dependent on snowmelt contribution.

**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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 3 – Incorrect:** Subansiri's discharge is mainly rainfall-driven; snowmelt contributes only about 13.6%.

**Q. With reference to the third unit of the Subansiri Lower Hydroelectric Project, consider the following statements:**

- The third unit has an installed capacity of 250 MW.
- With its commissioning, the total operational capacity of the project has reached 1,000 MW.
- The project is being developed by NHPC Limited.

Options:

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 2: Incorrect – Total operational capacity is 750 MW (3 units), not 1,000 MW.**

## Udasin Bhakats

### Syllabus – Prelims / GS Paper V

#### Context:

- Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma** launched a financial assistance scheme for **Udasin Bhakats** at a programme held at **Janata Bhawan, Guwahati**.



**About the Scheme**

- **Beneficiaries:** Udasin Bhakats of Sattras in Assam
- **Nature of assistance:** Direct financial support
- **Amount:** ₹1,500 per month
- **Mode of transfer:** Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) to bank accounts
- **Date of credit:** On the **10th of every month**



**Why they are in news**

- Many Udasin Bhakats face **financial insecurity** due to:
  - Decline in donations
  - Encroachment on Sattrra land

**Objectives of the Scheme**

- Recognition of:
  - Spiritual role
  - Cultural contribution
  - Social service of Udasin Bhakats
- Ensure:
  - Social security
  - Welfare of Sattradhikars and Bhakats

**Udasin Bhakats**

- **Udasin Bhakats** are a **distinct group of Vaishnavite devotees associated with the Sattrra (monastic) system of Assam, established by Srimanta Sankardeva.**
- **Who they are**
- **Udasin Bhakats** are **celibate (non-householder) monks** living within **Sattras**.
- They lead a **life of renunciation (udāsin = detached/ascetic)** and are dedicated full-time to spiritual service.



**Role in Sattras**

- Assist the **Sattradhikar** (head of a Sattrra) in:
  - Daily religious rituals (Naam-Prasanga, Kirtan)
  - Preservation of **Neo-Vaishnavite traditions**
  - Teaching scriptures like **Kirtan-Ghoxa** and **Bhagavata**
- Act as custodians of:
  - Sattriya culture
  - Manuscripts, music, dance, and religious practices

**Key Characteristics**

- Do **not** engage in household or economic activities
- Traditionally depend on:
  - Public donations
  - Support from Sattrra lands
- Wear simple attire and follow strict discipline
- Live inside Sattrra premises

**Difference from Grihasthi Bhakats**

Udasin Bhakats	Grihasthi Bhakats
Celibate monks	Married household devotees
Full-time religious service	Part-time religious involvement
Live in Sattras	Live in villages
Renunciatory life	Householder life





### Implementation Mechanism

- Beneficiary lists prepared by:
  - Offices of respective **Deputy Commissioners**
- Verification by:
  - District Commissioner / Additional District Commissioner
- Names uploaded on:
  - **DIDS portal** (district-wise)
- Department involved:
  - Directorate of Cultural Affairs

### Coverage Details

- **Total Udasin Bhakats covered at present: 620**
- **District-wise coverage (selected):**
  - Barpeta – 100
  - Dhubri & Goalpara – 8 each
  - Golaghat – 6
  - Jorhat – 54
  - Kamrup – 14
  - Lakhimpur – 22
  - Majuli – 74
  - Nagaon – 7
  - Nalbari – 6
  - Sivasagar – 6
  - Sonitpur – 3
  - Udalguri – 3

### Associated Issues Highlighted

- Many **Sattras face financial stress** due to:
  - Decline in public donations
  - Reduced traditional income sources
- **Encroachment on Satra land** identified as a major concern

### Related Government Measures

- Constitution of **Assam Satra Commission**
- Commission empowered to:
  - Provide financial grants
  - Permit eviction in cases of encroachment
- As per Assam State Land Revenue & Monitoring Commission:
  - **15,288 bighas** of Satra land encroached
  - **7,137 bighas** under encroachment in Barpeta district alone

(As per the Assam Cabinet decision on July 10, 2020)

**MONTHLY SUPPORT**  
for Udasin Bhakats of the state

To uphold the dignity and well-being of the revered *Udasin Bhakats* residing in the Sattras of Assam, the Government of Assam has extended monthly honorary support

**Support Amount: ₹1,500 per month**

### Prelims Practice Question

**Q. With reference to the financial assistance scheme for Udasin Bhakats launched by the Assam Government, consider the following statements:**

1. Under the scheme, Udasin Bhakats receive a monthly financial assistance directly credited to their bank accounts.
2. The identification and verification of beneficiaries is carried out at the district



level before uploading names on a digital portal.

- The scheme covers all Bhakats associated with Sattras across Assam without any district-wise limitation.

**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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 3 – Incorrect:** The scheme currently covers identified Udasin Bhakats (620), not all Bhakats across Assam.

## Tezpur Air Base upgrade

*Syllabus – Prelims / GS Paper V*

### Background

- The Government of India has approved the acquisition of **382.82 acres of land** at **Bokajan village in Sonitpur district, Assam**, for the expansion of the **Tezpur Air Force Station (11 Wing)**.

### The land will be used for:

- Advanced weapon systems and strategic assets to be inducted
- Upgrades focused on 11 Wing operations Located 150–200 km from the LAC, strengthening eastern air power
- A key forward base east of the Siliguri Corridor
- Tezpur AFS** remains a critical pillar of India's air dominance in the eastern sector.



### Historical Significance of Tezpur Air Base

- Established in **1942** during **World War II** by the Royal Indian Air Force.
- Became a full-fledged Indian Air Force base in **1959**.
- Aircraft Operated Over Time**
  - Vampire
  - Toofani
  - Hunter
  - MiG-21
  - Gnat
  - Mi-4 helicopters
  - Cheetah and Chetak helicopters
  - MiG-21 Operational Flying Training Unit (MOFTU)
- Present Status**
  - Currently houses **two squadrons of Su-30MKI** fighter aircraft.
  - Hosts other **strategic and support assets**.





## Why Tezpur Air Base is Strategically Important

### 1. Geographical Significance

- Located in **central Assam**, Tezpur Air Base is close to the **India–China border (LAC)**.
- Serves as a forward base for rapid air operations in **Arunachal Pradesh and the wider Northeast**.
- Distance to another key eastern air base **Chabua** is about **250 km**, allowing integrated regional coverage.

### 2. Role in Eastern Theatre

- Forms a critical component of the **Eastern Air Command**.
- Enables quick deployment of fighter aircraft and air defence systems during border tensions.
- Enhances India's deterrence posture against **hostile neighbours** in the eastern sector.



## Strategic Rationale Behind the Upgrade

### 1. China Factor

- Ongoing tensions along the **Line of Actual Control (LAC)**.
- Need for strong air dominance and missile defence in the Northeast.

### 2. Multi-Pronged Defence Strategy

- Combination of:
  - Advanced imported systems (S-400)
  - Indigenous missiles (Akash-NG)
  - Infrastructure expansion
- Focus on **deterrence, rapid response, and survivability**.

## Indigenous Defence Boost – Akash NG

- The **DRDO** has successfully completed **user evaluation trials** of the **Akash Next-Generation (Akash-NG)** missile system.
- Akash-NG complements S-400 by providing **indigenous medium-range air defence**, supporting **Atmanirbhar Bharat in defence**.



**Infrastructure Development at Tezpur**

- **Hardened Aircraft Shelters (HAS)**
- Expansion will allow construction of **additional Hardened Aircraft Shelters.**
- HAS are reinforced structures designed to:
  - Protect aircraft from aerial and missile attacks
  - Increase survivability during conflict
- **Other Likely Upgrades**
  - Runway and taxiway expansion
  - Logistics and maintenance infrastructure
  - Support facilities for additional aircraft squadrons

**NEXT GENERATION HARDENED AIRCRAFT SHELTERS**



**Deployment of SAMs**

**Surface-to-Air Missiles (SAMs)**

- **Type :** *Mobile Surface-to-Air Missile (SAM) system*
- **Role:**
  - Defend airspace against:
    - Enemy fighter aircraft
    - Ballistic missiles
    - Cruise missiles
    - Drones and UAVs



**India's Surface-to-Air Missile (SAM) Systems**

System	Range	Category
Akash	~30 km	SR-SAM
QRSAM	~25-30 km	SR-SAM
MR-SAM (Barak-8)	~70 km	MR-SAM
LR-SAM	~90 km	Long-range
VSHORAD	~6 km	Very short
S-400	Up to 400 km	Strategic





**Prelims Practice Question**

**Q1. Consider the following statements regarding Tezpur Air Force Station:**

1. Tezpur Air Force Station is located in Sonitpur district of Assam.
2. It functions under the Eastern Air Command of the Indian Air Force.
3. It was established after India's independence.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

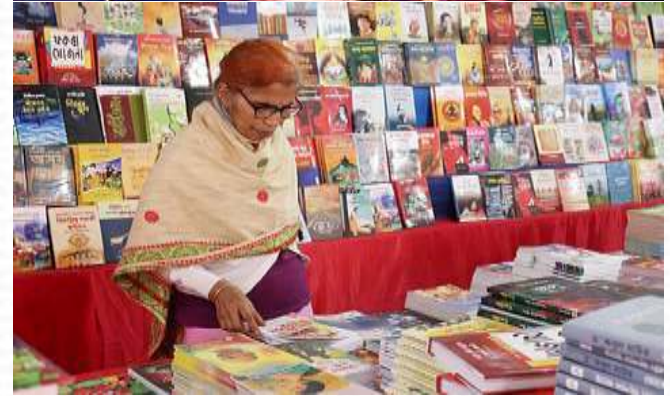
**Sol: Statement 3 is incorrect** – it was established during World War II.

**Zubeenor Gadya**

**Syllabus – Prelims / GS Paper V**

**News in Brief**

- **Zubeenor Gadya**, a book compiled and edited by **Manjit Rajkonwar**, is set to be formally released at the **Assam Book Fair** held at the **College of Veterinary Science playground, Khanapara, Guwahati**.
- The book is published by **Assam Publishing Company**.



**About the Book: Zubeenor Gadya**  
**Nature of the Book**

- A collection of prose written by **Zubeen Garg**, one of Assam's most influential cultural figures.



- The book reflects the **literary dimension** of Zubeen Garg beyond his musical career.

### Contents

The collection includes:

- Recollections from **childhood, adolescence, and youth**
- Reflections on his **songs and creative journey**
- Essays on **people close to his life**
- Personal memories and emotional experiences

### Prelims Practice Question

**Q. Consider the following statements regarding the book *Zubeenor Gadya*:**

1. It is a collection of prose written by singer Zubeen Garg.
2. The book has been compiled and edited by Manjit Rajkonwar.
3. It is published by the National Book Trust.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 3 is incorrect** – it is published by Assam Publishing Company.

## FIFA Cup in Guwahati

### Syllabus – Prelims / GS Paper V

#### News in Brief

- The **iconic FIFA World Cup Trophy** will arrive in **Guwahati, Assam, on January 13**.
- The visit is part of the **global FIFA World Cup Trophy Tour**.
- This marks a **historic first** for Assam and the **Northeast region**, giving fans direct access to the most prestigious trophy in international football.



### About the FIFA World Cup Trophy

- **Introduced:** 1974 (replaced the Jules Rimet Trophy).
- **Material:**
  - Made of **18-carat gold**
  - Weight: **6.1 kg**
  - Height: **36.8 cm**
- **Design:**
  - Depicts **two human figures holding up the Earth**, symbolizing global unity.
- **Custody:**
  - Retained by **FIFA**; winning teams receive a **replica**, not the original.



**FIFA Cup - Trophy Tour to India**

Occasion	Year	Event	Trophy Tour to India
1	2010	FIFA World Cup (South Africa)	Yes (first India visit)
2	2013	FIFA World Cup (Brazil)	Yes (Kolkata)
3	2017	FIFA U-17 World Cup (India)	Yes (multi-city)
4	2026	FIFA World Cup Trophy Tour (USA/Canada/Mexico)	Yes (Delhi & Guwahati)

**Key Event Details**

- **Date of Arrival: 13 January**
- **Route:**
  - Trophy will be **flown from Delhi to Guwahati**
  - Transported **directly from Guwahati Airport to ACA Stadium, Barsapara**
- **Venue: ACA Stadium, Barsapara (Guwahati)**

**Special Highlight**

- **Gilberto Silva** will accompany the trophy during its Guwahati visit.
  - Renowned **Brazilian footballer**
  - **FIFA World Cup winner (2002)**

**FIFA World Cup Trophy Tour – Key Features**

- Organised by **FIFA** ahead of World Cup cycles.
- Travels across **multiple countries and cities** to:
  - Promote football culture
  - Engage fans
  - Build excitement for the tournament

- Serves as a tool of **sports diplomacy and global branding.**



**Significance of Guwahati as a Host City**

**(a) Regional Significance**

- First such global football event exposure for **Assam & Northeast India.**
- Recognises the **growing football culture** in the region.

**(b) Sports Infrastructure Context**

- Assam has invested in:
  - Stadium upgrades
  - Sports-hosting capacity
- Aligns with India's ambition to become a **global sports destination.**



Top News of the Week

**TOP NEWS OF THE WEEK**

**MMUA Cheque Distribution**

₹10,000 seed capital to 1.88 lakh women entrepreneurs across Assam



**Landmark Inaugurations by Hon'ble Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah**

Batadrava Than, Guwahati Police Commissionerate, Intelligence City Surveillance System, Jyoti-Bishnu Auditorium



**Welfare for Udasin Bhakats**

Monthly assistance of ₹1,500 for 620 Udasin Bhakats of recognised sattras



**FULFILLING THE PROMISE GIVEN TO MY MOTHERS AND SISTERS**

ENSURING SEAMLESS ORUNODOI DISTRIBUTION TILL ELECTIONS

₹8,000 TO BE DISTRIBUTED AT ONE GO ON FEBRUARY 20

**SPECIAL BIHU GIFT ₹3,000**

ORUNODOI FOR JANUARY - APRIL

₹1,250 X 4 = ₹5,000



**TURNING FRUIT into FORTUNE**



National Push for Lakhipur Pineapple

Zero-Waste Pineapple Innovation Hub Approved

₹1.64 Crore NITI Aayog Grant for Lakhipur

New Opportunities for Farmers and SHGs



**A BIG WIN FOR ASSAM'S CONSERVATION EFFORTS**



**RHINOS KILLED IN 2025**



## Buffalo Fights in Assam

Syllabus: Prelims/GS Paper V

### Buffalo Fights Organised in Assam

#### What Happened?

- Traditional **buffalo fights** were organised at **Ahatguri (Morigaon)** and **Deobali (Raha)** in Assam on **January 15, 2026**, coinciding with **Magh Bihu** celebrations.
- The events took place *despite a Supreme Court ban* on animal fights and races meant to prevent cruelty to animals.
- Local buffalo owners and spectators took part in the fights, showing enthusiasm and continuing the cultural practice.
- No official committee publicity was done due to sensitivity over the ban, but the events occurred with buffalo owners bringing animals from far-flung areas.



### Background: Magh Bihu & Traditional Animal Sports

**Magh Bihu** (also called *Bhogali Bihu*) is a major harvest festival of Assam celebrated in mid-January.

- It marks the end of the harvest season, symbolising *prosperity, community feasting, and social gatherings*.
- Cultural programs often include **folk games, sports, feasts (bhog), community bonfires (meji), and traditional games**.

#### Buffalo Fights in Cultural Context

- Historically, **buffalo fights** were a *popular rural sport* during Bihu festivities, similar in social function to other indigenous seasonal games.
- They were not regulated but viewed locally as a *folk spectacle* and community bonding event.



### Legal Framework: Supreme Court Ban & Animal Welfare Laws

#### Supreme Court Ruling (2014)

- In *Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) vs Nagaraja & Others (2014)*, the Supreme Court passed an order **banning all animal races and fights** across India on grounds of cruelty and pain inflicted on animals and birds.
- The order specifically prohibited activities such as *bullock cart races, buffalo fights, cockfights, kite fighting with animals as participants* — categorising them under **Section 11** of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960*.
- The Court directed AWBI and the **Centre** to enforce measures preventing such practices, especially during festivals.

#### Assam Government's Role

- The Assam Legislative Assembly passed the **Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Assam Amendment) Bill, 2025**.
- Purpose: **To legalise buffalo fights (Moh-Juj)** during **Magh Bihu**, similar to **Jallikattu** in Tamil Nadu.



### Overview of the Bill

- Amends provisions of the **Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act, 1960** as applicable to Assam.
- Seeks to *permit traditional buffalo fights* during Magh Bihu under regulatory conditions.
- Portrayed as an effort to preserve **Assamese cultural heritage**.

### Key Issues at Play

#### 1. Animal Welfare vs Cultural Practice

- **Animal rights activists** argue that such events constitute *cruelty and suffering* for animals, and violate national laws and the Supreme Court's directive.
- **Local communities** see the practice as part of *cultural heritage* and social celebration during Bihu, resulting in resistance to legal restrictions.

#### 2. Enforcement Challenges

- Lack of publicity for the events (to avoid ire of authorities) suggests *informal or covert organisation*, highlighting enforcement gaps.
- Buffalo owners brought animals over distances, indicating *deep cultural value* and community support for the practice.

#### 3. Judicial Precedent

AWBI vs Nagaraja case continues to be a **landmark directive** on animal sports and games involving animals in India, often cited in *public interest litigations* and enforcement actions.



### Supreme Court Animal Welfare Board Case

#### Animal Welfare Board of India vs Nagaraja & Others (2014)

- **Held:** All forms of animal races/fights causing suffering are prohibited.
- **Reasoning:** Violates the definition of *cruelty* under the **Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960**.

- **Implementation:** Directed AWBI and the Centre to enforce the ban, especially during festivals.
- This ruling impacts *bullock races, buffalo fights, cockfights, elephant races, etc.*



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to **buffalo fights in Assam and animal welfare regulations**, consider the following statements:

1. The Supreme Court of India, in the *Animal Welfare Board of India vs Nagaraja* case, has banned all forms of animal races and fights including buffalo fights due to cruelty concerns.
2. Magh Bihu is a harvest festival where traditional community sports and games were historically unrestricted by law.
3. Enforcement of the ban on animal fights during festivals has been uniformly implemented across all Indian states without any local resistance or cultural conflict.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol:** Statement 3 is incorrect — enforcement has not been uniform, and local resistance/conflicts have occurred (as seen in Assam).

### Mega Bagurumba Performance

**Syllabus:** Prelims/GS Paper V

#### Mega Bagurumba Dance Event —

#### What's Happening?

- **Event:** Attempt to set a *Guinness World Record* with **10,000 Bodo dancers**



performing **Bagurumba**, a traditional Bodo folk dance.

- **Where:** Sarusajai Stadium, Guwahati (Arjun Bhogeswar Baruah Sports Complex).
- **When:** January 17, 2026, coinciding with the visit of **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**.
- **Organisers:** Bodoland Cultural Centre, Assam cultural bodies, and master trainers from across the state.



- The Bagurumba is over 1000 year old traditional dance of the indigenous Boro people living in the State of Assam and North East India.
- It is also called **“butterfly dance”** because it's personification of movements of butterflies and birds.
- In this occasion, only the Bodo women perform the dance, wearing their colourful traditional attire **dokhna, jwmgra (fasra)** and **Aronai**.
- The dance is accompanied by handmade percussion instruments such as **'kham'** (a long cylindrical drum, made of wood and goat skin or other animal's skin), **sifung** (flute, carved out of bamboo), **jota** (made of iron/tama), **serja** (a bowed instrument, made of wood and animals skin), and **gongwna** (made of bamboo), **tharkha** (a piece of split bamboo)

**Background: Bagurumba — The “Butterfly Dance”**

**Origins & Identity**

- **Bagurumba** is a *traditional folk dance* of the **Bodo (Boro) people**, an indigenous tribal community of **Assam and Northeast India**.
- Often called the **“Butterfly Dance,”** it symbolises the *grace of nature*, harmony, and peaceful community life.

**Cultural Significance**

- Performed predominantly by **young Bodo women**, the dance features *fluid hand movements and graceful steps* that mimic butterflies, birds, rivers, and foliage — reflecting a close *bond with nature*.
- It is traditionally part of the *Bwisagu / Baishagu* spring festival, which marks renewal, community gratitude, and respect for nature.





### Wider Participation

- Dancers and musicians come from *across Assam* — including districts such as **BTC (Bodoland Territorial Region), Goalpara, Kamrup, Sonitpur, Biswanath, Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Golaghat, Karbi Anglong, Charaideo, Morigaon, Dima Hasao, Nagaon, Bongaigaon, Dhubri** and subdivisions.
- Over **400 master trainers** are involved in shaping the formation, with hundreds more instrumentalists and singers supporting the performance.



### Performance Details

#### Traditional Costume

- Dancers wear colourful Bodo attire:
  - **Dokhna:** Traditional wrap-around skirt
  - **Jwmgra (fasra):** Embroidered jacket/scarf
  - **Aronai:** Symbolic scarf representing respect and unity
- Bright colours evoke the vibrancy of nature and community joy.

#### Musical Ensemble

- The dance is accompanied by indigenous instruments that create rhythm and melody:
- **Kham:** Long cylindrical drum made from wood and goat skin
- **Sifung (or Siphung):** Five-holed bamboo flute
- **Serja:** Bowed string instrument
- **Jotha / Gongwna / Tharkha:** Percussion elements adding rhythm and depth
- These instruments are essential in maintaining tempo and cultural fidelity.



**Prelims Practice Question**

**Q.** With reference to the *Bagurumba* dance of Assam, consider the following statements:

1. *Bagurumba* is a traditional folk dance of the Bodo community, symbolising harmony with nature and often performed during the Bwisagu festival.
2. The dance is accompanied by traditional instruments such as *Kham*, *Sifung*, and *Serja*, which form an essential part of Bodo musical heritage.
3. The Guinness World Record attempt involving 10,000 *Bagurumba* dancers is being organised in Kokrajhar to mark the visit of the Prime Minister in January 2026.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol:** While **statements 1 and 2 are correct**, the record attempt is taking place at Sarusajai Stadium, Guwahati — not Kokrajhar — making **statement 3 incorrect**.

**LACHIT-1 Satellite**

**Syllabus : Prelims/GS Paper V**

**What is LACHIT-1?**

- **LACHIT-1** stands for *Live Amateur Communication Hub for Innovative Technologies-1* — a small satellite developed by **Assam Don Bosco University (ADBU)**, making it the **first satellite mission led by an institution from Northeast India**.
- Named after the legendary **Ahom general Lachit Borphukan**, symbolising *regional pride, resilience, and technological aspiration*.
- Built under **Dhruva Space's ASTRA for Academia** programme, enabling academic institutions to design, integrate, and operate real spacecraft

**64<sup>th</sup>**  
Flight of  
**PSLV**

**5<sup>th</sup>**  
Mission  
**PSLV-DL variant**

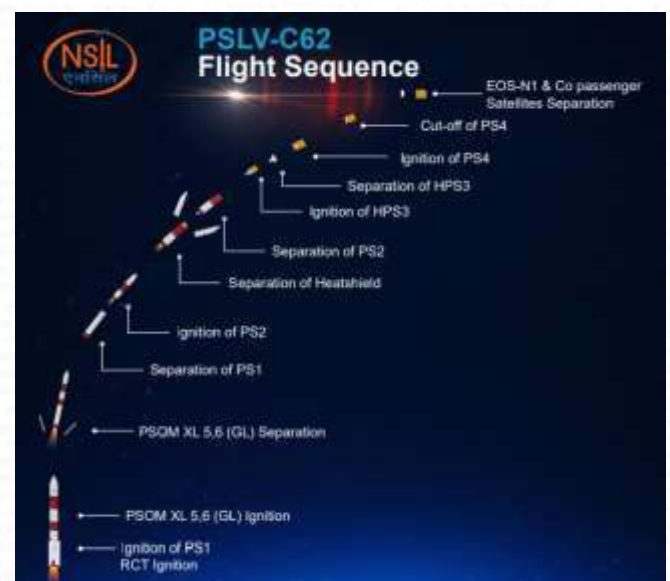


Vehicle Configuration

PSLV-C62 Vehicle Characteristics	
Vehicle Height	44.4 m
Lift off Mass	260 t
Stages	4
First Stage	2PSOM-XL+ S139
Second Stage	PL40(HP)
Third Stage	HPS3
Fourth Stage	L2.5(AI)

**The Launch Mission: PSLV-C62**

- **Date:** January 12, 2026  
**Launch Site:** Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh  
**Launch Vehicle:** ISRO's **PSLV-DL C-62** — the 64th flight of India's workhorse rocket.
- The mission's *primary payload* was **EOS-N1 (Anvesha)** — an Earth observation satellite with strategic and environmental applications, built for the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- Alongside EOS-N1, PSLV-C62 carried **LACHIT-1** and *15 other co-passenger satellites* from universities, startups, and international partners under **Dhruva Space's Polar Access-1** programme.



### Outcome: Anomaly & Mission Failure

- Although the rocket lifted off nominally at **10:17 am IST**, the mission did **not place the satellites into the intended Sun-Synchronous Orbit**.
- ISRO reported an **anomaly toward the end of the third stage (PS3)**, causing a *deviation in the flight path and failure to achieve required orbital velocity*.
- As a result, **all 16 satellites**, including LACHIT-1, **re-entered the atmosphere and were lost**.
- ISRO has initiated a **detailed failure analysis** to diagnose the technical issue and prevent future recurrence.
- This represented a **rare setback** for the PSLV programme, known historically for a high success rate.



PSLV is the workhorse launch vehicle of ISRO that has completed 63 flights including notable missions like Chandrayaan-1, Mars Orbiter Mission, Aditya-L1 and Astrosat Mission. In 2017, PSLV set a world record by launching 104 satellites in a single mission.

### Why the Mission Still Matters

Even though the satellites were lost:

#### 1. Academic and Regional Milestone

- LACHIT-1 was *the first satellite developed and funded entirely by a Northeast Indian university*, involving **50+ students and faculties from across the region**.
- The project built *hands-on expertise* in aerospace systems, mission operations, ground station management, and satellite-to-ground communication workflows.

#### 2. Capacity Building

- Students learned practical applications of **IoT in space tech** and **store-and-forward communication**, which can be vital for *emergency networks during disasters* —

especially in difficult terrains like Northeast India.

#### 3. Public-Private Space Collaboration

- The mission highlighted collaboration between **academic institutions**, a **private space company (Dhruva Space)**, and **ISRO infrastructure**, signalling a maturing *Indian space ecosystem*.

#### 4. Boosting Amateur Radio & STEM Engagement

- Had it reached orbit, LACHIT-1 was to be *accessible to amateur radio operators worldwide*, fostering community engagement in space experiments.

### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to **LACHIT-1** and the **PSLV-C62 mission**, consider the following statements:

1. LACHIT-1 was India's first satellite built by a private corporation and launched into orbit in collaboration with ISRO.
2. The PSLV-C62 mission carrying LACHIT-1 encountered an anomaly during its third stage, leading to the loss of multiple satellites.
3. LACHIT-1 was designed to support amateur radio and IoT-based atmospheric monitoring from low Earth orbit.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: b

**Sol:** **Statement 1 is incorrect** because LACHIT-1 was developed by Assam Don Bosco University, not a private corporation, and it did not reach orbit due to the PSLV anomaly. **Statements 2 and 3 are correct.**

### Sad demise of Pradip Baruah

**Syllabus: Prelims/GS Paper V**

#### Veteran Assamese Journalist Pradip Baruah Passes Away

**What Happened?**

- Veteran Assamese journalist **Pradip Baruah**, founding editor and publisher of the influential fortnightly magazine **Prantik**, passed away on **January 14, 2026** in



Guwahati at the age of 87/88 following age-related illness/cardiac arrest.

- His last rites were performed at **Navagraha Crematorium** with family and close associates present.



### Who Was Pradip Baruah?

- **Founding Editor & Publisher** of *Prantik*, a widely-read **Assamese fortnightly magazine** established in **1981**.
- Under his leadership, *Prantik* became a **respected platform** for *literature, culture, socio-political discourse, and intellectual thought* in Assam, influencing generations of readers and writers.
- Born on **3 September 1938** in *Dibrugarh*, educated at **Don Bosco School** and **Cotton College** in Guwahati.
- He was the **younger son of Radha Govinda Baruah**, a prominent media figure and founder of *The Assam Tribune* group.
- Pradip Baruah was honoured with prestigious awards (e.g., Pratidin Group's Achievers Award, Sadin Literature & Journalism Award), recognising his contribution to journalism and Assamese literature.



### Legacy & Impact

#### Editorial Leadership

- Pradip Baruah led *Prantik* for **over four decades**, steering its editorial vision toward *critical thought, independent journalism, and cultural engagement*.

#### Platform for Voices

- *Prantik* provided a **nurturing platform for writers, poets, thinkers, and critics** — shaping public discourse in Assamese language media.

#### Journalistic Influence

- He maintained **editorial independence** throughout his career — a feature widely respected among peers and younger journalists.

#### Boost to Assamese Literature

- Through essays, interviews, critiques, and cultural commentary, *Prantik* under Baruah enriched **Assam's literary and intellectual landscape**.



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to **Pradip Baruah** and *Prantik*, consider the following statements:

1. Pradip Baruah was the founding editor of the Assamese fortnightly magazine *Prantik*, which he led for over four decades.
2. Pradip Baruah was the eldest son of Radha Govinda Baruah, the founder of *The Assam Tribune* group.
3. Under his editorial leadership, *Prantik* became a respected platform for literature, culture, and socio-political discourse in Assam.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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



Ans: c

**Sol: Statement 2 is incorrect** — Pradip Baruah was the younger son of Radha Govinda Baruah, not the eldest.

## Piyush Desai awarded

**Syllabus: Prelims/GS Paper V**

### NETA Lifetime Achievement Award to Piyush Desai

**What Happened?**

- The **North Eastern Tea Association (NETA)** will confer its **Lifetime Achievement Award** on **Piyush Desai**, the **86-year-old chairman** of the **Wagh Bakri Tea Group**, recognising his outstanding contribution to the Indian tea industry over six decades



**Who Is Piyush Desai?**

- **Piyush Desai** is a veteran tea expert and **chairman of the Wagh Bakri Tea Group**, one of India's most prominent **packaged tea companies**.
- He has served in leadership roles such as **Chairman of the Federation of All India Tea Traders Association (FAITTA)** — the

apex body of tea packers and traders — and **Founder Chairman of the Western India Tea Dealers' Association**.

- NETA leaders described him as a **tea tasting and evaluation expert** and a **visionary leader** who set high quality standards for the industry.

### About Wagh Bakri Tea Group

- **Founded:** 1892, with a legacy spanning over 130 years in the tea business.
- **Operations:** The group owns and operates one of India's leading packaged tea companies, with a **turnover of over ₹2,000 crore** and distribution of **over 50 million kg of tea annually**.
- **Market Position:** It is the **third-largest tea brand in India**, with an estimated **9 % market share** in the national tea market, behind **Hindustan Unilever** and **Tata Consumer Products**.
- **Geographic Presence:** A strong pan-India footprint with presence in key markets such as Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Delhi, and recently expanding into East and Central Indian states.
- **Exports:** The brand also exports tea to over **60 countries**, building global reach and recognition.

### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to the **Indian tea industry**, consider the following statements:

1. Wagh Bakri Tea Group is one of India's oldest tea companies, ranking as the third-largest packaged tea brand with significant market share behind Hindustan Unilever and Tata Consumer Products.
2. The North Eastern Tea Association (NETA) represents tea producers primarily from Assam, Tripura and Manipur.
3. Piyush Desai, honoured with the NETA Lifetime Achievement Award, has served as chairman of the Federation of All India Tea Traders Association.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: c



**Sol: Statement 2 is incorrect** — NETA's membership covers tea companies in Assam, Nagaland, and Arunachal Pradesh, not Tripura and Manipur.

## 70 MW Khudigaon Plant

**Syllabus: Prelims/GS Paper V**

### Solar Power Boost in Assam: 70 MW Khudigaon Plant

#### What Happened?

- **Assam Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma** inaugurated a **70 MW solar power project at Khudigaon, Bilasipara**.
- This marks a **significant clean-energy milestone** for the state's renewable energy expansion.

#### Project Details

- **Capacity:** 70 MW (solar photovoltaic generation)
- **Location:** Khudigaon, near **Bilasipara, Assam**
- **Cost:** Over **₹350 crore**
- **Annual Generation:** **141 million units (MU)** of electricity
- **Carbon Reduction:** Estimated **1.15 lakh tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>** avoided per year



#### India's Green Energy / Renewable Energy Targets

1) 500 GW of non-fossil energy capacity by 2030

#### Assam's Green / Renewable Energy Targets

1) 3,500 MW of solar power by 2030

#### Why It Matters

##### 1. Renewable Energy Expansion

- With the addition of this project, **Assam's solar power capacity reaches 680 MW**.

- The state has set an ambitious target of reaching **2,000 MW of renewable energy capacity**, boosting **energy self-reliance**.

##### 2. Environmental Impact

- Renewable generation reduces dependence on fossil fuels and cuts greenhouse gas emissions — key for climate goals.
- Reduction of nearly **1.15 lakh tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> annually** is equivalent to planting millions of trees or reducing thousands of tonnes of coal usage.

##### 3. Economic & Energy Security

- Increased solar capacity improves *energy availability*, especially during peak demand.
- It supports rural electrification and reduces transmission losses by producing power closer to load centres.



#### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to **renewable energy expansion in Assam**, consider the following statements:

1. The Khudigaon solar power project in Bilasipara has an installed capacity of 70 MW and is expected to generate more than 140 million units annually.
2. The solar project will directly reduce carbon emissions by over 1 lakh tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> each year.
3. Assam's total solar power capacity reached 680 MW after this project, and the state aims to achieve 5,000 MW of renewable energy capacity by 2030.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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



Ans: a

**Sol: Statements 1 and 2 are correct** based on the project's capacity and emission reduction estimates.

**Statement 3 is incorrect** — Assam's stated target is 2,000 MW of renewable energy capacity, not 5,000 MW.

## Assam's CM at WEF

### Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper V

#### What is the News?

- **Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma** participated in the **World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting 2026** at **Davos-Klosters, Switzerland**.
- This marks the **first time Assam has formally participated** in the WEF Annual Meeting.
- Ahead of the summit, the CM held meetings in **Zurich** with:
  - **Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam**
  - **World Bank President Ajay Banga**
  - **Union Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu**
  - CEOs of multinational companies and global institutional leaders.



Professor Klaus Schwab founded the World Economic Forum in 1971

#### World Economic Forum (WEF): Summits -

1. **WEF Annual Meeting (Davos Summit)**
2. WEF Regional Summits
3. Industry & Thematic WEF Summits
4. Global Technology & Innovation Meetings
5. Special Dialogue & Partnership Platforms

#### Key Objectives of Assam's Participation

- Attract **global investment** into Assam and the Northeast.
- Build on momentum from **Advantage Assam 2.0 Investment & Infrastructure Summit**.
- Position Assam as:
  - A **fast-growing investment destination**
  - A hub for **technology-driven and AI-enabled growth**
  - A key player in **semiconductor, infrastructure, aviation, and manufacturing sectors**
  - Assam will set up a **Centre of Excellence (CoE)** in collaboration with the World Economic Forum.
  - The CoE will focus on a theme of **national and state importance**.
- Assam is also entering into a **long-term partnership with WEF** to leverage:
  - WEF's **global knowledge platforms**
  - **Annual summits at Davos and other global forums**
  - Research, policy frameworks, and best practices.



#### Why WEF Davos Matters

- **World Economic Forum (WEF):**
  - Founded in **1971**
  - A **non-profit international organisation**
  - Hosts one of the **world's most influential global economic summits**
- Brings together: (improve the state of the world through public-private cooperation)
  - Heads of State and Government
  - CEOs of multinational corporations
  - Leaders from World Bank, IMF, WTO, and global think tanks

#### MoUs & Investment Push

- Assam aims to sign **MoUs worth close to ₹1 lakh crore** during the WEF meeting.



- Focus sectors include:
  - Infrastructure
  - Semiconductors
  - Aviation & logistics
  - Manufacturing
  - Skill development and workforce readiness

Assam has recently been rated the **fastest-growing state in India** by the **Reserve Bank of India**, strengthening its investment pitch.



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to Assam’s participation in the World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting at Davos, consider the following statements:

1. Assam participated in the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting for the first time, represented by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.
2. The World Economic Forum is a profit-oriented organisation established to promote international trade negotiations.
3. Assam aims to sign Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) worth nearly ₹1 lakh crore during the WEF meeting to boost investment and employment.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 2 is incorrect** — WEF is a non-profit organisation, not a trade negotiation body.

## Kaziranga Elevated Corridor

### Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper V

#### What is the News?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi performed the **Bhoomi Pujan** of the **Kaziranga Elevated Corridor Project** at **Kaliabor, Assam** on **18 January 2026**.
- The project involves **4-laning** of the **Kaliabor–Numaligarh** section of **NH-715**.
- **Total Project Cost: ₹6,950 crore+**
- **Approval Authority: Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)**
- The project is being described as a model of **“development with environmental responsibility.”**
- **Execution Mode: EPC (Engineering, Procurement & Construction)**



#### Why the Project is Necessary

- The existing **Kaliabor–Numaligarh section of NH-715 (old NH-37):**
  - Is mostly **two-lane**
  - Passes **through or along Kaziranga National Park**
  - Has **restricted Right of Way (16–32 metres)**
  - Suffers from **poor road geometrics**

#### Flood & Wildlife Challenge

- During monsoon floods:
  - Wildlife moves from **Kaziranga National Park** to the **Karbi Anglong Hills**
  - Animals must cross the highway → **high mortality & accidents**



- Heavy round-the-clock traffic worsens **human–wildlife conflict**
- Strengthens connectivity to **Upper Assam & Arunachal Pradesh**, especially:
  - Dibrugarh
  - Tinsukia
- Boosts:
  - Tourism to Kaziranga



**Environmental & Conservation Significance**

- Protects **traditional animal corridors**
- Reduces:
  - Roadkill
  - Human–wildlife conflict
- Supports conservation of:
  - **One-horned rhinoceros**
  - Elephants
  - Tigers

**Prelims Practice Question**

**Q.** With reference to the Kaziranga Elevated Corridor Project, consider the following statements:

1. The project involves four-laning of the Kaliabor–Numaligarh section of NH-715 and includes a 35 km elevated wildlife corridor passing through Kaziranga National Park.
2. The elevated corridor is designed to ensure uninterrupted movement of wildlife such as rhinos, elephants and tigers while allowing vehicular traffic to pass above.
3. Kaziranga National Park is recognised as a Ramsar Wetland Site, which necessitated the construction of an elevated corridor.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol:** Statement 3 is incorrect — Kaziranga is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, not a Ramsar wetland (though Assam has many Ramsar sites).

**Technical Details of the Project**

- **Total Length: 85.675 km**
- **Elevated Wildlife Corridor: ~34.5 km**
- **Upgradation of Existing NH: 30.22 km**
- **Greenfield Bypasses: 21 km**
  - Jakhlabandha (Nagaon)
  - Bokakhat (Golaghat)
- **Districts Covered**
  - Nagaon
  - Karbi Anglong
  - Golaghat



## 1st Vande Bharat Sleeper train

Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper V

### Types of trains

System	Purpose	Speed	Distance
Metro	Intra-city	~80 km/h	10–50 km
Namo Bharat (RRTS)	Regional commuting	~160 km/h	50–250 km
Vande Bharat (Previously Train18)	Intercity	~180 km/h	300–800 km
Amrit Bharat	Affordable long-distance	Conventional	500+ km



### 1. Vande Bharat Sleeper Train (VBS)

What is it?

- India's first long-distance, overnight, semi-high-speed sleeper train
- An extension of the Vande Bharat platform, which earlier had only chair-car (daytime) versions

Key Features

- Fully air-conditioned sleeper coaches

- Designed for long-distance night travel (1,000+ km)
- Faster acceleration and deceleration
- Modern safety systems (Kavach-ready)
- Aircraft-like passenger amenities



First Route

- **Howrah – Guwahati (Kamakhya)**  
Symbolically connects eastern India with the North-East

Significance

- Reduces travel time (expected reduction ~2–3 hours)
- Enhances integration of the **North-East with mainland India**
- Represents technological upgradation of Indian Railways under *Make in India*

### 2. Amrit Bharat Express

What is it?

- A **non-AC, affordable, long-distance train**
- Introduced to improve connectivity for **common passengers**

Key Features

- Non-AC sleeper & general coaches
- Improved riding comfort compared to conventional Mail/Express trains
- Modern interiors, better lighting, passenger-friendly amenities
- Focus on **safety, affordability and mass connectivity**





### Routes Flagged Off from Assam

- Guwahati (Kamakhya) – Rohtak
- Dibrugarh – Lucknow (Gomti Nagar)

### Significance

- First non-AC Amrit Bharat services from the North-East
- Benefits students, workers, traders, and migrant population
- Strengthens Assam's connectivity with North, Central & Eastern India

**Q. The introduction of Vande Bharat Sleeper and Amrit Bharat Express trains reflects Indian Railways' shift towards a multi-tier connectivity model—balancing speed, affordability and regional integration. How will it empower regional connectivity and economy of Assam?**

### Introduction

- The launch of **Vande Bharat Sleeper** and **Amrit Bharat Express** reflects Indian Railways' **multi-tier connectivity approach**, balancing speed, affordability and inclusiveness.
- This is particularly significant for **Assam and the North-East**, historically affected by remoteness and high logistics costs.

### Impact on Regional Connectivity

- **Enhanced Integration with Mainland India**
- **Inclusive Mobility**

### Impact on Assam's Economy

- **Boost to Trade, Tourism and Labour Mobility**

### Conclusion

- Together, these services strengthen Assam's role as a regional hub and support **balanced regional development**, aligning with the **Act East Policy** and long-term economic integration of the North-East.

## Silpi Diwas

### Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper V

### Background & Significance

- **Silpi Diwas** is observed **every year on January 17** in Assam to commemorate the death anniversary of **Rupkonwar Jyoti Prasad Agarwala**, one of the most iconic figures in Assamese culture — a poet, playwright, songwriter, filmmaker and creative visionary whose work shaped modern Assamese arts and cinema.

### Jyoti Prasad Agarwala

- Revered as *Rupkonwar* ("**Jewel of the Arts**") of Assam, Jyoti Prasad Agarwala played a pivotal role in **developing Assamese cultural identity** through literature, music, theatre and film.
- He passed away on **January 17, 1951**, and this date is now celebrated as *Silpi Diwas* to honour his legacy.



**Rupkonwar Jyoti Prasad Agarwala**

### Why the Day Matters

- **Name Meaning:** *Silpi* means **artist** in Assamese context — so Silpi Diwas is "**Artist's Day**."
- Silpi Diwas is a **tribute to Assam's artistic conscience and creative heritage**. It acknowledges Agarwala's contributions to:
  - Assamese literature and poetry
  - Modern Assamese cinema
  - Music and theatre
  - Cultural expression and identity in the region





- **Rupkonwar Jyoti Prasad Agarwala** directed “**Jyoti**” (1935) — the **first Assamese film**, and composed hundreds of songs (*Jyoti Sangeet*), plays and poems that remain central to Assam’s artistic heritage.
- Based on Lakshminath Bezbaroa's play about the 17th-century Ahom princess Jyoti Konwari, the film was produced and directed by the noted Assamese poet, author, and **film-maker Jyoti Prasad Agarwala**, and starred **Aideu Handique** and acclaimed stage actor and playwright Phani Sarma.
- **Aideu Handique**: The lead actress was honored during the Golden Jubilee of Assamese Cinema in 1985 and was provided a state pension by the Assam Government.

### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Consider the following statements regarding Silpi Diwas:

1. Silpi Diwas is observed on 17 January every year in Assam to commemorate the death anniversary of Jyoti Prasad Agarwala.
2. The day was originally called Jyoti Diwas and has been celebrated formally since 1953.
3. Silpi Diwas is dedicated to honouring artists and promoting Assamese art, literature, music, theatre, and cinema.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: b

**Sol: Statement 2 is incorrect** — There is no reliable evidence that it was called Jyoti Diwas or formally started in 1953.

## Silpi Bota

### Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper V

#### News Summary

- Eminent singers **Dhanada Pathak** and **Samar Hazarika** (posthumously) have been selected for the **Silpi Bota 2026 Award** by the **Government of Assam**.
- The awards will be formally presented in **February 2026** as part of the **Silpi Diwas celebrations**.



Famous for Bihu & Kamrupi Lokageets

#### Other Cultural Honors :

- The State Government also announced other cultural honours such as:
  - **Krishna Kanta Handiqui Memorial Award 2025** – to litterateur *Maneswar Deuri*
  - **Gopinath Bordoloi National Integration Award 2025** – to educationist *Dr Amalendu Guha* (posthumously)
  - **Natasurya Phoni Sarma Award 2025** – to *Karuna Deka*
  - **Dr Bhaben Saikia Award 2025** – to filmmaker *Arup Manna*



- **Biju Phukan Award 2025** – to film personality *Abani Ranjan Pathak*



### Other initiatives

- Additionally, **83 artistes** have been chosen for the **regular Silpi Pension (2025-26)**; **170** for annual **Silpi Sanman**, and **26** for **Family Pension**.

**GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM**  
**CULTURAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT**  
ASSAM SECRETARIAT (CIVIL)  
D-BLOCK :: 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR :: DISPUR :: GUWAHATI

**ORDERS BY THE GOVERNOR**

#### NOTIFICATION

**CAD eCF No. 603081/22:** In exercise of the powers conferred by the Assam Award of Pension to Artists & Special Pension to their Families Rules, 1987 as amended, the Governor of Assam is pleased to select the following Artists for Silpi Pension @ Rs. 8000/- (Rupees Eight thousand) only per month with effect from 17-01-2025 to each of the following Artists for their distinguished contribution in the field of art and culture for the year 2024-2025.

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#### REGULAR SILPI PENSION, 2024-25

Sl. No.	Appn. ID	Name	Age	District	Field Of Art
1	15242	Dilip Das	70	Bajali	Dance
2	16007	Aghona Haloi	62	Bajali	Light And Sound
3	16364	Chandrasekanta Machabari	77	Bajali	Bodo Theatre
4	15666	Tipu Narzary	64	Baksa	Puppetry, Theatre, Singer, Comedian
5	15068	Ganendra Nath Gayan	74	Barpeta	Tal & Jhol
6	15078	Ankananda Pathak	89	Barpeta	Bell Metal Artist
7	15874	Bireswar Das	66	Barpeta	Muhje Theatre
8	16096	Pranod Das	70	Barpeta	Theatre And Cinema
9	16123	Ramkrishna Das	77	Barpeta	Jewelry Artist
10	16553	Rasudeb Das	89	Barpeta	Instrumentalist
11	15658	Rahindra Lal Roy	72	Cachar	Baul Song, Folk Song
12	15516	Prafulla Sarma	61	Darrang	Suknati Oja
13	15535	Pranab Kumar Saharia	61	Darrang	Make-up Artist, Actor
14	15131	Geetok Chandra Kumar	73	Darrang	Dhepadhulia And Mohokhunda

CAD/17/2025-CULTURAL AFFAIRS-Cultural Affairs Department

1/89873/2025

### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to *Silpi Diwas* and *Silpi Bota* in Assam, consider the following statements:

1. *Silpi Diwas* is observed on January 17 every year to commemorate the birth anniversary of Jyoti Prasad Agarwala.
2. The *Silpi Bota Award* is conferred by the Government of Assam to individuals for outstanding contributions in the field of arts and culture.
3. *Dhanada Pathak* and *Samar Hazarika* (posthumously) were selected for the *Silpi Bota Award 2026*.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: b

**Sol: Statement 1 is incorrect** — Silpi Diwas marks the death anniversary, not birth anniversary, of Jyoti Prasad Agarwala



## Army flag march at Kokrajhar

### Syllabus - GS Paper V

#### What Happened?

- Clashes erupted in Kokrajhar district on **January 20** between members of the **Bodo and Adivasi communities** following a **mob lynching incident**.
- The violence was triggered after a vehicle carrying **Bodo construction workers** was stopped by a mob on suspicion of **cattle theft**.
- During the confrontation, the vehicle allegedly hit **two Adivasi persons**, after which the occupants were assaulted and the vehicle set on fire.
- Both injured persons later **succumbed to injuries**, identified as **Sikhna Jwhlwao Bismit** and **Sunil Murmu**.



#### Security & Administrative Response

- The **Indian Army** conducted a **flag march** in sensitive areas of Kokrajhar as a confidence-building measure.
- **Four Army columns** were deployed and carried out **joint patrolling** with the civil administration, particularly in and around **Karigaon**.

- Central forces including the **Rapid Action Force (RAF)** and **CRPF**, along with the **Assam Police**, remain deployed.

#### Humanitarian Situation

- Around **1,000 people** displaced due to the violence are staying in **five relief camps** set up in local schools.
- Security forces are encouraging families to return home as the situation stabilises



#### What is an Army Flag March?

- An **Army flag march** is a **visible patrol or march by armed forces** through **sensitive or disturbed areas** to:
  - Reassure civilians
  - Deter miscreants
  - Restore public confidence
  - Support civil administration in maintaining law and order
- It is a **preventive, confidence-building measure**, not a combat operation.

#### Objectives of an Army Flag March

1. **Psychological reassurance** to law-abiding citizens
2. **Deterrence** against further violence or unrest
3. **Visibility of state authority** in volatile areas
4. **Support to police and district administration**
5. **Stabilisation of law and order** without use of force

#### Article 355 in Constitution of India

355. Duty of the Union to protect States against external aggression and internal disturbance

It shall be the duty of the Union to protect every State against external aggression and internal disturbance and to ensure that the Government of every State is carried on in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.



### Legal & Preventive Measures

- **19 persons arrested**; several others detained for questioning.
- **Prohibitory orders imposed under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023.**
- **Mobile internet and data services suspended in Kokrajhar and Chirang districts** to prevent the spread of rumours.
- Earlier clashes saw **NH blockade, arson, attacks on police outposts**, and damage to government property.



### Government Steps taken -

- Chief Minister **Himanta Biswa Sarma**, currently in Davos, deputed ministers **Jayanta Malla Barua** and **Charan Boro** to Kokrajhar.
- A **peace meeting** was held at the **BTC Assembly Auditorium** in the presence of **BTC Chief Hagrama Mohilary**.
- Representatives from **over 400 organisations**, cutting across communities, participated and stressed:
  - Collective responsibility
  - Inter-community coordination
  - Sustained dialogue to preserve peace



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to the recent clashes in Kokrajhar district of Assam, consider the following statements:

1. The Indian Army conducted a flag march in sensitive areas as a confidence-building measure in aid of civil administration.
2. Prohibitory orders were imposed under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, and mobile internet services were suspended to prevent the spread of rumours.
3. The clashes originated due to a dispute over land ownership between Bodo and Adivasi communities during a BTC election campaign.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 3 is incorrect** — the trigger was a mob lynching incident linked to suspicion of cattle theft, not an election-related land dispute.

## Santosh Trophy 2025-26

### Syllabus - GS Paper V

#### What is the news?

- Assam is hosting the **Final Round of the 79th Santosh Trophy (2025–26)**
- Matches scheduled at **Dibrugarh and Silapathar** from **January 21 to February 8**
- Assam has received **direct entry into the Final Round as host**

#### About the Santosh Trophy

- **Oldest national football tournament** in India (started in **1941**)
- Named after **Sir Manmatha Nath Roy Chowdhary of Santosh**
- Conducted by **All India Football Federation (AIFF)**
- Teams represent **states / government institutions**, not clubs





GROUP STAGE		
<b>GROUP A</b> (JAMMU & KASHMIR, LADAKH, PUNJAB, HIMACHAL PRADESH)	<b>GROUP B</b> (CHANDIGARH, HARYANA, UTTAR PRADESH, UTTARAKHAND)	<b>GROUP C</b> (BIHAR, JHARKHAND, RAILWAYS, DELHI)
<b>GROUP D</b> (MIZORAM, NAGALAND, MANIPUR, TRIPURA)	<b>GROUP E</b> (MEGHALAYA, SIKKIM, ARUNACHAL PRADESH)	<b>GROUP F</b> (ODISHA, MADHYA PRADESH, CHHATTISGARH, TELANGANA)
<b>GROUP G</b> (ANDAMAN & NICOBAR, ANDHRA PRADESH, TAMIL NADU, PONDICHERRY)	<b>GROUP H</b> (GOA, KARNATAKA, LAKSHADWEEP, SERVICES)	<b>GROUP I</b> (MAHARASHTRA, GUJARAT, RAJASTHAN, DNH & DD)

THE NINE GROUP WINNERS WILL QUALIFY FOR THE FINAL ROUND



### Why Hosting Is Significant for Assam

- Sports Infrastructure & Capacity**
  - Reflects Assam's improved stadiums, logistics and event management capacity
  - Reinforces Guwahati–Upper Assam as emerging sports hubs
- Football Development in the North-East**
  - North-East is India's football heartland
  - Hosting boosts grassroots interest and talent identification
- Economic & Social Impact**
  - Generates local employment, tourism and hospitality demand

- Enhances Assam's visibility on the national sports map
- 4. Strategic Recognition**
- Direct entry into final round acknowledges Assam's organisational readiness
  - Continuity after hosting national matches earlier (e.g., Kokrajhar)



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to the Santosh Trophy, consider the following statements:

- It is India's oldest national football tournament.
- Teams in the Santosh Trophy represent football clubs.
- The tournament is conducted by the All India Football Federation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol:** Teams represent states/institutions, not clubs



## Big news of the week



30 January 2026 11 AM KH

**Provisions**

- Assembly Building (G+2)
- MLA Hostel (G+8)
- Auditorium (800 capacity) (G+2)
- Barrack (480 capacity) (G+2)

Project cost  
**₹284 crore**

Time of completion  
**30 months**

30 January 2026 11 AM Khanikar Parade Ground, Dibrugarh

**Provisions**

- Assembly Building (G+2)
- MLA Hostel (G+8)
- Auditorium (800 capacity) (G+2)
- Barrack (480 capacity) (G+2)

Project cost  
**₹284 crore**

Time of completion  
**30 months**

## Assam's Export Preparedness

### Syllabus - GS Paper V

### Assam in Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2024

What is the news?

- Assam ranked 24th among 36 States & UTs in NITI Aayog's Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2024.
- The index assesses export readiness and growth potential.

### Major Export Items of Assam

- Tea (largest export; Assam tea has GI tag)
- Rice (including Joha rice – GI product)
- Petroleum products
- Coal, coke and semi-coke
- Silk (especially Muga and Eri silk)
- Pharmaceutical products

ASSAM

### Assam ranks Third in Export Readiness among Northeast States: NITI Aayog EPI 2024

- MORE DETAILS IN CAPTION -



### Key Export Markets

- Neighbouring countries:** Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal
- Global:** Europe, Middle East, Southeast Asia (tea, silk, agarwood)



### Top Exporting States of India

State	Export Value (Approx.)	Share in India's Exports	Major Export Items
Gujarat	₹9–10 lakh crore	~25–30%	Petroleum products, chemicals, gems & jewellery
Maharashtra	₹5.5–6 lakh crore	~16–17%	Engineering goods, chemicals, gems & jewellery, pharmaceuticals
Tamil Nadu	₹4–4.5 lakh crore	~13–14%	Automobiles, electronics, textiles, engineering goods
Assam	₹3,500–4,000 crore	<1%	Tea, petroleum products, coal, silk, pharmaceuticals

Assam ranked below its northeastern neighbours Nagaland and Tripura.

#### Key Findings for Assam

- **Exports (FY 2024):** ~₹3,700 crore
- **Major export:** Tea (accounts for **over 50%** of merchandise exports)
- **Strengths:**
  - Improving infrastructure connectivity
  - Growth in pharmaceuticals, coal-based products
- **Major Constraints:**
  - Shortage of **NABL-accredited & EIC-approved testing labs**
  - Inadequate **cold-chain infrastructure**
  - Limited **cargo & air-freight services**
  - Heavy dependence on **out-of-state labs** (Kolkata, Hyderabad)
  - Export concentration risk (tea + Bhutan ~23% exports)



#### Structural Issues Highlighted

- Narrow export basket → low resilience to global shocks
- High logistics cost due to third-party hubs
- Informal/unaccounted exports → loss of revenue & credibility



Emerging export areas for Assam (future potential):



- **Agri & food processing:** Organic tea, packaged rice, spices, ginger, turmeric, processed fruits
- **Handloom & handicrafts:** Sustainable textiles, bamboo and cane products
- **Silk value-added goods:** Finished Muga, Eri and Pat silk garments
- **Forest-based products:** Essential oils, aromatic plants, bamboo composites
- **Petrochemicals & downstream plastics**
- **IT & knowledge services:** IT-enabled services, data processing, startups
- **Tourism services:** Eco-tourism and cultural tourism exports (services)

### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to the **Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2024**, consider the following statements regarding Assam:

1. Assam was ranked 24th among States and Union Territories in the EPI 2024.
2. Tea accounts for more than half of Assam's total merchandise exports.
3. The EPI is released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: (a)

**Sol:** Statement 3: Incorrect (EPI is released by NITI Aayog)

## Dibru Saikhowa National Park

### Syllabus - GS Paper V

#### What is the news?

- A Royal Bengal Tiger has been camera-trapped in Dibru–Saikhowa National Park, Assam.
- This marks the first confirmed visual evidence in nearly 30 years.
- The sighting was recorded through camera traps installed by Forest Department & Wildlife Trust of India.



### About Dibru–Saikhowa National Park

- Located in Tinsukia & Dibrugarh districts
- Declared:
  - Biosphere Reserve (1997)
  - National Park (1999)
- Part of the **Eastern Himalayan biodiversity hotspot**
- **Known for:**
  - Grasslands, wetlands, riverine forests
  - Species: feral horses, hoolock gibbon, migratory birds



### Historical Context of Tigers in Dibru–Saikhowa

- **1993 census:**
  - 8 males, 12 females, 7 cubs recorded
- **1997 survey:**
  - 12 males, 14 females, 4 cubs
- **After that:**
  - No confirmed tiger records for decades
- **Current sighting revives possibility of natural recolonisation**





## Ecological Significance of the Sighting

### 1. Indicator of Ecosystem Health

- Tigers are apex predators
- Their presence reflects:
  - Adequate prey base
  - Functional food chain

### 2. Habitat Connectivity

- Suggests possible movement through:
  - Brahmaputra floodplains
  - Links with Arunachal forests
- Highlights importance of wildlife corridors

### 3. Conservation Success

- Shows impact of:
  - Camera-based monitoring
  - Anti-poaching efforts
  - Habitat protection



### Challenges Ahead

- Flooding and river erosion
- Human-wildlife conflict
- Need for:
  - Long-term monitoring
  - Landscape-level conservation planning

## Prelims Practice Questions

**Q.** With reference to the recent sighting of the Royal Bengal Tiger in **Dibru–Saikhowa National Park**, consider the following statements:

1. Dibru–Saikhowa National Park is located in the Tinsukia and Dibrugarh districts of Assam.
2. The recent camera-trap sighting provides the first confirmed visual evidence of tiger presence in the park in nearly three decades.
3. Dibru–Saikhowa National Park is officially designated as a Tiger Reserve.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: (a) 1 and 2 only

**Sol: Statement 3 is incorrect:** (Dibru–Saikhowa is not a Tiger Reserve).

## Padma Awards 2026

### Syllabus - GS Paper V

### Padma Awards 2026: Assam & North-East

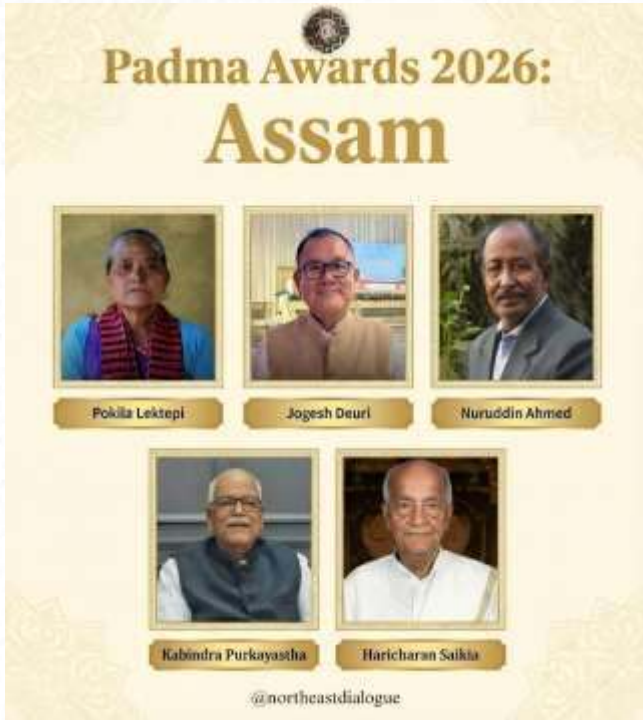
**What is the news?**

- **Five personalities from Assam** have been conferred the **Padma Shri (2026)**.
- Awards announced on the **eve of Republic Day** by the Union Home Ministry.
- Padma Awards will be presented by the **President of India at Rashtrapati Bhavan (March–April)**.

### Padma Awards 2026: Key Facts

- **Total awards:** 131
  - Padma Vibhushan: 5
  - Padma Bhushan: 13
  - Padma Shri: 113
- **Women awardees:** 19
- **Posthumous awards:** 16
- **Foreigners / NRI / OCI / PIO:** 6





- Founder of **Integrated Bodoland Silk Parks**
- Benefited **1,600+ villages**, thousands of farmers
- **70% women participation** in eri silk value chain



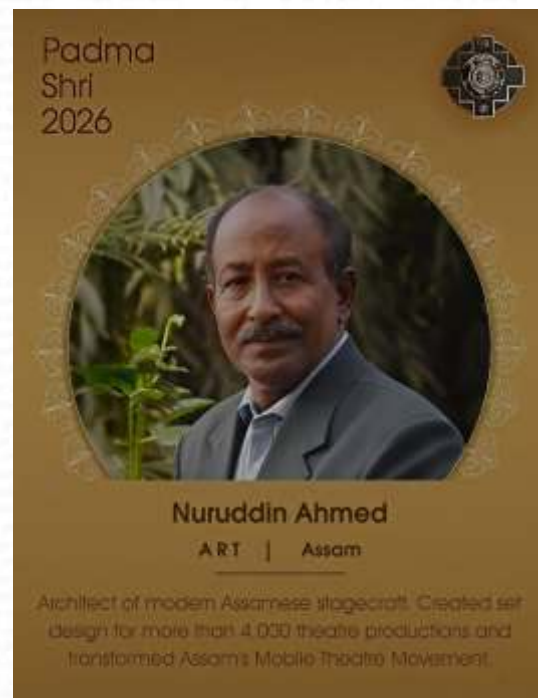
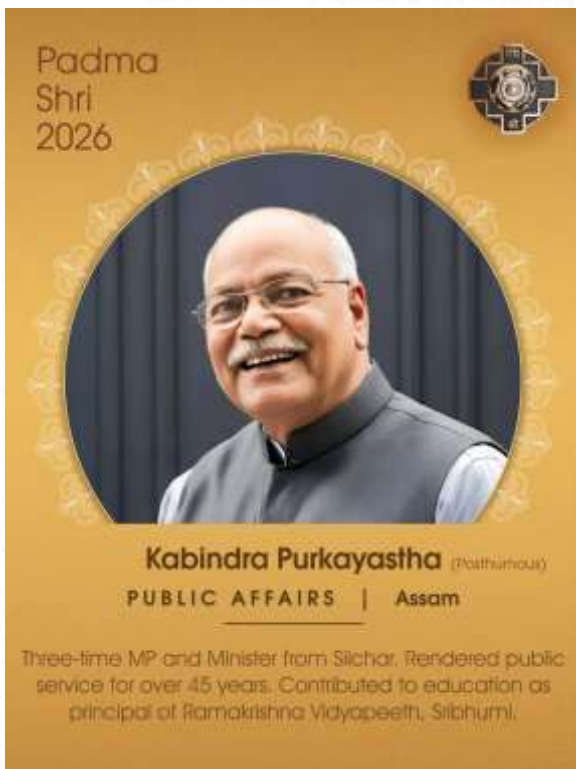
**Padma Shri Awardees from Assam (2026)**

**1. Late Kabindra Purkayastha (Posthumous)**

- **Field:** Public Affairs
- Three-time MP, former Union Minister
- Also contributed to **education** as Principal of Ramakrishna Vidyapeeth, Sribhumi

**3. Nuruddin Ahmed**

- **Field:** Art (Theatre & Stagecraft)
- Designed sets for **4,000+ theatre productions**
- Key figure in **Assam's mobile theatre movement**
- Designer of **Batadrava Cultural Project**



**2. Jogesh Deuri**

- **Field:** Agriculture (Sericulture)



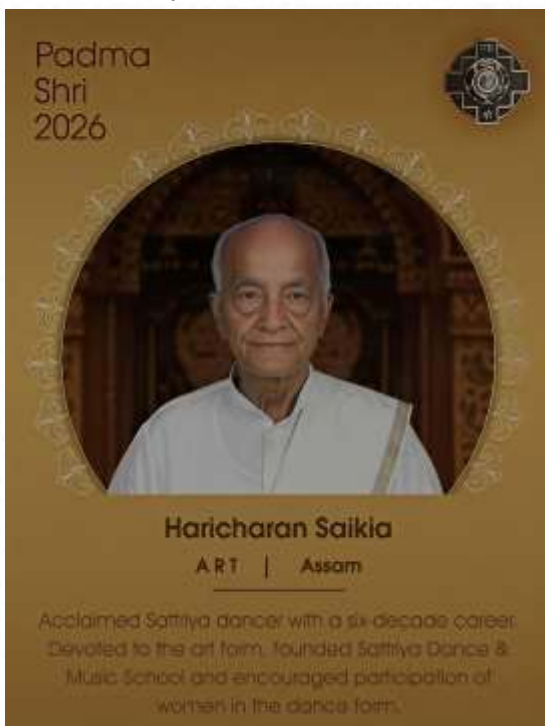
#### 4. Pokhila Lekthepi

- **Field:** Art (Folk Music)
- Karbi folk singer
- Composed **300+** folk songs, expanded Karbi cultural reach



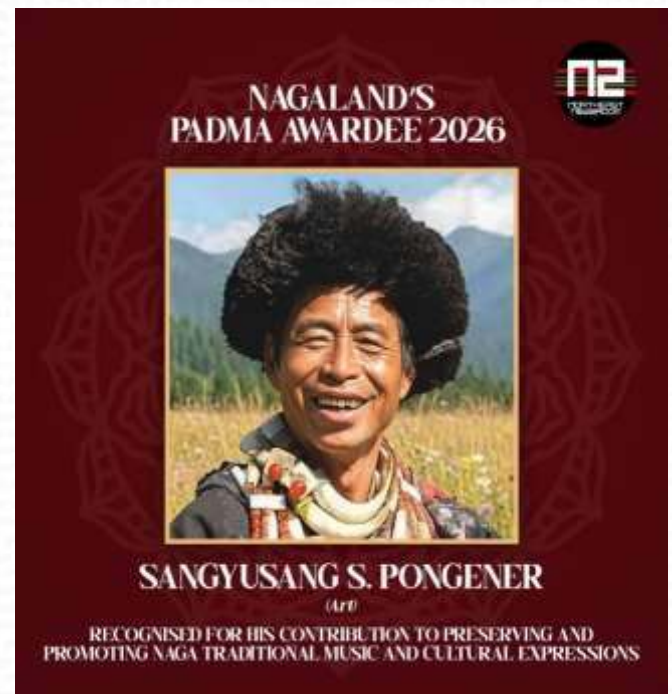
#### 5. Haricharan Saikia

- **Field:** Art (Sattriya Dance)
- Six-decade career
- Founded Sattriya dance & music school
- Promoted **women's participation** in Sattriya



#### Padma Shri Awardees from Other NE States (2026)

- **Arunachal Pradesh:** Techi Gubin – Social Work
- **Meghalaya:** Hally War – Social Work
- **Manipur:** Yumnam Jatra Singh (*Posthumous*) – Art
- **Nagaland:** Sangyusang S Pongener – Art
- **Tripura:** Naresh Chandra Dev Varma – Literature & Education



#### Prelims Practice Questions

**Q.** With reference to the Padma Awards, consider the following statements:



1. Padma Awards are announced on the eve of Republic Day.
2. Padma Shri is the highest civilian award of India.
3. Padma Awards are presented by the President of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a) 1 and 3 only

**Sol:** Padma Shri is not the highest civilian award; Highest: Bharat Ratna Then: Padma Vibhushan → Padma Bhushan → Padma Shri

## Assam in EU-India FTA

### Syllabus - GS Paper V

#### India-EU FTA:

- Aims to deepen bilateral trade by reducing tariffs, non-tariff barriers and enhancing regulatory cooperation.
- EU is a high-value, regulation-intensive market with strong demand for agri-products, including tea.

#### Significance for Tea Sector:

- India exports **~19–21 million kg of tea annually to the EU.**
- **Germany and Poland** act as major entry and redistribution hubs for Indian tea in Europe.
- Duty elimination (especially for green tea packs <3 kg) can improve price competitiveness.



#### Opportunities for Assam Tea:

- Expansion of market access beyond traditional buyers amid geopolitical disruptions (e.g. Russia, Iran).
- Scope for branding of Assam tea as a premium, GI-linked product.
- Potential boost to value-added and packaged tea exports.

#### Key Challenges Highlighted:

- Stringent EU regulations on:
  - **Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs)**
  - Food safety and traceability
  - Packaging, labelling, sustainability and human rights due diligence
- High compliance costs, especially for small and medium tea producers.

#### The MRL Issue -

- The EU has introduced new regulations on pesticide residues in tea.
- The **Maximum Residue Level (MRL)** for **thiamethoxam** and **clothianidin** will be reduced to **0.05 ppm** from **March 7**.
- Another regulation will lower the **MRL for thiacloprid** to **0.05 ppm** from **May**.

#### Impact on Assam Tea Industry:

- Assam's tea industry relies on these chemicals for **pest control** in tea plantations.



- There are **no widely accepted alternatives** for replacing these pesticides.
- The **Tocklai Tea Research Institute of TRA** has found some alternative chemicals (**chlorfenapyr and tolfenpyrad**).

**Solution**

- **Policy & Institutional Gaps:**
  - Shortage of NABL-accredited testing labs.
  - Need for better certification, traceability systems and cold-chain/logistics support.
- **Way Forward :**
  - Align domestic schemes with FTA commitments.
  - Strengthen testing infrastructure and capacity building.
  - Early stakeholder consultations to ensure exporter preparedness.
  - Promote sustainable and ethical tea production to meet EU norms.
- **Conclusion:**  
The India–EU FTA can be a **game changer for Assam’s tea exports**, provided regulatory preparedness, sustainability compliance and institutional support are strengthened.



**Prelims Practice Question**

**Q. With reference to the India–EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and India’s tea exports, consider the following statements:**

1. The India–EU FTA is expected to eliminate customs duties on certain categories of green tea exports from India, improving price competitiveness.

2. Germany and Poland together account for a significant share of India’s tea exports to the European Union.
3. Under the India–EU FTA, tea exports from India will be exempt from compliance with EU regulations related to food safety, sustainability and traceability.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: (a) 1 and 2 only

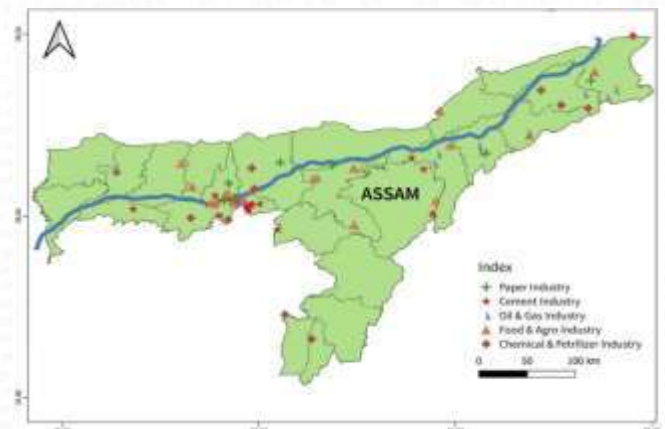
**Sol: Statement 3 is incorrect:** EU regulations on food safety, sustainability and traceability remain stringent and mandatory even under the FTA.

**Assam’s Hydrocarbon Resources**

**Syllabus - GS Paper V**

**Context:**

- Assam remains one of India’s oldest oil-producing regions, yet **over 40–50% of its hydrocarbon resources are still untapped**, highlighting both a challenge and an opportunity.
- This was underlined during the **Assam State Session at India Energy Week**, where the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas noted that a significant portion of Assam’s hydrocarbon potential has not yet been converted into recoverable reserves.



## Assam Hydrocarbon Hotspots

### Petroleum & Natural Gas (Most Important)

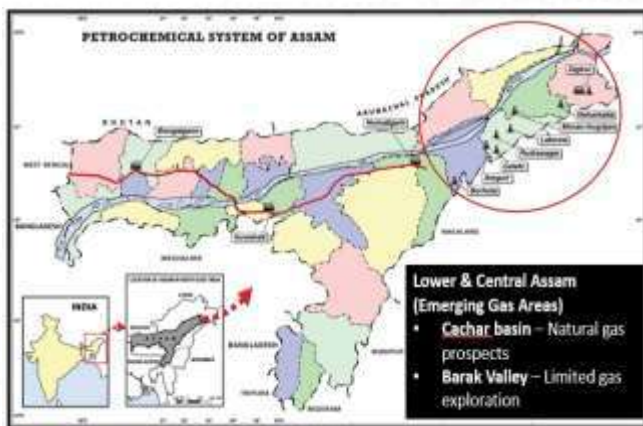
- **Digboi** – India's oldest oilfield
- **Naharkatiya** – Oil & gas
- **Moran** – Oilfield
- **Lakua–Lakhmani** – Oil & gas
- **Rudrasagar** – ONGC field
- **Duliajan** – OIL headquarters & gas fields

### Coal

- **Makum Coalfield** (Tinsukia district)
- **Margherita**
- **Ledo**
- **Tirap–Tipong** area

### Limestone

- **Karbi Anglong** district
- **North Cachar Hills** (Dima Hasao)



## Key Issues Highlighted

- **Untapped Hydrocarbon Reserves**
  - Despite being a key contributor to India's oil and gas sector, Assam's deeper and frontier hydrocarbon prospects remain under-explored.
  - Exploration is constrained by **inconsistent data, limited survey depth, and environmental sensitivities**.
  - The focus is now shifting from mere discovery to **monetisation of reserves**.
- **Gas Flaring and Resource Loss**
  - Gas flaring in Assam has resulted in substantial economic and energy losses.
  - A **new legal framework penalising gas flaring** aims to curb wastage and improve efficiency.
  - Reducing flaring aligns with India's climate commitments and Assam's green growth strategy.

## Need for an Integrated Gas Pipeline Network

- Experts stressed the urgency of **connecting all Northeastern states through a unified gas grid**.
- Projects led by **Indradhanush Gas Grid Limited (IGGL)** and **Assam Gas Company Limited (AGCL)** are expected to:
  - Boost city gas distribution,
  - Support industries,
  - Enable cleaner household energy access.



## Role of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs)

- **Oil India Limited (OIL):** Exploration, drilling, gas extraction
- **Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL):** Refinery auxiliaries, gas processing, green hydrogen
- **Brahmaputra Cracker and Polymer Limited (BCPL):** Petrochemicals and downstream industries
- **Power Department, Assam:** Thermal power and non-conventional energy sources
- Together, these entities outline a **vertically integrated energy ecosystem** for Assam.





### Government Vision

The Assam government has reaffirmed its commitment to:

- Policy stability and transparency,
- Faster clearances,
- Investor-friendly governance,
- Coordination with Central agencies.
- The emphasis is on **balancing reserve creation, production growth, and environmental sustainability.**



### Significance for Assam

- Converts Assam from a **resource-producing state to a value-adding energy hub.**
- Supports industrialisation, employment, and regional energy security.
- Aligns with India's broader goals of **energy transition and gas-based economy.**

- Positions Assam as a strategic energy gateway for the Northeast.

**Q. Despite being one of India's oldest oil-producing regions, a large part of Assam's hydrocarbon potential remains untapped. Discuss the challenges and outline how an integrated energy ecosystem can drive sustainable development in the State.**

### Introduction

- Assam is a pioneer in India's oil sector, yet **~40–50% hydrocarbon resources remain untapped.**

### Challenges

- Limited deep and frontier exploration
- Inconsistent geological data and survey depth
- Gas flaring causing economic and energy loss
- Environmental sensitivity of the region
- Inadequate integrated gas pipeline connectivity

### Integrated Energy Ecosystem – Way Forward

- Accelerated exploration and conversion of resources into reserves
- State-wide gas grid and city gas distribution (IGGL, AGCL)
- Reduction of gas flaring through regulatory penalties
- Value addition via refineries, petrochemicals and downstream industries (NRL, BCPL)
- Expansion into green hydrogen and non-conventional energy

### Significance

- Enhances energy security and industrial growth
- Generates employment and investment
- Balances economic development with environmental sustainability

### Conclusion

- Assam's energy future lies in **monetising untapped resources through integrated, sustainable, and investor-friendly energy planning.**



# FEBRUARY MONTH

## Budget 2026 & Assam

**Syllabus: Prelims: Economy, Government Schemes, Federal Finance**

### Key Focus Areas for Assam

#### 1. Urban Mobility & Infrastructure

- Incremental funding for **electric buses** offers Guwahati an opportunity to correct chronic public transport failures.
- Expansion can reduce **congestion, pollution, and commuter fatigue**.
- Scope for early adoption in **Dibrugarh and Silchar**, preventing future urban sprawl.
- Emphasis on **charging infrastructure and rational route planning**.

### Yuva Shakti-driven Budget

#### Government's 'Sankalp'

*To focus on poor, underprivileged and disadvantaged*



#### 2. Municipal Finance & Urban Governance

- Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) like **GMC, DMC, and SMC** can now explore **municipal bond financing**.
- Bond-based funding can unlock **drainage and sewerage projects**, addressing Assam's recurring urban flooding.
- Reflects shift towards **financially empowered and professionalised urban governance**.

#### 3. Healthcare Sector Push

- Proposal for a **Guwahati Medical Hub** as a regional healthcare cluster.
- Potential integration of **medical education, diagnostics, research, and tertiary care**.
- Emphasis on upgrading **district hospitals to Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS)**.
- Strengthens **decentralised and accessible healthcare systems**.



#### 4. AYUSH & Sustainable Livelihoods

- Renewed national thrust on **AYUSH systems**.
- Assam's biodiversity positions it well for:
  - **Ayurveda hospitals**
  - **Medicinal plant plantations**
- **Scientific agar cultivation** within regulated AYUSH frameworks:
  - Prevents illegal extraction
  - Encourages value addition
  - Balances ecology with livelihood creation

#### 5. Tourism Development

- Indirect but strong encouragement for tourism growth.
- Focus areas:
  - **Electric mobility in tourist circuits**
  - Professional, eco-sensitive facilities
  - Trained guides and multilingual interpretation
- **Buddhist Heritage Circuit** proposed across six Northeastern states.
- Absence of a fully empowered **Kaziranga Tourist Authority** remains a governance gap.





## 6. Education Infrastructure

- Emphasis on **asset renewal** aligns with upgrading decades-old schools.
- Focus on:
  - Structural safety
  - Sanitation
  - Digital access
  - Modern learning spaces
- Reinforces **foundational education and human capital formation**.

## 7. Industry, MSMEs & Employment

- National incentives enable **IT hardware and electronics assembly units** in Assam.
- Improved connectivity, power supply, and logistics support light manufacturing.
- Potential for MSME clusters around anchor units.
- Aligns with **MSME-led employment generation strategy**.

## Expenditure of Major Items

In ₹ crore



## Expenditure on Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe sub-plans and schemes for the welfare of women, children, and the North Eastern Region (NER)

- Programmes for the welfare of women and children have been allocated Rs 6,33,176 crore in 2026-27, an increase of 25% over the revised estimate of 2025-26. These allocations include programmes being implemented across all ministries.
- Allocation towards the welfare of women is estimated to increase due to increased allocation towards the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. Under the Awas Yojana, the female head of the family must be the owner or co-owner of the house.
- Allocation towards the welfare of children is estimated to increase due to a higher allocation towards school education under POSHAN, PM-SHRI, and the Samagra Shiksha scheme.
- Allocation for Scheduled Castes is estimated to be higher due to increased allocation under the Jal Jeevan Mission and the Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana.



**Table 7: Allocations for women, children, SCs, STs and NER (Rs crore)**

	Actuals 2024-25	Revised 2025-26	Budgeted 2026-27	% change (2025-26 RE to 2026-27 BE)
Welfare of Women	3,59,722	3,97,885	5,00,879	25.9%
Welfare of Children	99,099	1,07,945	1,32,297	22.6%
Scheduled Castes	1,23,372	1,61,205	1,96,400	21.8%
Scheduled Tribes	1,05,711	1,23,435	1,41,089	14.3%
North Eastern Region	87,736*	88,741	1,08,335	22.1%

Note: \*Revised estimates taken as actuals  
Sources: Expenditure Profile, Union Budget 2026-27; PRS.

**Growth of High Value Crops**

- Support to growth of high value crops like **Agarwood** in North East - Agarwood, often called "**liquid gold**" or "**Wood of the Gods,**" is a rare, fragrant, and dark resinous heartwood produced by *Aquilaria* trees, primarily in Southeast Asia.
- Agarwood, also known as oud, is a highly aromatic resinous heartwood derived from *Aquilaria* trees, prized for its use in luxury perfumery, incense, and traditional medicine.



**Tezpur Mental Health -**

- Reaffirming the commitment to Mental Health and Trauma Care, the Finance Minister announced to setup a NIMHANS-2 (The National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences) and also upgrade **National Mental Health Institutes in Ranchi and Tezpur** as Regional Apex Institutions.

**National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS)**



Low Cost Treatment  
in Bangalore  
Best Neurology  
Hospital





### Developing City Economic Regions

- Tier 2 / Tier 3 & Temple towns –
  - The Budget aims to further amplify the potential of cities to deliver the economic power of agglomerations by mapping **city economic regions (CER)**, based on their specific growth drivers.
  - An allocation of ₹ 5000 crore per CER over 5 years is proposed for implementing their plans through a challenge mode with a reform-cum-results based financing mechanism

The Budget proposes mapping "**City Economic Regions**" (CER) with an allocation of ₹5,000 crore each for development.



### Buddhist Circuit

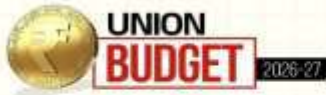
**Heritage and Culture Tourism**

- National Destination Digital Knowledge Grid to be established to digitally document all places of significance - **cultural, spiritual and heritage**
- Development of 15 archeological sites including **Lothal, Dholavira, Rakhigarhi, Adichanallur, Sarnath, Hastinapur, and Leh Palace** into vibrant, experiential cultural destinations
- Development of an **integrated East Coast Industrial Corridor** with a well-connected node at Durgapur, creation of **5 tourism destinations in the 5 Purvodaya States**, and the provision of **4,000 e-buses**
- Scheme for Development of **Buddhist Circuits in Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Assam, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura**

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## BUDDHIST CIRCUIT: A NEW SACRED TRAIL IN THE NORTH EAST

New Buddhist Circuit scheme across  
Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Assam,  
Mizoram, Tripura and Manipur

Focus on preservation and restoration  
of Buddhist temples and monasteries

Improved pilgrim amenities across  
the identified states



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Consider the following statements regarding the Union Budget 2026–27 and its implications for Assam:

1. The Budget emphasises competitive federalism by linking development outcomes to state-level planning and execution.
2. Municipal bond financing has been encouraged to strengthen urban infrastructure and local body autonomy.
3. The Budget mandates compulsory central funding for electric bus expansion in all Tier-2 cities of Assam.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Q:** *The Union Budget 2026–27 signals a shift from entitlement-based assistance to opportunity-driven development for Assam. Critically examine how this approach can transform Assam’s urban governance, healthcare, and employment landscape.*

#### Introduction

- The Union Budget 2026–27 reflects a governance philosophy rooted in competitive federalism, offering Assam policy instruments rather than unconditional fiscal transfers.

#### Body

- **Urban Governance:** Electric mobility and municipal bonds can address congestion, flooding, and weak municipal finances if professionally managed.
- **Healthcare:** Guwahati Medical Hub and IPHS-compliant district hospitals can decentralise healthcare and reduce dependency on metros.
- **Employment & Industry:** MSME-driven IT hardware and electronics manufacturing can generate local employment and skill ecosystems.
- **Tourism & AYUSH:** Buddhist circuits, AYUSH systems, and agar cultivation integrate cultural heritage with sustainable livelihoods.
- **Challenges:** Administrative capacity, coordination deficits, and outcome-based monitoring remain key risks.

#### Conclusion

Budget 2026 opens a strategic window for Assam to transition from dependence to participation. Success will hinge on institutional reform, disciplined execution, and alignment with national priorities.

## Biswa Mahabir Chilarai Diwas

**Syllabus: Prelims: Art & Culture, History**

#### Overview

- The event commemorates **Biswa Mahabir Chilarai**, a legendary **Koch general** known for his **wisdom, diplomacy, and military prowess**.
- Chilarai is often compared to **Napoleon Bonaparte** and **Chhatrapati Shivaji** for his strategic brilliance.

**Bir Chilarai Divas 2025** was observed on **12 February in 2025**

*It falls on the full moon day (Purnima) of the Magha month in the Assamese Lunar calendar, which typically corresponds to February in the Gregorian calendar. As a result, when Assamese calendar dates are converted into the Gregorian calendar, the corresponding English date shifts every year.*





### Basic Details: Chilarai

- Chilarai, whose real name was **Sukladhwaja** (1510–1571 AD)
- He was the **younger brother of Nara Narayan** the Koch dynasty's most powerful emperor
- He served as the **Commander-in-Chief and Chief Minister (Dewan)** of the kingdom under Nara Narayan's rule.
- Chilarai earned his title due to his **exceptional military skills**, particularly his swift troop movements, which were as **fast as a chila** (kite/eagle).
- Chilarai's valor secured Koch dominance over the **Bhutia, the Kachari kingdom (of Hadimba, now Dimapur), and the Ahoms**.



- **Chilarai** played an important role in propagating and supporting **Vaishnavism**, which was promoted by **Srimanta Sankardeva** at the time.

- His support for religious and cultural activities influenced the socioreligious identity of Assam and the Koch regions.
- Today, **Chilarai** is regarded as a symbol of **bravery and strategic brilliance** in Assam and Bengal. The **Bir Chilarai Award** is named after him. The Bir Chilarai Award is given annually to the **top NCC cadet in Assam**.
  - It is the **highest honor for NCC cadets** in the state.



### Prelims Practice Question:

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Vir Chilarai:

1. Chilarai was a great military general of the **Koch dynasty** and the younger brother of Maharaja Naranarayan.
2. He played a key role in expanding the Koch kingdom and led successful military campaigns against the Ahoms and Mughals.
3. Chilarai is honored with an annual award by the Government of Assam for contributions to culture and bravery.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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



## Swagat Satirtha 2.0 Portal

**Syllabus: Prelims: Governance, e-Governance initiatives**

### About the Portal

- **Swagat Satirtha 2.0** is an **online mutual transfer portal** launched by the Assam Government.
- Applicable to **Grade III and Grade IV State government employees**.
- Aims to ensure **transparent, efficient, and paperless transfer processes**.
- Launched by **Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma** at Lok Sewa Bhawan, Guwahati.



### How the Mutual Transfer Process Works

- Employee submits an online application with service details.
- Applicant selects **five preferred districts**.
- Assigned officer verifies application details.
- Mutual transfer request sent to eligible employees in selected districts.
- On acceptance, request moves to **Head of the Directorate**.
- After approval, department issues **transfer order digitally**.



### Key Features

- Fully **online, single-click transfer mechanism**.
- Eliminates physical file movement and visits to Dispur.
- Ensures:
  - Same **grade pay**
  - Same **service rules**
  - Similar **nature of post**
- Covers **38 departments** and over **75 directorates / HOD offices**.



### Performance of Swagat Satirtha 1.0

- **4,502 applications approved**.
- **9,004 employees benefited** across **32 departments**.
- **31,000 employees registered** (Jan–Feb 2025).
- Around **21,000 employees selected preferred districts**.
- Significant reduction in administrative workload and costs.

### Governance & Administrative Significance

- First-of-its-kind **transparent mutual transfer system** in India.
- Reduced:
  - File processing
  - Travel costs (≈ ₹10,000 per employee saved)
  - Administrative delays
- Aligns with:
  - Digital governance
  - Transparency
  - Ease of service delivery
- Builds on earlier experience under **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan** (teacher transfers).





### Future Vision

- Portal to be opened **twice every financial year**.
- Goal to **eliminate routine transfer applications within 3 years**.
- Transfers in **public interest** will remain permissible.

### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Consider the following statements regarding Swagat Satirtha 2.0:

1. It is an online portal facilitating mutual transfers for Grade III and IV employees of the Assam Government.
2. The portal allows transfer requests across different grades and service rules.
3. Swagat Satirtha 1.0 benefited more than 9,000 employees across multiple departments.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

## Busu Festival

**Syllabus: Prelims: Art & Culture, Tribes of Assam**

### About the Festival

- Busu is a post-harvest festival of the Dimasa community.
- Celebrated annually after completion of agricultural activities.
- Observed with traditional rituals, dances, sports, folklore, and community feasts.

- Symbolises gratitude to nature, prosperity, and social unity.

### Location & Community

- Celebrated predominantly in **Dima Hasao district**.
- Major venues include **Maibang**, an important cultural centre of the Dimasas.
- Organised by community bodies such as the **Central Busu Celebration Committee**.



### Key Cultural Elements

- **Baikho:**
  - Traditional **dancing hall** of the Dimasa community.
  - Central space for ritual dances and collective celebrations.
- **Traditional Games & Sports:**
  - Reflect martial and agrarian heritage.
- **Dance & Folklore:**
  - Performances by troupes from **Dima Hasao, Karbi Anglong**, and other regions.
- **Ritual Practices:**
  - Age-old customs reinforcing cultural continuity.



"Baikho" in the Dimasa context refers to a traditional, open-air arena or stage used for performing cultural dances.

### Dimasa People

- **Dimasa**, also known as **Dimasa Kachari**, are an **ethnolinguistic tribal community** of **Northeast India**, mainly inhabiting **Assam and Nagaland**.
- They are considered **one of the oldest indigenous inhabitants** of the region.

### Language

- The Dimasa people speak the **Dimasa language**.
- It belongs to the **Tibeto-Burman language family**, specifically the **Boro–Garo branch**.
- The Bodo-Kachari group includes **Boro, Garo, Rabha, Tripuri, Tiwa, Koch, Moran**, etc.



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Consider the following statements regarding the Busu festival of Assam:

1. Busu is a post-harvest festival celebrated by the Dimasa community.
2. The Baikho is the traditional dancing hall associated with Busu celebrations.

3. Busu is primarily celebrated in the Brahmaputra Valley districts.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

## Rise of Arsenic

**Syllabus: Prelims/GS Paper III/V**

### Arsenic Beyond Prescribed Limits Found in Groundwater in Assam

#### 1. Context

- The Union Minister of State for Jal Shakti informed Parliament that **arsenic beyond prescribed limits** has been found in **some isolated pockets of Assam's groundwater**.
- However, as per data from the **Central Ground Water Board (CGWB)**, groundwater in Assam remains **largely potable**, with localized contamination reported in certain areas.



#### 2. What is Arsenic Contamination?

- Arsenic is a **naturally occurring toxic metalloid**.

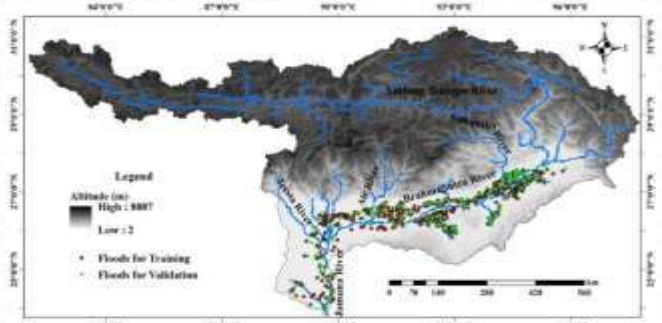


- It dissolves into groundwater through:
  - Geological processes (especially in alluvial plains)
  - Sediment interaction in river basins
- Long-term exposure causes:
  - Skin lesions
  - Cancer (skin, lung, bladder)
  - Cardiovascular diseases
  - Neurological disorders
- WHO guideline for arsenic in drinking water: **10 µg/L (0.01 mg/L)**  
BIS (Bureau of Indian Standards) permissible limit:
- Acceptable: 0.01 mg/L
- Permissible (in absence of alternate source): 0.05 mg/L



### 3. Why is Assam Vulnerable?

- Located in the **Brahmaputra floodplain**, composed of young alluvial sediments.
- Natural geochemical processes release arsenic into aquifers.
  - The Brahmaputra carries sediments eroded from the **Himalayan rocks**, some of which naturally contain arsenic.
- Similar contamination is seen in:
  - West Bengal
  - Bihar
  - Bangladesh
- **Issue: Groundwater is a primary drinking water source in rural Assam.**



### 4. Institutional & Governance Framework

#### Agencies Involved:

- **Ministry of Jal Shakti**
- **Central Ground Water Board (CGWB)**
- State Public Health Engineering Departments

#### Key Scheme:

- **Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)**
  - Aims to provide tap water to rural households.
  - Special focus on arsenic & fluoride-affected habitations.



### 5. Policy & Public Health Dimensions

#### Positive Aspects:

- Parliamentary disclosure ensures transparency.
- CGWB monitoring provides scientific assessment.
- Acknowledgment that contamination is localized.

#### Concerns:

- Chronic health risks due to prolonged exposure.
- Poor awareness in rural communities.
- Need for stronger water testing infrastructure.





### 6. Way Forward

- Regular groundwater quality monitoring.
- Promotion of treated piped water supply.
- Community awareness campaigns.
- Installation of arsenic removal plants.
- Integration with health surveillance data.

### Prelims Practise Question

**Q.** With reference to arsenic contamination in groundwater in Assam, consider the following statements:

1. Arsenic contamination in Assam is primarily due to natural geochemical processes occurring in the Brahmaputra floodplain's alluvial sediments.
2. The World Health Organization's guideline value for arsenic in drinking water is 0.05 mg/L.
3. Under the Jal Jeevan Mission, special focus is given to arsenic- and fluoride-affected habitations.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

## Hollongapar Wildlife Sanctuary

**Syllabus: Prelims/GS Paper III/V**

### Context

- An **endangered hoolock gibbon** (adult male) died due to **electrocution** on the electrified railway track passing through **Hollongapar Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary**.
- The sanctuary is located near **Mariani, Jorhat district, Assam**.

- The **1.65 km broad-gauge railway line** bisects the sanctuary.
- Recent **railway electrification without adequate mitigation measures** has increased wildlife risks.



### About Hollongapar Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary

- Area: **20.98 sq km**
- Known for highest primate diversity in Assam.
- Houses **7 species of primates**, including:
  - Western Hoolock Gibbon
  - Capped Langur
  - Rhesus Macaque
  - Stump-tailed Macaque, etc.
- Gibbon population: **~125 individuals in 26 groups**
- Sanctuary has become a **'forest island'** due to fragmentation and loss of connectivity.





### About Hoolock Gibbon

- India's only ape species
- Species in Assam: **Western Hoolock Gibbon (Hoolock hoolock)**
- Status:
  - **IUCN Red List:** Endangered
  - **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972:** Schedule I (Highest protection)
- Habitat: Exclusively **arboreal** (tree-dwelling)
- Movement type: **Brachiation** (swinging through canopy)
- Rarely come to ground — highly vulnerable if forced down.



- Gibbons, known as the smallest and fastest of all apes, inhabit tropical and subtropical forests in Southeast Asia.
- They have high intelligence, distinct personalities, and strong family bonds similar to other apes.

### Key Issues Highlighted

#### A. Habitat Fragmentation

- Railway line has divided sanctuary into **two disproportionate parts**.

- Especially affects **4–5 gibbon families in Compartment-I**.
- Leads to:
  - Isolation of groups
  - Reduced gene flow
  - Lower genetic variability
  - Long-term survival threat

#### B. Electrocutation Risk

- Electrification without mitigation measures increases:
  - Direct electrocutation risk
  - Disturbance due to rail traffic

#### C. Failure of Artificial Canopy Bridges

- Wildlife Institute of India (WII) suggested **7 artificial canopy bridges**.
- Earlier canopy bridges failed due to:
  - Poor design
  - Not suited to gibbons' brachiation movement
- Doubling of railway line may further worsen situation.



### Expert Recommendations

- **Rerouting Railway Line**
  - Suggested by conservationists & primatologists.
  - Only **1.65 km track**, can be shifted outside sanctuary.
- **Properly Designed Canopy Bridges**
  - Scientifically designed structures aligned with:



- Gibbon movement pattern
- Height and canopy structure
- **Landscape Connectivity Restoration**
  - Restore forest corridors linking sanctuary to nearby forest patches.



### Ecological Implications

- Loss of top arboreal species impacts:
  - Seed dispersal
  - Forest regeneration
- Genetic bottleneck risk in small isolated population.
- Threat extends to:
  - Other primates
  - Ground mammals crossing track

### Prelims Practise Question

**Q.** With reference to the Western Hoolock Gibbon, consider the following statements:

1. It is the only ape species found in India.
2. It is listed as Schedule I species under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
3. It is primarily a terrestrial species that frequently moves on the forest floor.
4. Hollongapar Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary in Assam hosts the highest number of primate species in the State.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

## Special Revision of Electoral Roll

**Syllabus: Prelims/GS Paper III/V**

### What Happened?

- During **Special Revision (SR) 2026, 2,43,485 names** were deleted from Assam's draft voter list.

- Draft voters: **2,52,01,624**
- Final voters: **2,49,58,139**
- Net decrease: **0.97%**

In **Kamrup Metro district:**

- Draft: **10,75,576**
- Final: **10,49,644**
- Decline: **2.41% (~26,000 voters)**

In **Kamrup (R) district:**

- Total voters: **12,44,030**
  - Male: 6,24,540
  - Female: 6,19,490
- Service voters: 2,837



### Legal & Constitutional Framework

#### Constitutional Provisions

- **Article 324** – Superintendence of elections vested in Election Commission of India (ECI)
- **Article 326** – Universal Adult Franchise (18+ years)

#### Statutory Provision -

- **Representation of the People Act, 1950**
  - Governs preparation and revision of electoral rolls
  - Section 24: Appeal mechanism
    - First appeal → District Magistrate (within 15 days)
    - Second appeal → Chief Electoral Officer (within 30 days)





### Administrative Process Followed

- **House-to-house verification** (Nov 22 – Dec 20, 2025)
- Draft roll published: **Dec 27**
- Claims & objections: Dec 27 – Jan 22
- Final roll published: Feb 10
- *This suggests procedural compliance and transparency.*

### About SEC, Assam

- The State Election Commission, Assam was constituted in May, 1994 under provision of the **Article 243K and 243 ZA** of the Constitution of India, with a view to perform responsibilities viz.
  - superintendence,
  - direction and control of preparation of Electoral Rolls for and
  - conduct of all elections to the Panchayats and Municipalities.
- The State Election Commission shall be consist of a State Election Commissioner to be appointed by the respective Governor of a State.



Shri Ranjan Sharma, ACS (Retd.)  
State Election Commissioner

### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to the preparation and revision of electoral rolls in India, consider the following statements:

1. The preparation and revision of electoral rolls are governed by the Representation of the People Act, 1950.
2. An appeal against the decision of an Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) can be made to the District Magistrate.
3. The Election Commission of India is a constitutional body established under Article 324 of the Constitution.
4. Special revision of electoral rolls is conducted only once in five years before General Elections.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

**Q.** Periodic revision of electoral rolls is essential for ensuring free and fair elections. Discuss in the context of the recent Special Revision of electoral rolls in Assam.

Introduction

- Electoral roll forms the basis of universal adult franchise under Article 326.
- Free and fair elections require accurate and updated voter lists.



- In Assam's Special Revision (SR 2026), there was a 0.97% reduction in voters after verification.
- Legal and Constitutional Framework
- Article 324 – Superintendence, direction and control of elections vested in the Election Commission of India (ECI).
- Article 325 – No exclusion from electoral roll on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex.
- Representation of the People Act, 1950 – Governs preparation and revision of electoral rolls.
- Section 24 – Provides for appeal against decisions of Electoral Registration Officer (ERO).

#### Assam Context

- House-to-house verification conducted before final publication.
- Use of statutory forms:
  - Form 6 – Inclusion
  - Form 7 – Deletion
  - Form 8 – Correction
- Appeal mechanism available (District Magistrate and CEO).
- Sensitive backdrop due to migration and NRC-related issues.

#### Concerns and Challenges

- Risk of wrongful exclusion of genuine voters.
- Documentation barriers for migrants and vulnerable groups.
- Political controversy and trust deficit.

#### Conclusion

Electoral integrity requires both accuracy and inclusiveness.

Revision exercises must ensure procedural fairness and protection of voting rights.

#### Why Were Names Deleted?

Authorities cited three main reasons:

1. **Deceased electors**
  2. **Permanent relocation**
  3. **Duplicate entries**
- In Kamrup Metro specifically:
    - 26,846 deletions due to deaths
    - ~17,000 due to permanent shift
    - 3,407 enrolled in other districts
    - 22,394 new voters added
  - This indicates **data correction, not mass disenfranchisement**.

Any person is entitled to be an Elector and on application to be registered in the electoral roll for that constituency if that person is:

- a. Citizen of India;
- b. Not less than 18 years of age as on 01.01.2026;
- c. Ordinary resident of the constituency;
- d. Not disqualified under any law; and
- e. Not of unsound mind.



#### CEO's Clarification:

No "Suo Motu" Deletion – Chief Electoral Officer clarified:

- No arbitrary deletion.
- Due process followed.
- Hearings conducted before deletion.
- Appeals available:
  - 15 days → District Magistrate
  - 30 days → Chief Electoral Officer
- Revision continues till **10 days before nomination filing**.
- **Special SOP**
  - Separate Standard Operating Procedure for **evicted persons** whose names were removed.
- This is significant given Assam's **eviction drives & migration issues**.

#### Moran Emergency Landing

**Syllabus: Prelims/GS Paper III/V**

#### Key Highlights of Visit

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi to visit Assam on a daylong tour.
- Landing at **Chabua**.
- Inauguration of **Emergency Landing Facility (ELF)** on **Moran Highway**.
- Indian Air Force (IAF) air show with aircraft such as:
  - C-130



- Sukhoi fighter jets
- PM's aircraft to take off from the **4.2 km landing facility**.

**Chabua Air Force Station Upgrade: To keep a close eye and counter any Chinese intrusion or intervention at the border areas.**



The Lockheed Martin C-130J Super Hercules is a medium-size American four-engine turboprop military transport aircraft.

**Emergency Landing Facility**

- The state of Assam is going to witness a historic event, inauguration of an Emergency Landing Facility (ELF) on the Moran bypass in Dibrugarh district on 14 February 2026.
- The facility opens an identified stretch on the highway as an alternative runway during contingencies which would be capable of handling emergency landing and take-off operations of fighters, transport aircraft and helicopters.
- This will also prove instrumental during Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations in far-flung areas.



**Other initiatives**

- At an event at Lachit Ghat, PM Modi will also inaugurate the temporary campus of IIM-Guwahati being set up at Bongora
- The NIC Data Centre coming up at Amingaon.
- He will also flag off 100 e-buses.





## Emergency Landing Facility (ELF)

### Concept

- Certain stretches of **National Highways** are developed as **Emergency Landing Airstrips**.
- Enables:
  - Military aircraft operations during emergencies.
  - Rescue and disaster response operations.
  - Strategic military mobility.

### Key Facts

- Length of Moran ELF: **4.2 km**
- IAF has cleared at least **12 National Highways** for such facilities.
- First-ever NH emergency landing facility:
  - **3.5 km stretch of NH-925A**
  - Location: Barmer district, Rajasthan
  - Inaugurated: September 2021

### Strategic Significance (Especially for Assam)

- Northeast has sensitive international borders:
  - China
  - Myanmar

- Enhances:
  - National security preparedness
  - Rapid troop mobilization
  - Disaster response in flood-prone Assam



## Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to Emergency Landing Facilities (ELFs) on National Highways in India, consider the following statements:

1. They are developed to enable military aircraft to land during emergencies.
2. They can also facilitate disaster response and rescue operations.
3. The first such facility in India was inaugurated on NH-925A in Rajasthan.
4. These facilities are developed exclusively for civilian aircraft operations.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

## Gohpur - Numaligarh Tunnel

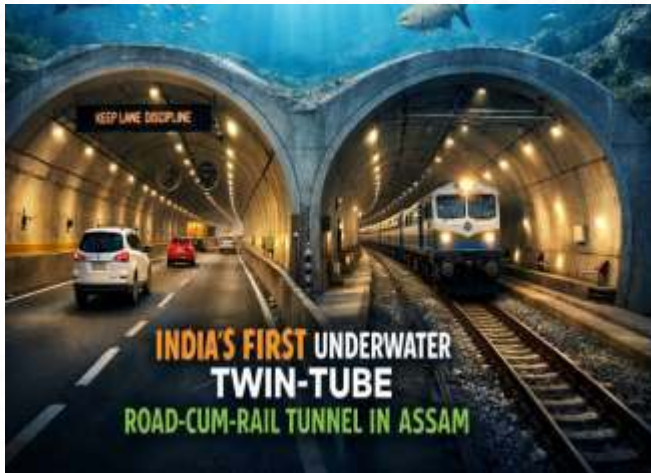
**Syllabus: Prelims/GS Paper V**

### Context

- Approved by the **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)**.
- Chaired by **Narendra Modi**.
- India's first **twin-tube underwater rail-cum-road tunnel**.
- Total Cost: ₹18,662 crore.
- Length of tunnel: 15.79 km.
- Total corridor length: 33.7 km (four-lane access-controlled greenfield connectivity).
- Construction timeline: 5 years.



- Mode: Engineering Procurement Construction (EPC).



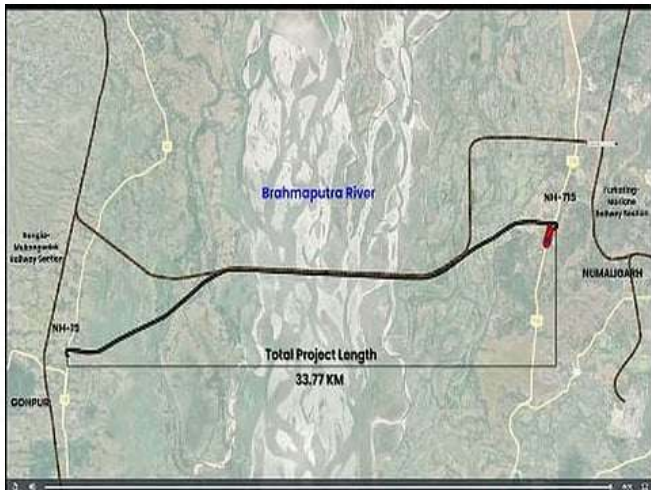
### Key Features

#### (A) Unique Significance

- India's first underwater rail-cum-road tunnel.
- World's second twin-tube rail-cum-road underwater tunnel.

#### (B) Location & Connectivity

- Connects:
  - Gohpur (NH 15)
  - Numaligarh (NH 715)
- Under River:
  - Brahmaputra



### Strategic & Economic Importance

#### (A) Travel Efficiency

- Current distance: 240 km via Kaliabhomora bridge (NH-52).
- Travel time: ~6 hours.
- After completion:
  - Travel time: ~20 minutes.

- Average speed increase: 100%.



### (B) Multi-Modal Integration

- Project integrates:
  - NH-15 & NH-715
  - Rangia–Murkongselek Railway (NFR)
  - Furkating–Mariani loop line (NFR)

#### Enhances:

- 11 economic nodes
- 3 social nodes
- 2 tourist nodes
- 8 logistics nodes

#### Connectivity to:

- 4 major railway stations
- 2 airports
- 2 inland waterways

### (C) Strategic Importance

- Crucial for:
  - Defence logistics in Northeast.
  - Connectivity to Arunachal Pradesh.
  - Faster troop & equipment movement.
- Reduces vulnerability of existing bridges.

### (D) Economic Benefits

- Reduces logistics cost.
- Boosts freight efficiency.
- Strengthens industrial corridors.
- Enhances trade integration in Northeast.
- Expected employment:
  - ~80 lakh person-days (direct & indirect).

### 4. Broader Relevance for Assam

#### (A) Industrial Boost

- Strengthens connectivity to **Numaligarh Refinery Limited**.
- Enhances petroleum & logistics movement.

#### (B) Tourism Promotion



- Improved access to:
  - Kaziranga National Park
  - Upper Assam eco-tourism belt.

### (C) Regional Development

- Reduces regional imbalance between North & South Bank of Brahmaputra.
- Promotes economic integration across districts.

### 5. Infrastructure & National Policy Linkages

- Aligned with:
  - PM Gati Shakti Master Plan.
  - Act East Policy.
  - North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme (NESIDS).
  - Bharatmala & railway modernisation.

### 6. Challenges

- Geological complexity of Brahmaputra riverbed.
- Seismic vulnerability (Zone V region).
- Environmental clearance issues.
- High capital cost.

### Prelims Practice MCQ

**Q.** With reference to the Gohpur–Numaligarh Tunnel Project, consider the following statements:

- It will be India's first twin-tube underwater rail-cum-road tunnel.
- The project will connect National Highway-15 and National Highway-715.
- The tunnel is proposed to be constructed in BOT (Build-Operate-Transfer) mode.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

## State Budget Session

**Syllabus: Prelims/GS Paper V**

### Context

- Last session of the **15th Assam Legislative Assembly**.
- Finance Minister **Ajanta Neog** presented the **Vote on Account Budget 2026–27**.
- Full-fledged budget deferred due to upcoming Assembly elections (March–April).
- Session began with the **Governor's Address** (Constitutional convention under Article 176).



## PART I: Vote on Account – Constitutional & Procedural Aspects

### 2. What is a Vote on Account?

- A **temporary budget provision** to withdraw funds from the Consolidated Fund of the State.
- Passed when:
  - Full budget cannot be presented (e.g., election year).
- Valid for:
  - Usually **2–4 months**.
- Passed through:
  - Appropriation (Vote on Account) Bill**.

### Constitutional Basis:

- Article 202 – Annual Financial Statement.
- Article 204 – Appropriation Bills.
- Article 206 – Vote on Account, Vote on Credit & Exceptional Grants.



### 3. Legislative Procedure in Budget Session

#### Key proceedings:

- Governor's Address
- Motion of Thanks
- Question Hour
- Supplementary Demands for Grants
- Supplementary Appropriation for 2025–26
- Discussion & Voting on Vote on Account
- Passing of Assam Appropriation (Vote on Account) Bill, 2026



#### Assam's Share

- Under 15th FC: **3.128%**
- Under 16th FC: **3.26%** (increase)
- Indicates recognition of economic performance.

### PART II: Assam's Economic Performance – Key Indicators

#### 4. GSDP Growth

- Projected GSDP (2026–27): **₹8.71 lakh crore**
- Growth Rate: **16.93%**
- GSDP increased from:
  - ₹4.10 lakh crore (2021–22)
  - ₹7.45 lakh crore (2025–26)
- 45% growth at constant prices (2019–20 to 2024–25) — above national average.

#### Target:

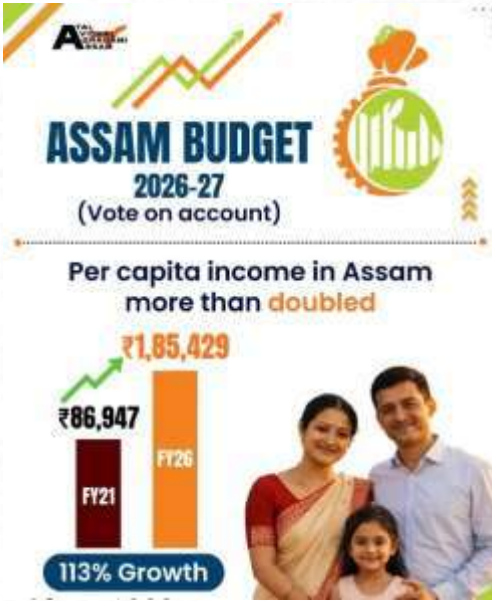
- Assam to become **₹10-lakh-crore (1 trillion rupee) economy by 2028.**



#### 5. Per Capita Income

- Increased from:
  - ₹86,947 (2020–21)
  - ₹1,85,429 (2025–26)
- Growth of 113%.
- However:
  - Among lowest 5 States.
  - Higher only than Bihar, Uttar Pradesh & Jharkhand.
  - States like Sikkim far ahead.
- **Insight:**
- High aggregate growth ≠ High income convergence.





**6. Revenue Trends**

**Own Tax Revenue:**

- ₹17,134 crore (2020–21)
- ₹30,052 crore (2024–25)
- Avg growth: 13%

**Own Source Revenue Share:**

- Increased from 30% (a decade ago)
- Now ~37% of total receipts

**Concern:**

- Still dependent on:
- Central devolution
- Externally aided projects



**7. Public Expenditure Trends**

Indicator	2015–16	2025–26 (BE)
Total Budget	₹72,573 crore	₹1,55,985 crore
Capital Expenditure	₹2,951 crore	₹26,409 crore

- Capital expenditure increased **8 times**.
- **Significance:**
  - Infrastructure creation

- Long-term asset formation
- Growth multiplier effect

**Debt & Fiscal Health**

- Debt-to-GSDP Ratio: **25.52%**
- Within FRBM limits.
- Reserves:
  - ₹10,000 crore in sinking & redemption funds.
- Ranked 21st among 28 States (controlled debt trajectory).
- **Interpretation:**
- Indicates fiscal prudence despite expenditure expansion.

**Banking & Credit Indicators**

- Credit-Deposit Ratio:
  - 56.09% (2021)
  - 74.48% (Dec 2025)
- Priority Sector Advances:
  - ₹3.69 lakh crore since 2021–22.

**Significance:**

- Financial deepening
- MSME & agriculture support
- Improved economic activity



**Externally Aided Projects**

- ₹15,000 crore (2021)
- ₹56,000 crore (Present)

**Indicates:**

- Increased development financing
- Infrastructure expansion





### Prelims Practice MCQ

**Q.** With reference to the Vote on Account and Assam's recent fiscal trends, consider the following statements:

1. A Vote on Account allows withdrawal of money from the Consolidated Fund without passing an Appropriation Bill.
2. Assam's debt-to-GSDP ratio is currently above 35%, exceeding FRBM limits.
3. Capital expenditure in Assam has increased more than eight times since 2015–16.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Q.** Assam's rapid GSDP growth has not yet translated into comparable per capita income levels. Critically analyse the structural challenges and suggest policy measures. (250 words)

#### Introduction

- Mention rapid GSDP growth.
- Highlight per capita income gap.

### Body

#### 1. Reasons for Gap

- Population growth.
- Agriculture dominance.
- Low industrial base.
- Informal economy.
- Regional imbalance.

#### 2. Fiscal & Structural Measures

- Improve tax base.
- Increase capital productivity.
- Promote MSMEs & manufacturing.
- Invest in human capital.
- Attract FDI.

#### 3. Financial Sector Role

- Improve credit flow.
- Support priority sectors.
- Encourage entrepreneurship.

#### 4. Social Dimension

- Skill development.
- Urbanisation & industrial corridors.
- Women workforce participation.

### Conclusion

- Sustainable growth requires:
  - Productivity enhancement
  - Income diversification
  - Fiscal discipline
  - Inclusive development

## 9<sup>th</sup> Assam Film Awards

**Syllabus: Prelims/GS Paper V**

### 9th Assam State Film Awards (2020 & 2021)

- The 9th Assam State Film Awards were presented by Lakshman Prasad Acharya at Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakshetra.

#### Major Winners

- 2021
  - **Best Film & Best Director:** Sabda Nishabda Kolahal – Directed by Dhanjit Das
  - **Jayanta Hazarika Award** – JP Das
  - **Nip Barua Award (Short Film)** – Kumu
  - **Naren Barua Award (Documentary)** – *Breaking the Silence*
- 2020
  - **Best Film & Best Director:** Balconit Bhagwan – Directed by Biswajit Bora
  - **Nip Barua Award (Short Film)** – *Xogun*
  - **Naren Barua Award (Documentary)** – *Screaming Butterflies*





**Lifetime Achievement Awards**

- Dinesh Das (2021)
- Jayanta Bhagawati (2020)



**Historical & Cultural Context of Assamese Cinema**

- The Governor emphasized the legacy of:
- **Jyotiprasad Agarwala** – Pioneer of Assamese cinema.
- His film **Jyomoti** – First Assamese feature film; foundation of the industry.

**Prelims Practise Question**

**Q.** With reference to the Assam State Film Awards, consider the following statements:

1. The awards are presented by the Governor of Assam.
2. The Assam State Film (Finance and Development) Corporation is associated with promotion of cinema in the State.
3. Only feature films are eligible for awards under this scheme.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only



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

## Polls to 3 State RS Seats

**Syllabus: Prelims/GS Paper V**

### Context

- The **Election Commission of India (ECI)** announced biennial elections to **3 Rajya Sabha seats from Assam**.
- Poll date: **March 16**.
- Term of 3 sitting MPs expiring in April 2026.

Retiring MPs:

- **Rameswar Teli**
- **Bhubaneswar Kalita**
- **Ajit Kumar Bhuyan**



### Rajya Sabha – Constitutional Background

- Upper House of Parliament.
- Maximum strength: 250 members.
  - 238 elected by States & UTs.
  - 12 nominated by President (Art 80).

### Constitutional Provisions:

- Article 80 – Composition.
- Article 83(1) – Permanent House (not subject to dissolution).
- One-third members retire every two years.
- Term: 6 years.

Term wise Rajya Sabha Members List				
Sl. No	NAME OF MEMBER	PARTY	TERM (From, To)	
			Appointment	Retirement
1	Kamakhya Prasad Tasa	Bharatiya Janata Party	15/06/2019	14/06/2025
2	Birendra Prasad Baisya	Asom Gana Parishad	15/06/2019	14/06/2025
3	Ajit Kumar Bhuyan	Independent & Others	10/04/2020	09/04/2026
4	Bhubaneswar Kalita	Bharatiya Janata Party	10/04/2020	09/04/2026
5	Sarbananda Sonowal	Bharatiya Janata Party	27/09/2021	09/04/2026
6	Pabitra Maughrita	Bharatiya Janata Party		
7	Rwngwen Nazary	United People's Party, Liberal		

### Nature of Rajya Sabha Elections

#### (A) Type:

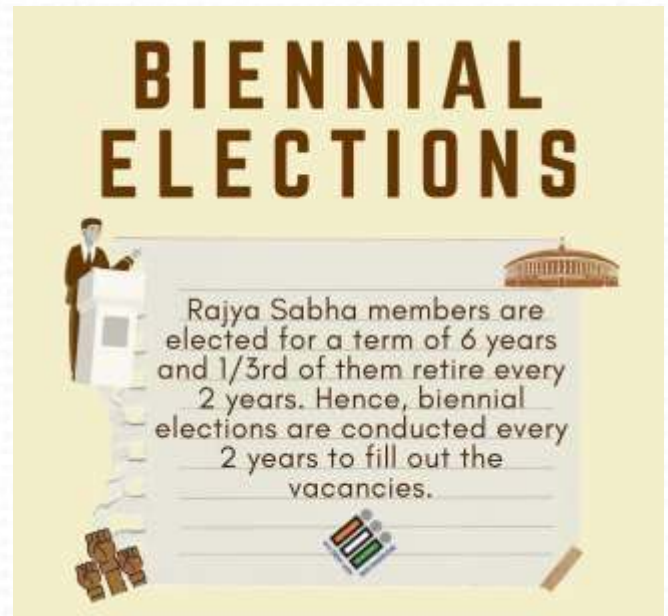
- Biennial (every 2 years).

#### (B) Electoral System:

- Proportional Representation.
- Single Transferable Vote (STV).
- Elected by elected members of State Legislative Assembly.

#### (C) Voting:

- Open ballot system (anti-defection safeguard).



### Prelims Practice MCQ

**Q.** With reference to elections to the Rajya Sabha, consider the following statements:

1. Members of the Rajya Sabha are elected through proportional representation by means of the Single Transferable Vote.
2. The Rajya Sabha is subject to dissolution every five years.
3. One-third of the members of the Rajya Sabha retire every two years.



Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

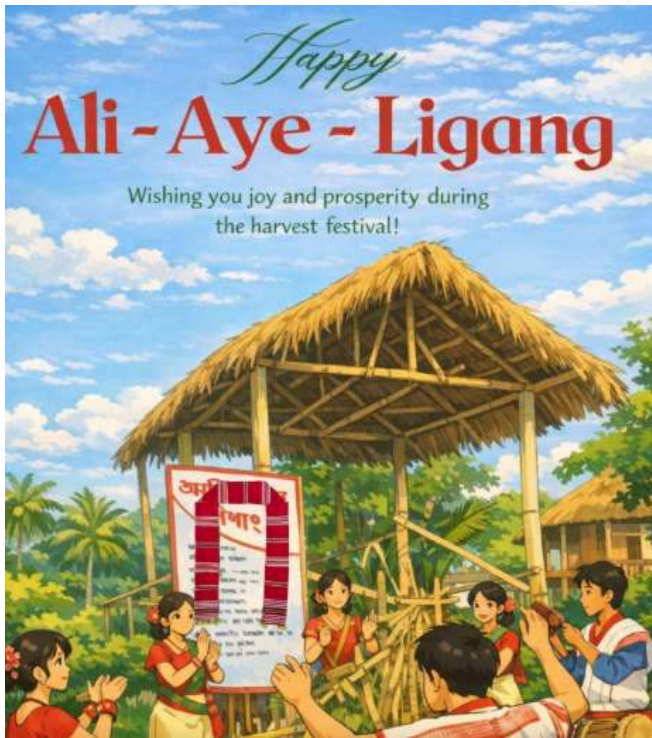
- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 1 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

## Ali Aye Lrigang

**Syllabus: Prelims/GS Paper V**

### Context

- Celebrated across Assam including Tezpur, Lakhimpur, Demow on 18<sup>th</sup> Feb 2026
- Observed on the **first Wednesday of the Assamese month of Phagun**.
- Marks the beginning of the **sowing season**.
- Organised by local Mising bodies like Tezpur Mising Kebang, Banke Dribi Kebang.



### About the Mising Community

- An indigenous tribal community of Assam.
- Primarily inhabit:
  - Upper Assam districts (Lakhimpur, Dhemaji, Majuli, Tinsukia, Sivasagar).
- Belong to the **Tani group** of Tibeto-Burman origin.
- Traditionally riverine and agrarian.

### Meaning of Ali Aye Lrigang

- **Ali** → Root/Seed
- **Aye** → Fruit
- **Lrigang** → Sowing
- Thus, it is a festival connected to agricultural prosperity and fertility.



### Prelims Practice MCQ

**Q.** With reference to Ali Aye Lrigang, consider the following statements:

1. It is an agricultural festival of the Mising community marking the beginning of the sowing season.
2. It is celebrated on the first Wednesday of the Assamese month of Phagun.
3. Gumrag Ch:man is a ritual connected with Bihu celebrations.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

## Vibrant Villages Phase II

**Syllabus: Prelims/GS Paper II**

### Context

- **Vibrant Villages Programme-II (VVP-II)** launched from **Nathanpur village, Cachar district (Assam)**.
  - Launched by **Amit Shah**.
  - Emphasis: Border villages as “India’s first villages”, not last.
  - Event attended by **Himanta Biswa Sarma** and senior civil & security officials.
- 2. Coverage & Financial Outlay**
- Covers **~2,000 villages**.
  - Spread across **334 border blocks**.
  - Applicable in **17 States/UTs** adjoining:



- Pakistan
- Bangladesh
- Estimated outlay: **₹6,839 crore**.



**3. Objectives of VVP-II**

Programme rests on **three core pillars**:

1. **Zero migration** from border villages.
2. **Zero infiltration** into the country.
3. **Zero developmental disparity** between border and mainland regions

**4. Key Components**

**(A) Infrastructure Development**

- All-weather roads.
- Reliable electricity supply.
- Piped drinking water.
- Housing & basic amenities.

**(B) Digital & Telecom Connectivity**

- Mobile connectivity expansion.
- Digital service access.

**(C) Social Sector Expansion**

- Strengthened healthcare network.
- Mobile ambulances.
- Modern educational infrastructure.



**(D) Livelihood & Tourism**

- Local employment generation.
- Border tourism promotion.
- Saturation of welfare schemes.

**(E) Security Architecture**

- Strengthening territorial integrity.
- Border monitoring.
- Prevention of infiltration.

**Assam-Specific Coverage**

Border districts to benefit:

- **Cachar**
- **Sribhumi**
- **Dhubri**
- **South Salmara**
- **Kokrajhar**
- **Chirang**
- **Baksa**
- **Tamulpur**
- **Udalguri**

Village coverage (as per announcement):

- **11 villages in Cachar**
- **21 in Sribhumi**
- **28 in Dhubri**
- Others across remaining districts



**6. Significance for Assam**

**(1) Security Dimension**

- Assam shares long international border with **Bangladesh**.
- Addresses:
  - Infiltration
  - Demographic imbalance concerns
  - Encroachment issues

**(2) Developmental Dimension**

- Reduces regional inequality.
- Boosts border economy.



- Prevents distress migration.
- (3) Strategic Dimension**
- Strengthens internal security.
  - Integrates frontier populations into national growth narrative.



**Prelims MCQ**

**Q.** With reference to the Vibrant Villages Programme-II (VVP-II), consider the following statements:

1. It covers villages located along India's borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh.
  2. The programme aims to achieve zero migration and zero infiltration in border areas.
  3. It is implemented only in North Eastern States.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

**Dark Sky Parks**

**Syllabus: Prelims/GS Paper V**

**1. Context**

Assam Government has received **in-principle Cabinet approval** to establish **Dark Sky Parks/Reserves** to:

- Reduce **light pollution**

- Promote **astro-tourism**
- Protect **nocturnal biodiversity**
  - organisms active at night, comprising over 60% of invertebrates and nearly 30% of vertebrates
- Enhance sustainable tourism

The initiative is led by the **Science, Technology & Climate Change Department, Assam.**



- *Dark Sky Parks and Reserves are specialized, certified areas dedicated to preserving natural nocturnal environments by minimizing artificial light pollution.*
- *These sites, often in national parks or rural areas, protect pristine night skies for scientific research, ecology, and tourism.*

**2. What are Dark Sky Parks?**

- Internationally recognized protected areas where **artificial light is regulated** to preserve natural darkness.
- Certified under global standards (aligned with **International Dark Sky Association guidelines**).
- Combine:
  - Conservation
  - Astronomy
  - Sustainable tourism



**Examples of Dark Sky Parks - India:**



- **Pench Tiger Reserve, M.P.** – Asia’s 5th official Dark Sky Park
  - **Hanle Dark Sky Reserve, Ladakh**
- International Examples:
- **Mont-Megantic** (Canada)
  - **Natural Bridges National Monument** (USA)
  - **Aoraki Mackenzie** (New Zealand)

### 3. Potential Sites in Assam

- Scientific assessment conducted across **8 locations**.

#### Top locations:

- **Kaziranga National Park**
  - 94.62% pristine dark area (highest)
- **Manas National Park**
  - 92.51% sky purity
- **Dima Hasao**
  - 87.05% sky purity

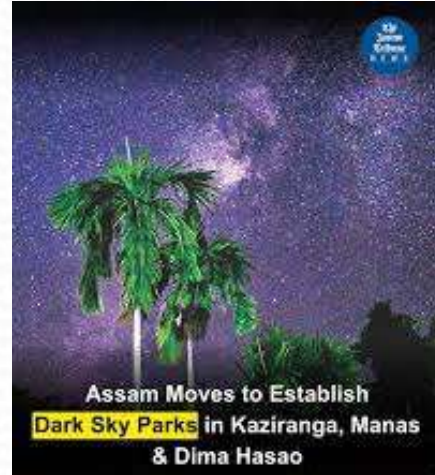
#### Other locations with rising light pollution concerns:

- Majuli
- Pobitora
- Dibru-Saikhowa
- Orang



### 4. Institutional & Policy Measures Proposed

- Formation of **Advisory Committee**
- Preparation of **lighting management plan**
- Multi-season sky quality monitoring (1–3 years)
- Inter-departmental coordination:
  - Panchayat & Rural Development
  - Tourism
  - Power Department
  - Forest Department



### 5. Key Implementation Features

#### (A) Lighting Reforms

- Downward-focused LED fixtures
- Smart lighting in buffer zones
- Zero-light protocol in core forest areas

#### (B) Conservation Measures

- Protection of nocturnal species
- Regulation of night tourism
- Reduced ecological disturbance

#### (C) Astro-Tourism Promotion

- Guided sky-viewing sessions
- Collaboration with:
  - **Indian Institute of Astrophysics**



### Prelims MCQ

**Q.** With reference to Dark Sky Parks, consider the following statements:



1. They aim to regulate artificial light to preserve natural night skies.
2. Kaziranga recorded the highest pristine dark area among assessed sites in Assam.
3. Dark Sky certification is granted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

## Assam - Arunachal Pradesh Boundary

**Syllabus: Prelims/GS Paper II**

**Issue:**

### 1. Context (Feb 2026 Development)

- First official border pillar erected at **Seijosa**, in **Pakke Kessang district (Arunachal Pradesh)**.
- Marks implementation of the **Namsai Declaration** (signed July 2022).
- Officials from:
  - Pakke Kessang (Arunachal Pradesh)
  - Biswanath district (Assam)
- Seen as a **historic milestone** in resolving the long-pending inter-state boundary dispute.



### 2. Background of the Dispute

- The dispute dates back to **1972**, when **Arunachal Pradesh** (earlier NEFA) became a Union Territory.
- Assam contested certain areas transferred based on:
  - **1951 notification** (boundary reorganization).
- Total disputed areas: **123 villages across 12 districts of Arunachal Pradesh**.

### Key Causes:

- Colonial-era boundary demarcations.
- Ambiguities in 1951 notification.
- Administrative vs traditional community boundaries.
- Encroachment allegations by both states.



### 3. The Namsai Declaration (July 2022)

- Signed between:
  - Assam CM **Himanta Biswa Sarma**
  - Arunachal CM **Pema Khandu**
- Signed at **Namsai, Arunachal Pradesh**.

### Key Features:

- Formation of **Regional Committees** (headed by Ministers).
- Joint field visits to disputed sites.
- Examination of:
  - Historical records
  - Administrative documents
  - Community claims
- Aim: **Mutually acceptable solutions** through negotiation (not litigation).



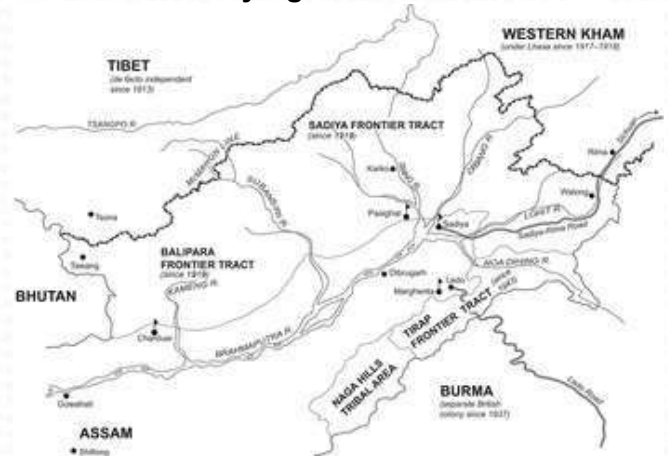
The controversy stretches back to the British Empire, when they introduced inner line control in 1873.



### Historical Genesis of the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh Border Dispute

- The origins of the dispute date back to **colonial times in 1873**, when the **British government introduced the Inner Line Regulation** to demarcate the plains from the frontier hills, later known as the **North East Frontier Tracts (NEFT)**
- After **Independence**, the **Assam government took control** of the North East Frontier Tracts.
- The **Ministry of External Affairs** took over administration of NEFA region on January 26, 1950. This relieved the Government of Assam.
  - The **Ministry of Home Affairs** took over administrative control of NEFA on August 1, 1965.
  - However it was governed under Governor of Assam
- In **1954**, the region renamed as the **North East Frontier Agency (NEFA)** -
  - Included Balipara, Tirap, Naga & Sadiya Frontier Tracts
- In **1972**, NEFA was granted the status of a **Union Territory (UT) of Arunachal Pradesh**.
- Finally, in **1987**, Arunachal Pradesh became a **full-fledged state** of India.

- **1951 Report:** Stated that around **3,648 sq km** of land from the **Balipara and Sadiya foothills** (then part of NEFA, later Arunachal Pradesh) was transferred to **Lakhimpur district of Assam**.
- **Core Issue:**
  - **Assam's Perspective:** Considered the transfer **legal and valid**.
  - **Arunachal Pradesh's Perspective:** Argued that the transfer was done **without the consent of tribal chieftains**, who had **customary rights** over these lands.



1937: Excluded area of Assam Province



### The Assam-Arunachal Pradesh Border Dispute

### Significance of First Border Pillar at Seijosa

- **First physical demarcation** under the agreement.
- Converts political understanding into ground-level implementation.
- Sets blueprint for:
  - Remaining demarcation process.
  - Long-term stability along the Assam–Arunachal border.
- **Administrative Importance:**
  - Reduces law & order tensions.
  - Prevents future encroachment disputes.
  - Enhances coordination between:
    - Civil administration
    - Police forces
    - Local communities





**Prelims MCQ**

**Q.** With reference to the Assam–Arunachal Pradesh boundary issue, consider the following statements:

1. The Namsai Declaration was signed in 2022 to resolve the boundary dispute between the two states.
2. The dispute originated after Arunachal Pradesh attained statehood in 1987.
3. Regional Committees were formed to conduct joint field verification of disputed areas.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

**Asomi Saras Mela**

**Syllabus: Prelims/GS Paper II**



**Diverse Stalls**

- ▶ Kolhapuri Jutti, Black Raisin from **Maharashtra**
- ▶ Kosa Saree, Khadi Kurta from **Chhattisgarh**
- ▶ Handmade Jewellery from **Goa**
- ▶ Bhagalpur Silk, Embroidery products from **Jharkhand**
- ▶ Bamboo products from **Tripura**
- ▶ Ceramic Pots, Carpet & Rugs from **Uttar Pradesh**
- ▶ Hand Embroidery items from **Uttarakhand**
- ▶ **Live Ethnic Food Stalls – 30 from 22 states**



## Govt. Irrigation Schemes

**Syllabus: Prelims/GS Paper III, V**

### Irrigation Gap & Climate Vulnerability

#### 1. Context

- As per the **State Economic Survey 2025–26 (Assam)**, there exists a **huge gap between irrigation potential created and actual utilization**, despite increasing climate variability and declining Rabi rainfall.

#### 2. Key Data (Important for Prelims)

- Irrigation potential created (till March 2025):** 8.84 lakh hectares
- Ultimate irrigation potential:** 12.6 lakh hectares
- Irrigation potential utilized (2024–25):** 2,50,293 hectares
  - Previous year: 2,98,314 hectares (decline observed)
- Total gross cropped area:** 40.88 lakh hectares

Less than **10% of total cultivated land** benefits from government irrigation schemes.



#### 3. Reasons for Underutilization

##### (A) Infrastructure Issues

- General wear and tear of irrigation schemes
- Lack of funds for maintenance and repairs

- Damage to power lines & transformers
- Theft of motors and pumps

##### (B) Power Supply Constraints

- Erratic electricity supply
- Dependence on power-operated surface lift irrigation

##### (C) Environmental Factors

- Change in river flow patterns
- Flood damage
- Siltation and shifting channels



#### 4. Climate Change

##### Declining Rabi Rainfall (Deviation %)

- 2018 – (-43%)
- 2019 – (-67.6%)
- 2020 – (-55.46%)
- 2021 – (-46.97%)
- 2022 – (-40.46%)

➔ Severe rainfall deficiency during **Rabi season**.





The Rabi season in India runs from November (sown) to April (harvested)

#### Long-Term Study (1951–2020)

- 91% of annual rainfall occurs during **pre-monsoon & monsoon**.
- 54 out of 70 years: At least one district faced drought in **August**.
- 53 out of 70 years: Drought in **September**.
- Every district experienced:
  - ≥7 drought years (August)
  - ≥5 drought years (September)

➔ Indicates **high monsoon dependency and vulnerability**.

#### 5. Structural Problem in Assam Agriculture

- Dominantly **rainfed agriculture system**.
- High flood-drought cycle.
- Low cropping intensity.
- Low irrigation coverage compared to national average.
- Seasonal concentration of rainfall → water stress in Rabi season.



#### 6. Implications for Assam

##### (1) Economic:

- Low agricultural productivity.
- Farmer income instability.
- Increased agrarian distress.

##### (2) Social:

- Seasonal migration.
- Rural indebtedness.

##### (3) Environmental:

- Overdependence on monsoon.
- Increased climate vulnerability.

#### Prelims MCQ

**Q. With reference to irrigation in Assam, consider the following statements:**

1. Less than 10% of Assam's gross cropped area is covered under government irrigation schemes.
2. More than 90% of Assam's annual rainfall occurs during the Rabi season.
3. A majority of years between 1951–2020 witnessed drought in at least one district during August.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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



## MARCH MONTH

### Vastra Meuseuma

**Syllabus: GS Paper I/IV**

#### Vrindavani Vastra Museum in Assam

- Himanta Biswa Sarma, Chief Minister of Assam, recently laid the foundation stone for a **Vastra Museum complex in Guwahati** to showcase the historic **Vrindavani Vastra**, one of the most significant cultural textiles of Assam.

#### 1. Context

- The Assam government has initiated the construction of a **world-class museum in Guwahati** to display the **Vrindavani Vastra**, a rare 16th-century silk textile associated with the Vaishnavite cultural heritage of Assam.
- The textile will be **loaned by the British Museum for 18 months beginning in 2027**, allowing public display in Assam for the first time in modern history.



#### 2. What is Vrindavani Vastra?

- Vrindavani Vastra** is a **16th-century woven silk tapestry** depicting scenes from the **life of Lord Krishna**.

#### Key Features

- Created under the guidance of **Srimanta Sankardeva**, the 15th–16th century saint, reformer and founder of the **Ekasarana Dharma**.
- Woven by **Assamese weavers of the Satra tradition**.
- Made using **silk on traditional looms**.
- Depicts **Krishna's life in Vrindavan**, including scenes from the **Bhagavata Purana**.
- Considered one of the **earliest narrative textiles in Asia**.



#### 3. Historical Significance

- Commissioned by **Srimanta Sankardeva in the 16th century**.
- Originally woven in **Barpeta region of Assam**.
- The textile travelled outside Assam over centuries through collectors and eventually reached the **British Museum**.
- Today it is preserved in fragments.
- The initiative to bring it back temporarily to Assam is seen as a **major cultural repatriation effort**.





#### 4. The Proposed Vastra Museum

- **Key Highlights**
- Location: **Guwahati**
- Designed as an **international-standard textile museum**.
- Will display:
  - Vrindavani Vastra
  - Assamese textile heritage
  - Vaishnavite art and culture.
- **Collaboration**
- The museum project is being supported by:
- **JSW Foundation**
- Coordination with the **British Museum**.



#### 5. Vrindavani Vastra and Neo-Vaishnavism

- The textile reflects the cultural movement started by **Srimanta Sankardeva**.
- Neo-Vaishnavism in Assam promoted:
- Bhakti devotion to Lord Krishna
- Use of art forms like **Bhaona, Sattriya dance, music, and textiles**
- Establishment of **Satras** (Vaishnavite monasteries).

- Thus, the textile represents a **fusion of religion, art, literature and craftsmanship**.



#### Prelims Practice MCQ

**Q.** With reference to Vrindavani Vastra, consider the following statements:

1. Vrindavani Vastra is a 16th-century silk textile created under the guidance of Srimanta Sankardeva.
2. It depicts scenes from the life of Lord Krishna in Vrindavan.
3. The original Vrindavani Vastra is currently preserved in the British Museum.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

#### Rima's Not a Hero

**Syllabus: GS Paper I/V**

**Assamese Film Not a Hero wins recognition at Berlin International Film Festival 2026**

- Rima Das, an internationally acclaimed filmmaker from Assam, won the **Crystal Bear Special Mention** at the **Berlin International Film Festival (Berlinale) 2026** for her latest feature film **Not a Hero**.
- This recognition highlights the growing **global presence of Assamese cinema** and its storytelling rooted in local culture and childhood experiences.





## 2. About the Film – *Not a Hero*

- Director: **Rima Das**
- Lead Actor: **Bhuman Bhargav Das**
- Production:
  - Flying River Films
  - Akanga Film Asia
  - TrainTripper Films

### Storyline

- The film narrates the journey of a **young boy from a city who moves to the countryside**, where he experiences:
  - friendship
  - self-discovery
  - emotional growth.
- The narrative emphasizes **children's perspectives, emotions, and identity formation.**



## 3. Award Won

- The film received the **Crystal Bear Special Mention** from the **Children's Jury** of the Generation Kplus section.

### About the Crystal Bear

- Award given at the **Berlin International Film Festival**.
- Selected by **children and youth juries**.
- Recognizes films that strongly resonate with **young audiences**.



## 4. Rima Das and the Berlinale

This is **Rima Das's** third film showcased at **Berlinale**.

### Previous recognition

- **Bulbul Can Sing (2019)**
  - Received **Special Mention in Generation 14plus** section.

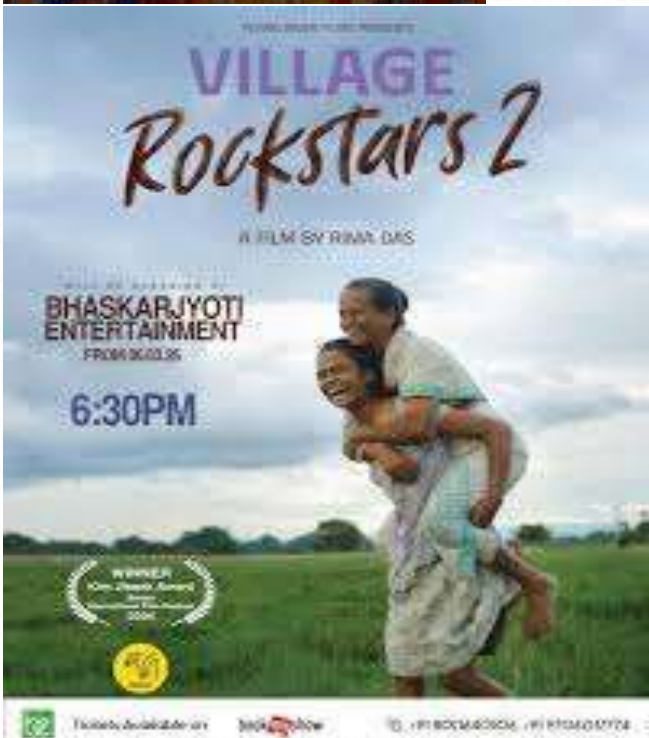
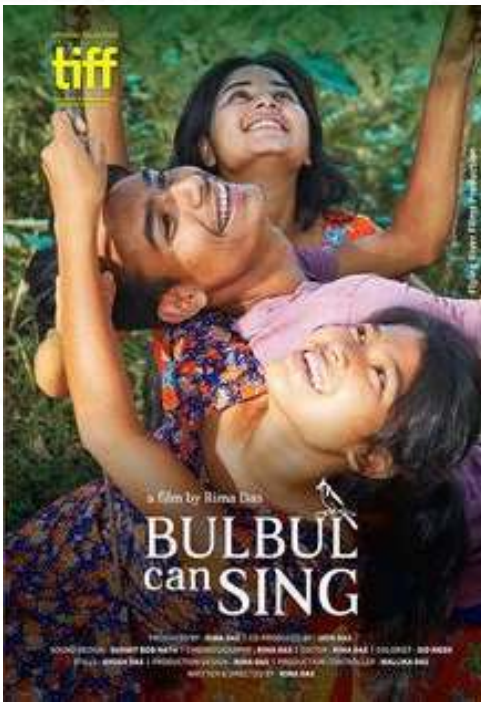
## Rima Das: Contribution to Indian Cinema

Rima Das is widely regarded as a pioneer of **independent filmmaking in Assam**.

### Notable Films

- Village Rockstars (2017)
- Bulbul Can Sing (2019)
- Village Rockstars 2 (upcoming release)





### Prelims Practice MCQ

**Q.** With reference to the film *Not a Hero*, consider the following statements:

1. The film is directed by Assamese filmmaker Rima Das.
2. It received the Crystal Bear Special Mention at the Berlin International Film Festival 2026.
3. The award was given under the Generation Kplus section which focuses on films for children and young audiences.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

## Waterbirds of Kaziranga

**Syllabus: GS Paper III/V**

### Kaziranga Waterbird Estimation and Wetland Biodiversity

#### 1. Context

- The **7th Kaziranga Waterbird Estimation** recorded **1,05,540 waterbirds** belonging to **107 species** across the **Kaziranga–Laokhowa–Burhachapori floodplain complex**.

The survey was conducted in the **Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve**, reaffirming the landscape as one of the **largest wintering waterbird habitats** in the **Brahmaputra valley**.

- The findings also highlight the importance of the region within the **Central Asian Flyway**, a major migratory bird route connecting **Arctic breeding grounds** to **South Asia and Africa**.



#### 2. Key Findings of the Waterbird Census

- **Total birds recorded: 1,05,540**



- **Total species recorded:** 107
- **Wetlands surveyed:** 166 wetlands
- Coverage across:
  - Eastern Assam Wildlife Division
  - Biswanath Wildlife Division
  - Nagaon Wildlife Division
- This indicates **high ecological productivity and wetland diversity** in Kaziranga's floodplain ecosystem.



### 3. Major Bird Groups Recorded

The survey documented a diverse range of waterbirds including:

- Grazing waterfowl
- Dabbling ducks
- Diving ducks
- Waders
- Marsh specialists
- Storks
- Cormorants
- Piscivorous raptors





#### 5. Species of Global Conservation Concern Endangered Species

- Greater Adjutant Stork (*Leptoptilos dubius*) – 66
- Pallas's Fish Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucoryphus*) – 61

#### Vulnerable Species

- Lesser Adjutant (*Leptoptilos javanicus*) – 257
- **Near Threatened Species**
- Ferruginous Pochard – 5,594
- Oriental Darter – 1,102

*Many of these species are protected under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.*



#### 6. Important Wetland Habitats in Kaziranga

Key wetlands serving as major bird congregation areas include:

- **Rowmari Beel**
- **Donduwa Beel**
- Wetlands in **Agoratoli Range**
- Wetlands in **Bagori Range**
- **Sohola Beel**

This diversity reflects the presence of varied wetland habitats such as:

- Deep perennial **beels**
- Shallow **mudflats**
- **Vegetated marshes**
- **Riparian corridors**

#### 4. Important Migratory Species Recorded

- Major migratory geese populations included:
- **Bar-headed Goose – 19,133**
- **Greylag Goose – 6,533**
- Together accounting for **over 25,000 birds**.

Other prominent species:

- **Gadwall – 5,283**
- **Green-winged Teal – 5,220**
- **Ferruginous Pochard – 5,594**
- **Lesser Whistling Duck – 6,700**
- **Grey-headed Swamphen – 6,286**



These wetlands form a **connected floodplain ecosystem** supporting migratory and resident birds.



### 7. Significance of the Findings

#### 1. Ramsar Wetland Benchmark

- The count **exceeds 20,000 waterbirds**, which satisfies **Ramsar Criterion 5** used to identify **wetlands of international importance**.

#### 2. Indicator of Ecosystem Health

- Bird populations act as **bioindicators** of ecosystem health:
- Sensitive to habitat change
- Reflect wetland quality
- Signal ecological degradation early.

#### 3. Importance for Migratory Routes

- Kaziranga acts as an **important stopover and wintering site** for birds migrating along the Central Asian Flyway.



### Way Forward

- Expand conservation beyond protected areas.
- Promote **community-based wetland conservation**.
- Involve **NGOs, local communities, panchayats, and district administration**.
- Strengthen **periodic biodiversity monitoring**.
- Protect wetlands outside national parks.

### Prelims Practice MCQ

**Q. With reference to the Kaziranga Waterbird Estimation, consider the following statements:**

- The recent waterbird estimation recorded more than one lakh birds belonging to over 100 species in the Kaziranga landscape.
- The wetlands of Kaziranga form an important part of the Central Asian Flyway for migratory birds.
- Ramsar Criterion 5 states that a wetland qualifies as internationally important if it regularly supports at least 2,000 waterbirds.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

## Literacy of Assam

**Syllabus: GS Paper I/IV**

### Literacy Trends and Educational Challenges in Assam

#### 1. Context

- Assam has witnessed **steady improvement in literacy over the past two decades**, mainly due to targeted government programmes and expansion of educational infrastructure. However, the State continues to face **structural challenges such as rural disparities, dropout rates, and infrastructure gaps**.



## 2. Literacy Trends in Assam

According to the **Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India:**

Census Year	Total Literacy	Male Literacy	Female Literacy
2001	63.25%	71.28%	54.61%
2011	72.19%	77.85%	66.27%



### Key Observations

- Literacy increased by **about 9 percentage points between 2001–2011.**
- Female literacy saw **faster improvement than male literacy.**
- Gender gap reduced from **~16% (2001) to ~11.5% (2011).**
- Indicates success of **female education initiatives and awareness campaigns.**

## 3. Major Government Programmes Driving Literacy

### (a) National Programmes

#### 1. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

- Aim: Universalisation of elementary education.
- Key features:
  - Construction of schools and classrooms
  - Free textbooks and uniforms
  - Recruitment of teachers
  - Focus on rural and marginalised populations.

Under this programme:

- **Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat**
  - Focus on **foundational literacy and numeracy.**

#### 2. Mid-Day Meal Scheme

- Provides free nutritious meals in schools.
- Benefits:
  - Increased school attendance
  - Improved retention
  - Reduced malnutrition among children.

## 3. Samagra Shiksha

- Integrated scheme covering **pre-school to Class XII.**
- Focus areas:
  - Quality education
  - Inclusive education
  - Teacher training
  - Digital learning.

### (b) State-level Efforts

#### State Literacy Mission Authority, Assam

- Implementing adult literacy and continuing education programmes.
- **New India Literacy Programme (launched in Assam in 2023)**
- Objective: **Achieve 100% literacy in the State.**
- Focus on adult literacy and digital literacy.



## 4. Key Educational Indicators

### Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)

- Assam has witnessed **increasing GER at elementary levels**, showing improved access to schooling.

### Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR)

- National Average: **28:1**
- Assam Government Primary Schools: **23:1** (better than national average).
- However, **rural areas face teacher shortages.**





## Acute Rainfall deficit

**Syllabus: GS Paper I/IV**

### Rainfall Deficit and Climate Variability in Assam

#### 1. Context

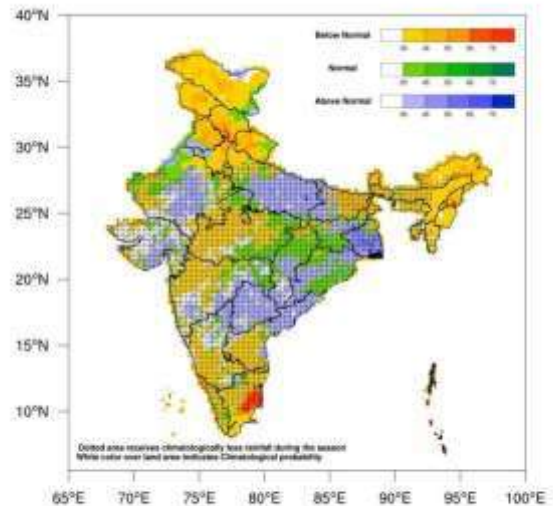
- Assam is experiencing a **severe rainfall deficit during the 2025–26 winter (rabi) season**. Data from the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)** show that the State recorded **over 70% below-normal rainfall since November** and **about 99% deficit since January 1**.
- This prolonged dry spell is affecting **agriculture, tea plantations, groundwater levels, and overall climate stability in Assam**.



#### 2. Key Rainfall Statistics

- Normal rainfall expected since **January 1: 39 mm**
  - Actual rainfall received: **0.4 mm**
  - Rainfall deficit: **~99%**
  - 25 districts recorded no rainfall at all**
  - Many other districts reported **over 90% deficit**
- In **Guwahati**:
- About **27.5 mm rainfall occurred in early November**
  - After that rainfall nearly stopped
  - Only **0.2 mm recorded on January 5**
  - The **dry spell started in the second week of November** and has continued through winter.

Probability rainfall forecast for 2026 January to March Season



**Fig.1.** Probability forecast of tercile categories (below normal, normal, and above normal) for the rainfall over India during JFM 2026. The figure illustrates the most likely categories as well as their probabilities. The dotted area shown in the map climatologically receives very less rainfall during this period and the white-shaded areas within the land regions represent no signal from the model (Tercile categories have equal climatological probabilities, of 33.33% each).

#### 3. Impact on Agriculture

##### 1. Rabi Crops

- Rainfed crops facing **moisture stress**:
  - Rapeseed
  - Potato
  - Maize
- Effects:
  - Shortened crop duration
  - Poor yields
  - Soil moisture depletion.

##### 2. Tea Industry

- Assam's tea plantations rely on **February rainfall for new leaf flushes**.
- Due to dry conditions:
  - Delayed tea flush
  - Reduced productivity
  - Lower humidity affecting plant growth.

##### 3. Fruit Crops

Early flowering reported in:

- Mango
- Litchi

*Early flowering due to **unusual temperature rise**, which can affect fruit quality and yield.*

##### 4. Temperature Trends

Upper Assam experienced **temperatures up to 7°C above normal during February**.

Consequences:

- Increased evapotranspiration
- Faster soil moisture loss
- Crop stress



- Higher risk of pest outbreaks.

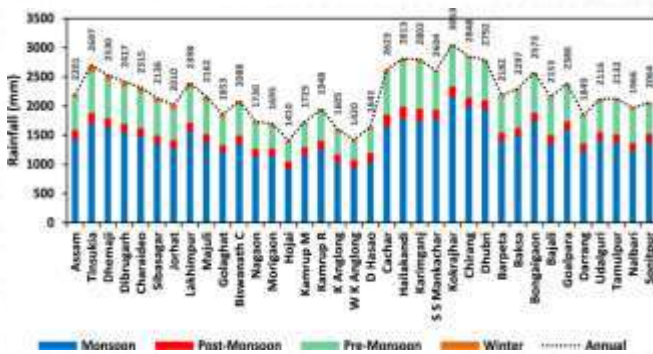
### 5. Long-Term Rainfall Patterns in Assam

Historical climate studies show:

- **91% of Assam's annual rainfall occurs during pre-monsoon and monsoon seasons.**
- Winter rainfall contributes very little.

Drought patterns:

- Drought in **August** recorded in **54 out of 70 years**
- Drought in **September** recorded in **53 years**
- This shows **frequent rainfall variability in late monsoon months.**



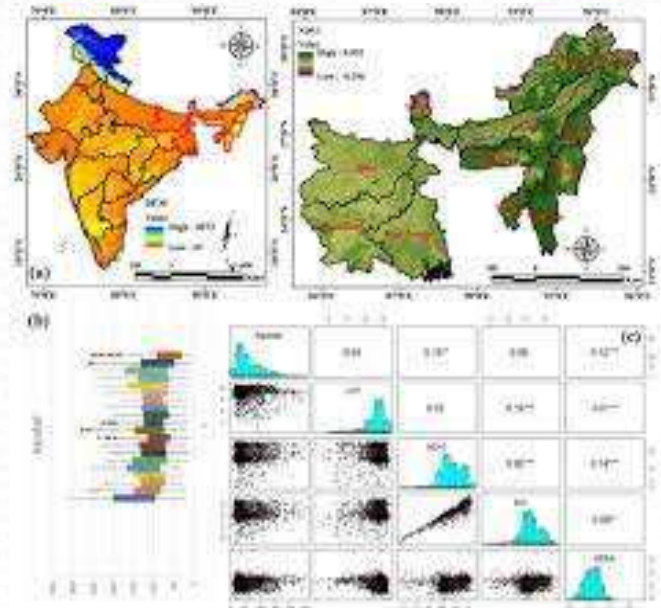
### 6. Climate Change Trends in Northeast India

- A **20-year study (2002–2021)** using satellite and climate data found:
- Mean rainfall decrease of **50.54 mm** across eastern and northeastern India.
- Significant **temperature variability** in:
  - Assam
  - Tripura
  - Meghalaya

#### Structural Vulnerabilities in Assam

1. **High dependence on monsoon rainfall**
2. **Limited irrigation infrastructure**
3. **Large rainfed agricultural area**
4. **Climate-sensitive crops (tea, rice, horticulture)**

These factors make farmers **highly vulnerable to climate variability.**



### 9. Way Forward

1. Expand **irrigation and micro-irrigation systems.**
2. Promote **climate-resilient crop varieties.**
3. Strengthen **weather forecasting and advisories for farmers.**
4. Encourage **rainwater harvesting and watershed management.**
5. Promote **climate-resilient agriculture and agroforestry.**

**Q. Assam is increasingly experiencing rainfall variability and extreme climate events. Discuss the impact of rainfall deficit on agriculture and ecosystems in the State and suggest measures for climate-resilient development. (250 words)**

#### Introduction

- Assam's climate is characterised by **high monsoon rainfall and seasonal variability.**
- Recent IMD data show **severe rainfall deficit during the winter season**, highlighting growing climate instability.

#### Body

##### 1. Impact on Agriculture

- Moisture stress affecting **rabi crops like rapeseed, potato, maize.**
- Reduced yield and shortened crop cycles.
- Delayed growth in **tea plantations**, affecting exports and livelihoods.
- Early flowering in horticulture crops such as mango and litchi.



## 2. Environmental Impacts

- Declining **soil moisture levels**.
- Reduced **groundwater recharge**.
- Increased risk of **forest degradation and biodiversity loss**.
- Intensification of **urban heat island effects** in cities like Guwahati.

## 3. Structural Vulnerabilities

- Heavy dependence on **monsoon rainfall**.
- Large share of **rainfed agriculture**.
- Limited irrigation infrastructure.
- Rising temperatures due to **climate change**.
- **4. Measures for Climate Resilience**
- Expansion of **irrigation and micro-irrigation systems**.
- Promotion of **climate-resilient crop varieties**.
- Strengthening **weather-based agro-advisories**.
- Investment in **rainwater harvesting and watershed management**.
- Adoption of **sustainable agricultural practices and agroforestry**.

## Conclusion

- Climate variability poses a serious threat to **Assam's agricultural economy and rural livelihoods**.
- Integrating **climate adaptation strategies with agricultural planning** will be essential for sustainable development.

## Su-30MKI crash

### Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper V

#### Su-30MKI Crash in Karbi Anglong

- A **Sukhoi Su-30MKI** of the **Indian Air Force** crashed during a **routine training flight** in **Karbi Anglong district**.
- **Location of crash:** Hilly area of **Kaala Pahar**.
- The aircraft had **taken off from Jorhat Air Force Station**.

#### Timeline

- Aircraft **lost contact with ground control at 7:42 pm** shortly after take-off.
- Residents reported a **loud explosion, flames, and thick black smoke**.
- **Search and rescue operations** were launched by IAF personnel and local volunteers in dense forest terrain.
- The **wreckage was located early on March 6** around **1 am**.



## Recent incidents

### 1. 2026

- **Sukhoi Su-30MKI** crash in **Karbi Anglong district** (March 2026).
- Aircraft lost radar contact after take-off from **Jorhat Air Force Station** during a training mission.
- Both pilots were killed.

### 2. 2025

- **HAL Tejas** crashed during a demonstration at the **Dubai Airshow** (November 2025).
- The pilot died and an inquiry was launched.

### 3. 2024

- **Sukhoi Su-30MKI** crashed in **Nashik** (June 2024).
- Both pilots **ejected safely** before impact.

### 4. 2024

- **HAL Tejas** crashed in **Rajasthan** during a training mission; pilot ejected safely.

### 5. 2023

- Mid-air collision between **Sukhoi Su-30MKI** and **Dassault Mirage 2000** during an exercise near **Gwalior** (January 2023).





### Sukhoi Su-30MKI

The **Sukhoi Su-30MKI** operated by the **Indian Air Force** is a highly capable fighter jet, but crashes have occurred over the years due to several factors. These do **not necessarily mean the aircraft is unsafe**, but reflect operational realities of a complex combat platform.

#### 1. Aging Fleet

- India started inducting the **Su-30MKI** in **2002**.
- Many aircraft are now **over two decades old**, increasing maintenance requirements and risk of mechanical issues.

#### 2. Complex Technology

- The aircraft has **advanced avionics, thrust-vectoring engines, and multi-role capabilities**.
- Such complex systems require **high maintenance and skilled servicing**, and failures in components can lead to accidents.

#### 3. Engine and Technical Issues

- Earlier crashes were linked to **engine failures, fly-by-wire system glitches, or ejection-seat problems**.
- Some components are supplied by **Sukhoi** and assembled in India by **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited**, making logistics and spare parts management challenging.

### Critical Florican Habitat

#### Syllabus - GS Paper III/IV

#### Issue

- A **9.3 sq km** area at **Kokilabari** within the core habitat of **Manas National Park** and **Manas Tiger Reserve** in **Assam** has been under **encroachment for over 25 years**.
- The area is currently used for **agriculture (paddy cultivation)** despite being part of a **critical wildlife habitat**.

#### Ecological Importance

The region is one of the **last refuges of the critically endangered Bengal Florican (*Houbaropsis bengalensis*)**.

It also lies within the **core/critical tiger habitat** of the tiger reserve.



### Historical Background of the Land

- **1928:** Area included in **Manas Wildlife Sanctuary**.
- **1971–2001:** **Kokilabari Seed Farm** leased to the Government of India for a **Central Seed Farm**.
- **1990:** Sanctuary upgraded to **National Park**.
- **2007:** Included in the **core habitat of Manas Tiger Reserve**.
- **Post-2001:** Land was supposed to revert to the **Forest Department**, but this has not happened.

### Current Administrative Situation

- The land falls within the **Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR)** administered by the Bodoland Territorial Council.
- The **Agriculture Department of BTR** reportedly leases the land to farmers for cultivation.



### Bengal Florican

- The Bengal florican also called **Bengal bustard**, is a bustard species native to the **Indian subcontinent, Cambodia, and Vietnam**.
- **Fewer than 1,000 individuals** were estimated to be alive as of 2017.
- It has two disjunct populations, one in the Indian subcontinent, another in Southeast Asia.

- The former occurs from Uttar Pradesh (India) through the Terai of Nepal to Assam (where it is called ulu mora) and Arunachal Pradesh in India, and historically to Bangladesh.



### Legal and Conservation Concerns

- The activity is alleged to violate:
  - Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972
  - Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980
- The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) has repeatedly recommended reclaiming the land through **Management Effectiveness Evaluation of Tiger Reserves (MEE-TR)** reports in **2006, 2014, 2018, and 2022**.





**Proposed Projects**

- Authorities have proposed:
  - College of Agroforestry & Biodiversity
  - Bengal Florican Conservation, Research & Ecotourism Site
- However, no development has yet taken place.

**Significance**

- Manas National Park is:
  - A UNESCO World Heritage Site.
  - A Tiger Reserve.
  - A Biosphere Reserve.
  - Known for rich biodiversity and endangered species conservation.

**Prelims Practice Question**

**Q.** Consider the following statements:

1. Manas National Park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site located in Assam.
2. The Bengal Florican found in Manas is listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List.
3. The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) was established under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: c

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**Railways Driving Assam Into a New Era of Progress**  
Dedication to the Nation of

Electrification of Chaparmukh - Dibrugarh Rail Line

Length: 571 Km  
States Benefited: Assam and Nagaland

**Benefits:**

- Supports faster turnaround and better scheduling of trains across the route
- Improves overall capacity, benefiting both passenger mobility and freight logistics in the region
- Reduces carbon emissions, resulting in lower air pollution across the region

## Tree Felling in Assam

### Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper V

#### Key Finding

- Over **1,06,896 mature trees** have been felled across Assam since **May 2016**, according to data obtained through the Right to Information Act.

#### Data Source

- Information provided by **15 out of 44 wildlife and territorial forest divisions** under the **Environment, Forest and Climate Change Department of Assam**.



#### Reasons for Tree Felling

- The government stated that the trees were cut out of **“dire necessity”** for development projects such as:

## Railways driving Assam

**Railways Driving Assam Into a New Era of Progress**  
Dedication to the Nation of

Electrification of Badarpur - Siktar and Badarpur - Charabari Rail Line

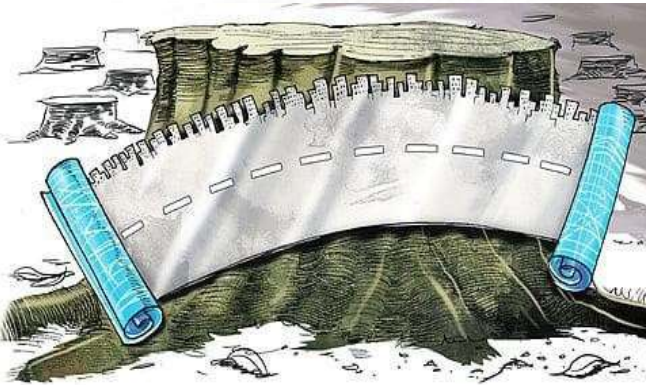
Length: 315 Km  
Districts Benefited: Sribhum, Hailakandi and Cachar (Assam)

**Benefits:**

- Strengthening connectivity and connectivity in Assam
- Strengthens strategic connectivity in the border region
- Reduce carbon emissions



- **Four-laning of National Highway projects** (e.g., National Highway 17 connecting Guwahati–Goalpara).
- Construction of infrastructure like:
  - Darrang Medical College and Hospital
  - Roads, bridges, flyovers, police battalions, factories, and buildings.
- Oil exploration by:
  - Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC)
  - Oil India Limited.



### Concerns Raised by Experts

- Experts from institutions like Cotton University and Gauhati University highlighted key issues:
- **Ecological Inequality**
  - Mature trees provide **decades of ecological services** (carbon storage, biodiversity habitat, microclimate regulation).
  - Saplings **cannot immediately replace these functions**.
- **Absence of Ecological Impact Assessment**
  - None of the responding divisions conducted **scientific studies on ecological impacts** of the tree felling.
- **Potential Environmental Impacts**
  - Loss of **biodiversity habitats**.
  - Changes in **local microclimate**.
  - Possible impacts on **human health and ecosystem stability**.

### Distribution of Tree Felling

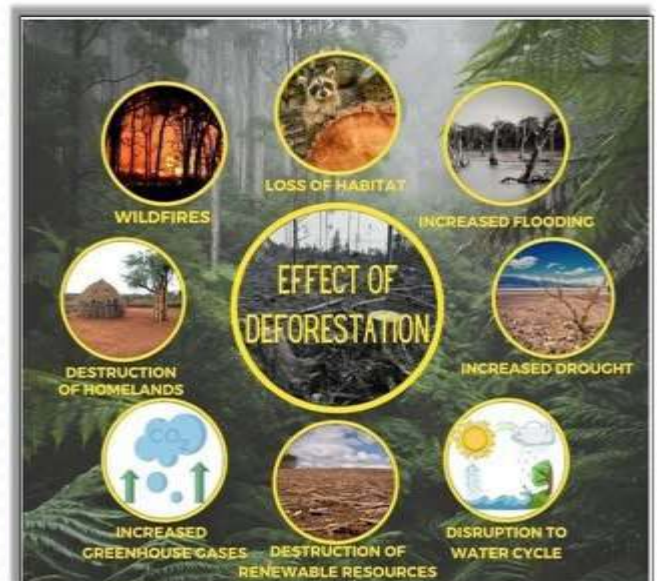
- **Over 26,000 trees** felled in **notified forest areas**.
- Remaining trees cut in **non-forest areas**.
- **~84,000 trees** felled for **government projects**.
- **Over 10,000 trees** cut for **private works**.

### Time Period

- Around **65,000 trees** were felled between **2021–2025** during the tenure of Himanta Biswa Sarma.
- Over **18,000 trees** were cut during the tenure of former CM Sarbananda Sonowal.

### Compensatory Plantation

- The state claims **3.5 crore saplings** have been planted in the last **two years**.
- Under the Amrit Briksha Andolan, **1 crore saplings were planted in a single day**.
- Government reports claim **over 70% survival rate** of saplings.



## Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Consider the following statements:

1. More than one lakh trees have been felled in Assam since 2016 mainly for infrastructure and oil exploration projects.
2. Over 26,000 trees were felled in notified forest areas during this period.
3. All forest divisions in Assam conducted ecological impact assessments before felling these trees.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 3 – Incorrect:** No division reported conducting ecological impact assessments for the tree felling.

## Black Bear at Rani Reserve

### Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper V

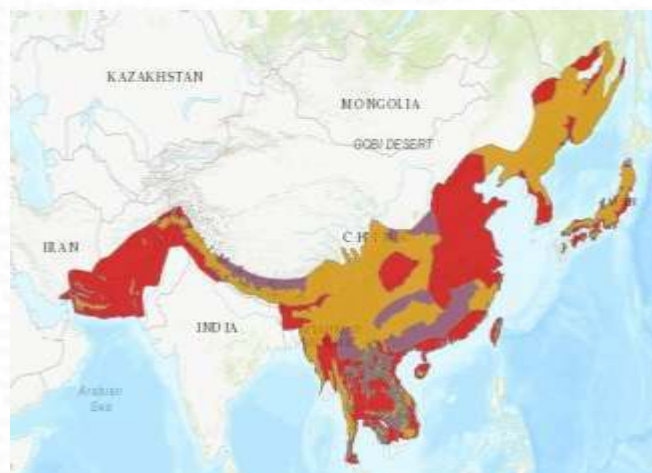
### Black Bear Sighting in Rani Reserve Forest

#### Recent Development

- A **black bear** was recently spotted in the wild at Rani Reserve Forest near Guwahati.

#### Species

- The animal spotted is the Asian Black Bear (commonly called the Himalayan black bear).
- It is native to **Himalayan and Northeast Indian forests**.



## About Rani Reserve Forest

### Ecological Significance

- Wildlife experts state that sightings of animals like the **Asian black bear** in **natural habitats** indicate:
  - **Healthy forest ecosystem**
  - **Adequate wildlife conservation**
  - **Low human disturbance**

### Ecological Role

- Important **seed disperser** in forest ecosystems.
- Helps maintain **forest biodiversity and ecological balance**.



### Conservation Status

- **IUCN Red List:** Vulnerable
- **Indian Wildlife Protection:** Listed under **Schedule I** of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 (highest level of protection).

### Asian Black Bear (Himalayan Black Bear)

- Asian Black Bear (*Ursus thibetanus*) is a medium-sized bear species found across **Asia**, including the **Himalayan region and Northeast India**.



### Key Features

- **Common name:** Himalayan Black Bear Moon Bear
- **Scientific name:** *Ursus thibetanus*
- **Distinctive mark:** White crescent-shaped patch on the chest (hence called Moon Bear).
- **Colour:** Black fur with a lighter muzzle.
- **Average weight:** 60–200 kg depending on sex and habitat.
- **Diet:** Omnivorous – fruits, berries, nuts, insects, honey, small animals and crops.



### Distribution in India

In India it is found mainly in:

- **Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh**
- **Himachal Pradesh**
- **Uttarakhand**
- **Sikkim**
- **Arunachal Pradesh**
- **Assam and other Northeast states**

### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Consider the following statements regarding the Rani Reserve Forest:

1. It is located on the outskirts of Guwahati in Assam.
2. A recent sighting of the Asian Black Bear there is considered an indicator of a healthy forest ecosystem.
3. The Asian black bear is endemic only to Assam and not found elsewhere in Asia.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 3 – Incorrect:** The Asian black bear is widely distributed across Asia, including the Himalayas, China, Korea, and Japan.

### Orunodoi 3.0



### Barpeta Medical College

Dr Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed Medical College and Hospital will be renamed Barpeta Medical College to follow the geographical naming pattern used for other medical colleges.

### Barpeta Medical College and Hospital – Key Pointers

- **Barpeta Medical College and Hospital** (earlier **Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed Medical College and Hospital**) is a **government medical college** in Barpeta, Assam.
- **Established:** 2011; classes for MBBS started in 2012.
- It is the **5th government medical college in Assam.**
- **Location:** Jotigaon, Barpeta district, Assam.
- **Affiliated to:** Srimanta Sankaradeva University of Health Sciences.
- **Recognition:** Approved by the **National Medical Commission**



## Diphu Cancer Centre



## IOC Award for Abhijit Bhattacharya

### Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper V

#### Award & Recognition

- Abhijit Bhattacharya, former captain of the **Indian men's national volleyball team**, was named the **Global Winner of the 2025 IOC Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI) Champions Award**.
- The award is presented by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).
- Recognizes individuals promoting **gender equality, diversity, and inclusion in sports**.



#### Background

- Bhattacharya hails from Tezpur in Assam.
- After his professional career, he launched **grassroots sports programmes in rural Assam**.

#### Key Initiatives

- Assam Volleyball Mission 100 (AVM100)**
  - Launched in **2019**.
  - Initially aimed to **distribute 100 volleyballs to villages**.

- Expanded into **100 village clubs** promoting community sports.
- Brahmaputra Volleyball League (BVL)**
  - Launched in **2020**.
  - One of the **largest community-based grassroots volleyball leagues in the world**.
  - Reaches **over 12,000 children across 400 teams**.



#### Key Features of the Programme

- Equal participation of girls and boys**.
- Teams registered in **Under-12 and Under-16 categories**.
- Matches held **within villages** to ensure accessibility.
- Provides many **rural girls their first opportunity to participate in organized sports**.

#### About the GEDI Champions Award

- Earlier known as the **IOC Women and Sport Awards (2000–2021)**.
- Recognizes **changemakers promoting gender equality through sport**.
- Six winners annually:**
  - 1 Global Winner**
  - 5 Continental Winners** (Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe, Oceania).





### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Consider the following statements:

1. Abhijit Bhattacharya received the Global Winner title of the IOC Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI) Champions Award 2025.
2. The Brahmaputra Volleyball League was launched before the Assam Volleyball Mission 100 initiative.
3. The IOC GEDI Champions Award was earlier known as the IOC Women and Sport Awards.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 2 – Incorrect:** AVM100 (2019) came before the Brahmaputra Volleyball League (2020).

## Bholaguri Tea Estate

### Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper V

#### Joymoti and Bholaguri Tea Estate

- **Joymoti** is widely regarded as the **first Assamese film**.
- Released on **10 March 1935**, marking the **beginning of Assamese cinema**.

#### Production

- **Producer & Director:** Jyoti Prasad Agarwala
- Produced under the banner **Chitralekha Movietone**.
- Filming period: **1933–1935**.

#### Story / Source

- Based on a play by Lakshminath Bezbaroa.
- Depicts the life and sacrifice of **Joymoti Konwari**, a 17th-century Ahom princess.

#### Cast

- **Aideu Handique** – first Assamese film actress.



**Production Site**



- The film was produced at Bholaguri Tea Estate.
- Except for **raw film, camera, cameraman, and sound equipment**, the production was largely **indigenous**.
- The tea estate environment formed the base for **Chitrobon Studio**, the early Assamese film studio.

### Bholaguri Tea Estate – Historical Significance

- Established in **1919** by Gopal Chandra Agarwala.
- It was the **first Assamese-owned tea garden on the North Bank of the Brahmaputra**.
- At the time, the **tea industry in Assam was largely controlled by British planters**.
- The tea estate symbolized **Assamese entrepreneurship during the colonial period**.

### Later Developments

- Taken over in **1974** by the Assam Tea Corporation.
- Earlier production statistics:
  - **118 hectares** under tea cultivation.
  - **8.28 lakh kg green leaf yield** annually.
  - **1.84 lakh kg made tea**.
- Current status:
  - **72 hectares** under plantation.
  - **1.56 lakh kg green leaf yield** annually.



### Current Issue

- The Assam government is establishing **Swahid Kanaklata Baruah State University** at the Bholaguri Tea Estate site.
- The university commemorates the teenage freedom fighter Kanaklata Barua.

### Concerns Raised

- Bholaguri Tea Estate is considered the **birthplace of Assamese cinema**.
- Closure of the tea garden and relocation of workers through **golden handshake schemes** raises concerns about **heritage preservation**.
- Critics argue that preserving only the **factory building as a museum** is insufficient without the surrounding tea estate ecosystem.



### Significance

- Represents:
  - **Birthplace of the Assamese film industry**.
  - Early **Assamese entrepreneurship in the tea sector**.
  - A **cultural heritage site** linked to the legacy of Jyoti Prasad Agarwala.





### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Consider the following statements:

1. Joymoti was the first Assamese film released in 1935.
2. The film was produced at Bholaguri Tea Estate, the first Assamese-owned tea garden on the North Bank of the Brahmaputra.
3. Bholaguri Tea Estate was originally established by the Assam Tea Corporation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 3 – Incorrect:** The tea estate was established by **Gopal Chandra Agarwala** in 1919; the Assam Tea Corporation took it over later in 1974.

## Longest Flyover in NE

**Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper V**

### Maharaj Prithu Flyover

#### Inauguration

- Inaugurated by Himanta Biswa Sarma, Chief Minister of Assam, on **10 March 2026** in Guwahati.
- It is the **longest flyover in Northeast India**.

#### Key Features

- **Name:** Maharaj Prithu Flyover
- **Length:** 4.2 km (planned extension to **4.5 km**).
- **Width:** 15 metres.
- **Road Type:** Four-lane flyover.
- **Cost:** ₹852 crore (approx.).
- **Construction Agency:** Public Works Department (Roads), Assam.
- **Completion Time:** 28 months (ahead of the scheduled **36 months**).



Some **major flyovers in Assam** and their approximate lengths:

- **Maharaja Prithu Flyover** — ≈ **4.5 km** (longest flyover in Assam; connects Dighalipukhuri–Noonmati)
- **Bhagadatta Flyover** — ≈ **1.6 km**
- **Nilachal Flyover** — ≈ **2.6 km**
- **Dinesh Goswami Flyover** — ≈ **1.8 km**
- **Ganeshguri Flyover** — ≈ **0.65 km**
- **Zoo Road Flyover** — ≈ **0.60 km**

#### Route

- Starts near **FCI Godown** and ends at Dighalipukhuri in Guwahati.



- Connects **Noonmati** area with central Guwahati.
- Provides an **additional 1.5-lane facility on both sides at ground level**, forming a **four-lane corridor along GNB Road**.

**Planned Extensions & Additions -**

- Two additional arms proposed:
  - One **above the Rajgarh railway line**.
  - One **from Gauhati Club towards Uzanbazar**.
- **Rotary points** similar to the one at Chandmari will be constructed at **Gauhati Club** and the **Ulubari flyover** for smoother traffic.



**Associated Infrastructure Plans**

- Work on Guwahati Metro Rail connectivity to begin after completion of the **Guwahati Ring Road project**.
- New flyover planned from **Gauhati Club to Ulubari flyover**.
- **Cycle Factory flyover** expected completion: **April 2026**.
- Mission Chariali flyover expected completion: **July 2026**.

**Significance**

- Reduce **traffic congestion** in Guwahati.
- **Reduce travel time and fuel consumption**.
- Lower **air and noise pollution**.
- Improve **urban mobility** in the city.

**Prelims Practice Question**

**Q.** Consider the following statements regarding the Maharaj Prithu Flyover in Guwahati:

1. It is currently the longest flyover in Northeast India.
2. The flyover connects Noonmati with Dighalipukhuri in Guwahati.
3. It was constructed by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 3 – Incorrect:** The flyover was constructed by the **Public Works Department (Roads)**, Assam, not by National Highways Authority of India.

**Science City Guwahati**

**Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper V**

**Inauguration**

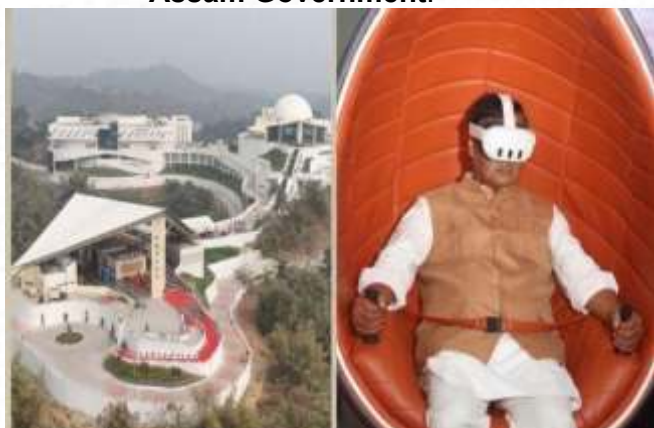
- Science City Guwahati was inaugurated on **10 March 2026** by Himanta Biswa Sarma.
- It is the **first Science City in the state of Assam**.
- Located at **Tepesia in Sonapur near Guwahati**.

**Implementation & Scheme**

- Developed under the **‘Scheme for Promotion of Culture of Science’** of the Ministry of Culture.
- Jointly implemented by:



- National Council of Science Museums (NCSM)
- **Science & Technology Department, Assam Government.**



### Significance

- Aims to **promote scientific temper and curiosity among students** in Assam and the Northeast.
- Part of Assam's broader effort to strengthen science education through:
  - **Aryabhata Science Centres** at development blocks.
  - **District-level science centres.**



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Consider the following statements regarding Science City Guwahati:

1. It has been developed under the Scheme for Promotion of Culture of Science of the Ministry of Culture.
2. The project has been implemented by the National Council of Science Museums in collaboration with the Assam government.
3. It is the first science city in Northeast India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

### Examples of Science Cities India

- Science City Kolkata — Kolkata
- Gujarat Science City — Ahmedabad
- Kapila Khandvala Science City — Lucknow
- Pushpa Gujral Science City — Kapurthala

### International

- Ontario Science Centre — Toronto
- Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie — Paris
- Exploratorium — San Francisco

### Project Details

- **Estimated Cost:** ₹300 crore.
- **Central Contribution:** ₹144 crore.
- **Area:** About 250 bighas of land.
- **Foundation stone laid:** 18 January 2021 by Sarbananda Sonowal.

### Facilities & Attractions

Currently includes two major galleries:

- **Eureka Pavilion**
- **Space Odyssey**

Planned future facilities:

- **Science Discovery Centre**
- **Science Park**

### Other Science Infrastructure Announced

Five **district-level science centres** virtually inaugurated at:

- Bongaigaon
- Dadara
- Kaliabor
- Majuli
- Silchar



**Sol: Statement 3 is incorrect** – it is the first science city in Assam, not the entire Northeast.

## Thaluwa Udyog Asoni

### Syllabus - Prelims

*Empowering Assam's Artisans*

**MUKHYAMANTRI THALUWA UDYOG BIKASH ASONI**

**IMPACT IN THE LAST 3 YEARS**

- 3,904 Beneficiaries Empowered
- ₹4.84 Crore Disbursed
- Tools & Equipment support up to ₹20,000 per artisan
- Infrastructure Grant up to ₹15 lakh

## Pragjyotishpur Medical College

### Syllabus - Prelims

#### Medical Colleges of Assam

1. Assam Medical College, Dibrugarh
2. Diphu Medical College & Hospital
3. Dhubri Medical College
4. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed Medical College, Barpeta
5. Gauhati Medical College, Guwahati
6. Jorhat Medical College & Hospital
7. Kokrajhar Medical College
8. Lakhimpur Medical College
9. Nagaon Medical College
10. Nalbari Medical College
11. Silchar Medical College
12. Tezpur Medical College & Hospital
13. Tinsukia Medical College & Hospital (opened in 2024)
14. Pragjyotishpur Medical College & Hospital

**The 14th Medical College of Assam**

প্রাগজ্যোতিষপুর চিকিৎসা মহাবিদ্যালয় আৰু চিকিৎসালয়  
Pragjyotishpur Medical College and Hospital  
Guwahati, Assam

**50 MBBS SEATS 2025-26**

*A proud milestone in Assam's mission to enhance healthcare and medical education*

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## Osbeckia Zubeengargiana

### Syllabus - GS Paper III/IV

**New Plant Species: Osbeckia zubeengargiana**

#### 1. Key Highlights

- New species discovered in
  - Manas National Park
- Named after
  - Zubeen Garg
- Published in journal
  - Phytotaxa

#### 2. Taxonomy

- Genus: *Osbeckia*
- Family: Melastomataceae
- One of the **largest angiosperm families**

#### Distribution:

- Mainly in **South-East Asia**





### 3. Distinct Features

- Linear lanceolate leaves with **three nerves**
- **Tetramerous flowers** (4 parts)
- Hypanthium with intersepalal emergences
- Pubescent style base
- Typically **purple/pink showy flowers**

### 4. Ecological Importance

- Found in:
  - Grassland ecosystems
- Role:
  - Supports biodiversity
  - Indicator of **floristic richness**

### 5. Significance

- Highlights:
  - Rich biodiversity of Assam
  - Importance of **field-based taxonomy**
- Cultural linkage:
  - Naming after a regional icon enhances awareness



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Consider the following statements regarding *Osbeckia zubeengargiana*:

1. It was discovered in Manas National Park.
2. It belongs to the family Melastomataceae.

3. Members of this family are primarily gymnosperms found in temperate regions. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 3: Incorrect** – These are angiosperms (flowering plants), mainly tropical, not gymnosperms.

## Sahitya Akademi Award

Syllabus - GS Paper III/IV

### Sahitya Akademi Awards 2025

#### 1. About the Award

- Conferred by Sahitya Akademi
- Awarded annually in **24 Indian languages**
- Includes:
  - Copper plaque
  - Shawl
  - Cash prize: ₹1 lakh

#### 2. Awardees from Assam

##### Assamese Language

- Devabrat Das
- Work: *Karhi Khelar Sadhu* (Novel)

##### Bodo Language

- Sahaisuli Brahma
- Work: *Dwngnwi Lama Mwnse Gathwn* (Novel)





### 3. Categories Awarded (2025)

- Poetry: 8
- Novels: 4
- Short stories: 6
- Essays: 2
- Literary criticism: 1
- Autobiography: 1
- Memoirs: 2

### 4. Selection Process

- Jury-based selection for each language
- Assamese jury included:
  - Dhruba Jyoti Borah
  - Dinesh Baishya
  - Ranjana Bhattacharyya
- 11 books shortlisted from Assam

## Joha Rice Prices

### Syllabus - GS Paper II/V

### Assam's Joha Rice Price Surge (2025–26)

#### 1. Key Facts

- Price increased from ₹80 → ₹160/kg
- Premium aromatic rice of Assam
- Increasingly **unaffordable for local consumers**
- **The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA)**, under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, facilitated the first export consignment of 25 metric tonnes of Geographical Indication (GI)-tagged Joha

rice from the state of Assam to the United Kingdom and Italy.

- The shipment was dispatched on March 12, 2026, in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, Government of Assam.



**A sharp spike in demand and supply shortage has pushed Joha rice prices to record levels..**



### Assam Joha Rice

- In Assam, Joha rice is cultivated across **around 21,662 hectares** with an estimated production of about **43,298 metric tonnes** in FY25.
- Key producing districts include **Nagaon, Baksa, Goalpara, Sivasagar, Majuli, Chirang, and Golaghat**.
- Before this shipment, the authority facilitated the export of 1 metric tonne of GI-tagged Joha rice to Vietnam and 2 metric tonnes to Middle Eastern countries, including Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, and Saudi Arabia.





### Unique Attributes of Assam Joha Rice

#### 1. Natural Aroma (Signature Feature)

- Joha rice is famous for its **distinct natural fragrance**, similar to basmati but **milder and sweeter**.
- The aroma intensifies after cooking, making it ideal for festive dishes.

#### 2. Indigenous to Assam

- Grown traditionally in the Brahmaputra valley of Assam.
- Deeply linked with Assamese culture, especially in **Bihu feasts and rituals**.

#### 3. Short & Non-Basmati Grain

- Unlike basmati, Joha rice has **small, short grains**.
- Despite shorter length, it still delivers a premium aromatic experience.

#### 4. Soft & Sticky Texture

- After cooking, it becomes **soft, slightly sticky, and easy to digest**.
- Perfect for traditional dishes like **komal saul-based meals, pulao, and payas (kheer)**.

#### 5. Low Glycaemic Index (Health Benefit)

- Compared to many white rice varieties, Joha rice has a **relatively lower glycaemic index**, making it **better for diabetics** (in moderation).

#### 6. GI Tag Recognition

- Joha rice has received a **Geographical Indication (GI) tag**, ensuring:
  - Authenticity
  - Regional identity
  - Protection from imitation

#### 7. Multiple Local Varieties

Some famous sub-types include:

- **Kola Joha** – slightly darker, strong aroma
- **Keteki Joha** – premium fragrance
- **Boga Joha** – most widely consumed

#### 8. Organic & Traditional Cultivation

- Often grown using **low chemical inputs** in traditional farming systems.

- Supports **sustainable agriculture** in Assam.

### Causes of Price Rise

#### A. External Demand Shock

- Crop failure of Gobindobhog rice in West Bengal
- ~40% production decline → **300% price rise**
- Assam's Joha filled supply gap → demand surge

#### B. Export Growth

- GI-tagged Joha exported to:
  - UK, Italy, Vietnam, Middle East
- Increased **global demand for niche product**

#### C. Supply Constraints

- Cultivated in only **~5% of Sali rice area**
- Low productivity (~1 tonne/hectare)
- Grown on marginal lands
- Not traditionally commercialised



#### D. Market Behaviour

- Farmers **hoarding stock** anticipating higher prices
- Possible **mislabeling/adulteration** in markets

### Challenges

- Low yield & limited area
- Quality control issues
- Price volatility
- Balancing export vs local needs

### Way Forward

- Expand cultivation area
- Promote improved varieties like Keteki Joha
- Strengthen GI enforcement
- Develop value chains & storage



- Ensure affordability for locals



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Consider the following statements regarding Joha rice of Assam:

1. It is a GI-tagged aromatic rice known for its distinct aroma and fine grain.
2. It is cultivated across the majority of Assam's total rice area.
3. Its recent price rise is partly linked to crop failure of Gobindobhog rice in West Bengal.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 2: Incorrect** – It is grown on only ~5% of Sali rice area.

## Umiam–Silchar Expressway

### Syllabus - Prelims

### Umiam–Silchar Expressway & Other Projects

#### Umiam–Silchar Expressway

- **Project Details**
- Name: Umiam-Silchar Expressway
- Length: **166 km**
- Cost: **₹22,864 crore**
- Type: **Greenfield, access-controlled expressway** (first of its kind in region)

#### Connectivity

- Connects:
  - Silchar (Assam)
  - Umiam (Meghalaya)

#### Impact

- Travel time:

- Reduced from **8.5 hours** → **~5 hours**



## LPG Use in Assam

### Syllabus - GS Paper III/IV

### Regulation of LPG Use in Assam

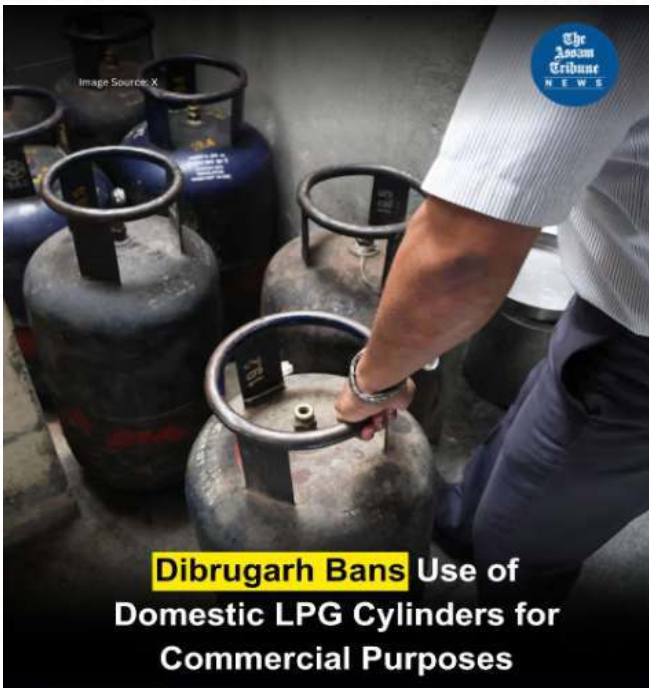
#### 1. Key Development

- Dibrugarh district administration banned:
  - Use of **domestic LPG cylinders for commercial purposes**
- Immediate enforcement by District Magistrate

#### 2. Reason for the Ban

- **Illegal diversion** of subsidised domestic LPG
- Use by:
  - Restaurants, hotels, dhabas
  - Tea stalls, street vendors, caterers
- Leads to:
  - **Artificial shortage** for households
  - Misuse of government subsidy





Of India's consumption of 189 million metric standard cubic meters LNG per day, 52% is produced domestically. A quarter of the total consumption is imported from the Persian Gulf.

### LPG vs LNG vs CNG

Feature	LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas)	LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas)	CNG (Compressed Natural Gas)
<b>Main Components</b>	Propane (C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>8</sub> ) + Butane (C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>10</sub> )	Mostly Methane (CH <sub>4</sub> )	Mostly Methane (CH <sub>4</sub> )
<b>Source</b>	By-product of crude oil refining & natural gas processing	Extracted from natural gas fields	Extracted from natural gas fields
<b>Storage Method</b>	Liquefied under moderate pressure	Liquefied at very low temperature (-162°C)	Stored as gas under high pressure (200–250 bar)
<b>State in Storage</b>	Liquid	Liquid	Gas
<b>Energy Density</b>	High	Very high (more compact than CNG)	Lower than LPG & LNG
<b>Transportation</b>	Cylinders, pipelines	Special cryogenic tankers/ships	Cylinders, pipelines

<b>Common Uses</b>	Cooking fuel, heating, small industries	Power plants, heavy transport, industrial fuel	Automobile fuel (cars, buses), domestic use
<b>Infrastructure Need</b>	Moderate	Very high (cryogenic systems needed)	Moderate (compression stations needed)
<b>Safety</b>	Heavier than air, can accumulate near ground	Lighter than air when vaporized	Lighter than air, disperses quickly
<b>Environmental Impact</b>	Cleaner than coal/petrol, but emits CO <sub>2</sub>	Cleaner than LPG & petrol/diesel	Cleanest among the three (lowest emissions)
<b>Cost</b>	Moderate	High (due to liquefaction & storage cost)	Cheapest among three (generally)

### LPG vs PNG

Feature	LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas)	PNG (Piped Natural Gas)
<b>Main Component</b>	Propane + Butane	Methane (CH <sub>4</sub> )
<b>Source</b>	Crude oil refining & natural gas processing	Natural gas fields
<b>Supply Mode</b>	Cylinders (bottled gas)	Pipeline network
<b>Storage</b>	Stored as liquid under pressure in cylinders	No storage needed at home
<b>State of Fuel</b>	Liquid in cylinder (turns gas on use)	Gas throughout
<b>Pressure</b>	Moderate pressure	Low pressure
<b>Convenience</b>	Needs booking, replacement	Continuous supply (no refill)
<b>Safety</b>	Heavier than air → may accumulate	Lighter than air → disperses quickly
<b>Cost</b>	Generally higher (subsidy dependent)	Usually cheaper in the long run



<b>Installation Cost</b>	Low (just cylinder + stove)	Higher initial pipeline connection cost
<b>Usage</b>	Common in rural & semi-urban areas	Mostly urban areas with pipeline network
<b>Environmental Impact</b>	Cleaner than traditional fuels	Cleaner than LPG (lower emissions)

**LPG Regulation & PNG Expansion**

**1. Context**

- Triggered by:
  - **Global uncertainty due to West Asia conflict**
  - Concerns over **LPG supply & misuse**
- Assam government response:
  - **Tightening LPG regulation**
  - **Accelerating PNG (Piped Natural Gas) rollout**

**Key Issue**

- Price distortion:
  - Domestic LPG (subsidised) << Commercial LPG
- Leads to:
  - Misuse by small businesses
  - Supply pressure on households



- **The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana** helped to boost LPG coverage in Indian households from about 62% in 2016 to almost 100% now.
- However, domestic production has not kept up with consumption. In 2024-25, Indian refineries produced 12.8 million metric tonnes of LPG, just 41% of the annual consumption of 31.3 million tonnes (Petroleum Ministry data)

**Expansion Plan**

- Proposed new connections:
  - **~12,500 across Assam**

- Key locations:
  - Guwahati, Tezpur, Jorhat, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia etc.

**Background: Global LPG Crisis**

- Trigger: Conflict in West Asia → disruption at
  - Strait of Hormuz
- Importance:
  - **~20% of global oil trade passes through it**
  - India heavily dependent for LPG imports.

**India's LPG Dependency (Structural Issue)**

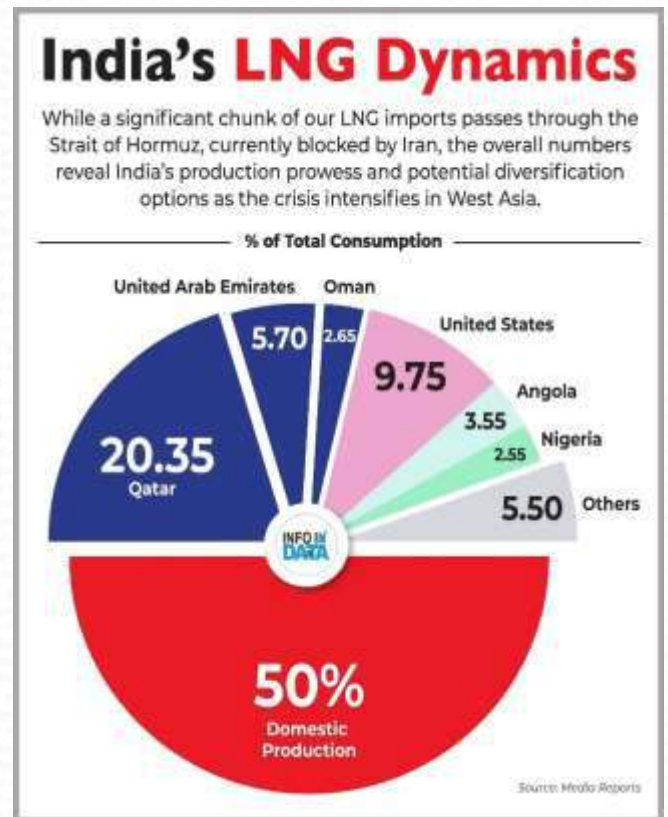
**Key Data**

- LPG production: **12.8 MMT**
- Consumption: **31.3 MMT**
- Import dependence: **~60%+**
- **~90% imports via Strait of Hormuz**

**Due to schemes like -**

- Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana
- LPG coverage increased from **62% (2016)** → **~100%**

**Problem:** Demand is high but domestic production lagging



**Emergency Response: Essential Commodities Act**

**About the Act**

- Essential Commodities Act
- Empowers government to:
  - Control **production, supply, distribution**
  - Ensure **equitable access & fair prices**

**Section 3 Powers**

- Set stock limits
- Prevent hoarding/black marketing
- Control storage, transport, pricing
- Direct industries to prioritise production



- On March 5, the government ordered all Govt. + Pvt oil refineries in India to channel their propane and butane streams into LPG production, rather than using them for petrochemical manufacturing.
- A revised order on March 9 specified that SEZ oil-refining companies and petrochemical complexes are also to be included.
- It added that propylene, butene, and other elements of the C3 and C4 streams were also to be used for LPG production only.
- The government claims that its order has already increased domestic production of LPG by at least 25%, though that still

leaves a 50% gap in supplies to be met by imports.

**THE ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES ACT, 1955**

- To ensure the easy availability of essential commodities to consumers
- To protect them from exploitation by unscrupulous traders.
- Delegated powers vide order dated 09.06.1978, the State Governments/UT Administrations have issued Control Orders for regulating production, distribution, pricing and other aspects of trading in respect of the commodities declared as essential.
- The enforcement/implementation of the provisions of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 lies with the State Governments and UT Administrations

**Regulating Natural Gas Supply**

- Top priority will go to piped natural gas for households, compressed natural gas for transport, gas needed for LPG production, and pipeline compressor fuel.
- Supplies to these sectors will be maintained at 100% of their average consumption over the past six months, subject to availability.
- Fertilizer manufacturers will get 70% of their needs, though this may change if the war continues to disrupt supplies as kharif sowing gets into full swing in summer.
- Supplies to tea, manufacturing, and other industries have been capped at 80%.



**Natural Gas Supply**

Government ensuring Uninterrupted Gas Availability

**Highlights**

- 100% supply ensured for PNG and CNG consumers under Natural Gas Control Order
- Supplies to Industrial and Commercial consumers regulated at 80%
- Over 1.5 crore households currently receiving PNG supply
- Consumers with PNG access encouraged to shift from LPG to PNG to conserve LPG cylinders

AI-Generated Images



**Q. The recent LPG crisis highlights the vulnerabilities in India's energy supply chain. Examine how policy measures such as the Essential Commodities Act and expansion of PNG infrastructure can enhance energy security. (250 words)**

The recent LPG crisis, triggered by disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz, exposed India's energy vulnerabilities.

- **Government Response: Short-Term Measures**
- Invocation of Essential Commodities Act
- Directed refineries to **prioritise LPG production**
- Ensured **equitable distribution and price regulation**
- Prioritised **household consumption over commercial use**

**State-Level Actions (Assam Example)**

- Ban on misuse of subsidised LPG in
  - Dibrugarh
- Crackdown on hoarding, black marketing
- Measures to prevent **artificial shortages**

**Long-Term Structural Reforms**

- Expansion of PNG via
  - Barauni-Guwahati Natural Gas Pipeline
- Promotes:
  - Continuous supply
  - Reduced subsidy burden
  - Lower leakage

**Conclusion**

Combines **crisis management + structural transition**.  
Enhances **energy security, efficiency, and welfare delivery**.



**Sahitya Akademi Award 2025 Winners**

No.	Language	Title & Genre	Author
1	Assamese	Karhi Khelar Sadhu (Novel)	Devabrat Das
2	Bengali	Shrestha Kabita (Poetry)	Prasun Bandyopadhyay
3	Bodo	Dwngnwi Lama Mwense Gathwn (Novel)	Sahaisuli Brahma
4	Dogri	Thakur Satsayie (Poetry, Couplets)	Khajur Singh Thakur
5	English	Crimson Spring (Novel)	Navtej Sarma
6	Gujarati	Bhattkhadaki (Poetry)	Yogesh Vaidya
7	Hindi	Jeete Jee Allahabad (Memoir)	Mamta Kalia
8	Kannada	Dada Seensu Tande (Short Stories)	Amaresh Nugadoni
9	Kashmiri	Najdavaneky Pot Aalav (Poetry)	Ali Shaida
10	Konkani	Konkani Kavyem: Rupani Ani Rupakam (Essays)	Henry Mendonca (H.M. Pernal)
11	Malithili	Dhatri Paat San Gaam (Memoir)	Mahendra
12	Malayalam	Maayamanushyar (Novel)	N. Prabhakaran
13	Manipuri	Kanglandriba Eephut (Short Stories)	Haobam Nalini
14	Marathi	Kalyanilya Resha (Autobiography)	Raju Baviskar
15	Nepali	Nepali Paramparik Sanskriti Ra Sabhyata Ko Dukuti (Essays)	Prakash Bhattarai
16	Odia	Padapurana (Poetry)	Girjakumar Baliyar Singh
17	Punjabi	Safety Kit (Stories)	Jinder
18	Rajasthani	Bharkhama (Stories)	Jitender Kumar Soni
19	Sanskrit	Prasthanacatustaye Brahmaghosah (Poetry)	Sadhu Bhadreshdas
20	Santali	Mid Bima Chenne Saon Inag Sagai (Short Stories)	Sumitra Soren
21	Sindhi	Waghoo (Stories)	Bhagwan Atlani
22	Tamil	Thamiz Sirukathaiyin Thadangal (Literary Criticism)	Sa. Tamilselvan
23	Telugu	Animesha (Poetry)	Nandini Sidha Reddy
24	Urdu	Safar Jaari Hai (Poetry)	Pritpal Singh Betab

**Prelims Practice Question**

**Q.** Consider the following statements regarding the Sahitya Akademi Awards:

1. They are awarded annually in 24 Indian languages.
2. The award includes a cash prize, shawl and a copper plaque.
3. They are conferred by the Ministry of Culture directly without any jury process.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 3: Incorrect** – चयन is jury-based, not direct government selection.

**World Poetry Day**

**Syllabus - Prelims / GS Paper IV**

**Basic Facts**

- **Occasion:** World Poetry Day



- **Date:** March 21
- **Edition:** 5th World Poetry Day Festival
- **Theme (2026):** “Just Beauty” (Justice + Beauty for the world)

#### Global Event Highlights

- **Host country:** Dominican Republic
- **Broadcast:** 24-hour continuous global streaming
- **Streaming hub:** Washington, D.C.
- **Coverage:**
  - 384 poets
  - 48 poetry groups
  - 50 countries



#### Significance

- Marks **global recognition of Assamese literature**
- Highlights **cultural diplomacy through poetry**
- Demonstrates **India’s linguistic diversity on international platforms**
- Reflects growth of **modern Assamese poetry (100+ years old tradition)**

#### Assam’s Participation -

- Special **30-minute segment** on **Assamese poetry**

**Broadcast time:** March 21, 1 PM (IST)

- **Assamese Poets Featured**
  - Lutfu Hanum Selima Begum
  - Rajeev Baruah
  - M Kamaluddin Ahmed
  - Kushal Dutta
  - Bornali Borgohain
  - Bijoy Sankar Barman
- **Special Note:**
  - Rajeev Baruah is serving as **Assamese language coordinator.**

#### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to World Poetry Day Festival 2026, consider the following statements:

1. The 5th World Poetry Day Festival is being organized in the Dominican Republic.
2. The theme for 2026 is “Poetry for Peace and Sustainability.”
3. A special segment featuring Assamese poetry is included in the festival.

Options:

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 2: Incorrect** – Theme is “Just Beauty” (Justice + Beauty), not “Poetry for Peace and Sustainability.”



## Special Observer for Assam

### Syllabus - Prelims / GS Paper V

#### What is a Special Observer?

- A **Special Observer** is a senior official (often retired civil servants, police officers, or experts) appointed by the Election Commission of India to oversee sensitive or critical aspects of elections.

#### Constitutional Validity

- **Backed by Article 324**
  - Article 324 gives **wide discretionary powers** to ECI.
  - Supreme Court has interpreted this as **residual power** where law is silent.



#### Important Judgements:

- **Mohinder Singh Gill vs Chief Election Commissioner (1978)**
  - ECI can act in areas not covered by law to ensure free and fair elections.
- **A.C. Jose vs Sivan Pillai (1984)**
  - ECI powers are subject to existing laws, but can fill gaps where laws are silent.

#### Types of Observers

- **General Observer** – monitors overall election process
- **Expenditure Observer** – tracks election spending
- **Police Observer** – oversees law & order
- **Special Observer** – appointed in:
  - Sensitive constituencies
  - Areas with history of malpractice or violence
  - Politically significant elections



#### Functions of a Special Observer

- Directly reports to the Election Commission
- Supervises:
  - Polling process
  - Law and order
  - Electoral malpractices
- Receives complaints from:
  - Political parties
  - Citizens
  - Civil society groups
- Can recommend:
  - Re-poll
  - Transfer of officials
  - Disciplinary actions



**Q. Discuss the role of Special Observers in ensuring free and fair elections in India. Examine the constitutional validity of their appointment. (250 words)**

#### Introduction

- Free and fair elections are part of the **basic structure** of the Constitution.
- The Election Commission of India appoints Special Observers in sensitive situations to strengthen electoral integrity.
- They act as independent field representatives, monitoring polling, law and order, and electoral malpractices such



as intimidation or bribery. They provide real-time feedback, address grievances, and recommend corrective actions like re-polls or transfer of officials, thereby enhancing electoral credibility.

- Their appointment derives constitutional validity from Article 324, which grants plenary powers to the ECI. Judicial rulings such as Mohinder Singh Gill vs Chief Election Commissioner (1978) uphold such discretionary powers where laws are silent.
- However, lack of explicit statutory backing raises concerns of overreach. Greater legal clarity can further strengthen this mechanism.

### Conclusion

The appointment of Special Observers is constitutionally valid under Article 324 and plays a vital role in safeguarding electoral democracy, though greater legal clarity can further strengthen the system.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Grandmaster from Assam

### Syllabus - Prelims / GS Paper V

#### Key Facts

- Mayank Chakraborty becomes the **first Grandmaster (GM) from Assam**
- Achieved the title under FIDE
- Marks a **historic milestone for Northeast India in chess**

#### What is Grandmaster (GM)?

- Highest title in chess (awarded by FIDE)
- Requirements:
  - Achieve **3 GM norms**
  - Cross **2500 Elo rating**



#### Significance

- Puts Assam on the **global chess map**

- Encourages **sports diversification beyond cricket/football**
- Boosts **chess ecosystem in Northeast India**
- Acts as an inspiration for young players

### Core Requirements

#### 1. Achieve 3 GM Norms

- A **GM norm** = strong performance in an international tournament
- Conditions:
  - Play against titled players (including Grandmasters)
  - Opponents from multiple countries
  - Maintain high performance rating (~2600 level)

#### 2. Cross 2500 Elo Rating

- Must achieve a **live rating of 2500 or above** at any point
- Rating can fluctuate later; peak crossing is enough

#### What is Elo Rating?

- A numerical measure of a player's strength
- Beginners: ~1000
- Strong players: 2000+
- Grandmaster level: 2500+

#### Typical Pathway

1. Learn basics → play local tournaments
2. Gain **FIDE rating (~1600-2000)**
3. Earn titles:
  - i) Candidate Master (CM)
  - ii) FIDE Master (FM)
  - iii) International Master (IM)
4. Compete in **international events**
5. Achieve **3 GM norms + 2500 rating**

#### Firsts & Pioneers

- Viswanathan Anand  
→ **First Indian Grandmaster (1988)**  
→ Former World Chess Champion (5-time)

#### Notable Indian Grandmasters

- R Praggnanandhaa
- D Gukesh
- Arjun Erigaisi
- Vidit Gujrathi





### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to Mayank Chakraborty, consider the following statements:

1. He is the first Grandmaster from Assam.
  2. The Grandmaster title is awarded by the International Olympic Committee.
  3. A minimum rating of 2500 Elo is required to become a Grandmaster.
- (a) 1 and 3 only  
(b) 2 and 3 only  
(c) 1 only  
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 2: Incorrect** – GM title is awarded by FIDE, not IOC.



## APRIL MONTH

### Book: Jibon aru Darshan

#### Syllabus - GS Paper V

#### Context

- A new Assamese book titled *Jibon aru Darshan (Life and Philosophy)* was launched in **Guwahati**
- Published by **Purbayan Publication**

#### Author

- **Dr Sauravpran Goswami**
  - Retired Professor of Philosophy, **Gauhati University**

#### Book Highlights

- Contains **15 essays** covering:
  - Life & philosophy
  - Science & religion
  - Contemporary society
  - Education
  - Philosophy of **Srimanta Sankaradeva**



#### Key Observations

- Central idea: *"Philosophy is a perspective, not a treatise"*
- Praised for:
  - **Simple and accessible language**
  - **Clarity in explaining complex ideas**
- Addresses gap of **limited Assamese literature on philosophy**

#### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Consider the following statements regarding the book *Jibon aru Darshan*:

1. It is authored by Dr Sauravpran Goswami.
2. The book contains essays only on religious philosophy.
3. It was published by Purbayan Publication.
4. The book emphasizes that philosophy is a perspective rather than a treatise.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: b

**Sol: Statement 2 - Incorrect** (covers multiple themes, not just religion)

### Euthalia Zubeengargi

#### Syllabus - GS Paper V

#### Context

- A new butterfly species discovered in **Arunachal Pradesh**
- Named after Assamese music icon **Zubeen Garg**

#### Scientific Details

- Scientific name: *Euthalia (Limbusa) zubeengargi*
- Common name proposed: **"Basar Duke"**
- Discovered in:
  - Basar region, **Leparada district**



#### Discovery

- By:
  - **Roshan Upadhaya**
  - **Kalesh Sadasivan**
- Found during **field studies in forested landscapes**

#### Habitat & Behaviour

- Found in **semi-evergreen forests**
- Elevation: **600–700 metres**
- Behaviour:
  - Slow movement in shaded understory
  - Feeds on:
    - Tree sap
    - Minerals from moist surfaces



## Physical Features

- Olive-brown wings
- White markings
- Faint iridescent sheen
- Distinct male anatomical traits

## Rarity

- Extremely rare:
  - Only **2 individuals recorded**
- Raises questions:
  - Naturally rare vs difficult to detect



## Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Consider the following statements:

1. The butterfly *Euthalia zubeengargi* was discovered in Assam.
2. It is commonly referred to as “Basar Duke”.
3. The species is found in semi-evergreen forests at mid-elevations.
4. It has been named after a renowned Assamese singer.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol:** Statement 1 is incorrect - Found in Arunachal Pradesh, not Assam.

## Assam Elections 2026

### Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper V

## Legislative Elections

- **States/UT going to polls (2026)**  
As per the Election Commission of India schedule, elections are being held in:
  - Assam

- Kerala
- Tamil Nadu
- West Bengal
- Puducherry
- **Constitutional Basis**
  - Elections to State Assemblies are governed by:
    - **Articles 168–212** (State Legislature)
    - **Article 324** → Powers of Election Commission of India
  - Conducted under:
    - Representation of the People Act, 1950 & 1951



## Model Code of Conduct

- The **Model Code of Conduct (MCC)** is a set of **guidelines issued by the Election Commission of India** to regulate the behavior of political parties and candidates during elections, ensuring **free, fair, and ethical elections**.
- **When does MCC come into force?**
  - From the **date of announcement of election schedule by the ECI**
  - Remains in force **till completion of the election process (results)**
- **Evolution:**
  - The origin of the MCC lies in the **Assembly elections of Kerala in**



- 1960, when the State administration prepared a 'Code of Conduct' for political actors.
- Subsequently, in the **Lok Sabha elections in 1962**, the ECI circulated the code to all recognized political parties and State governments, and it was wholeheartedly followed.
- It was in **1991** after repeated flouting of the election norms and continued corruption, the EC decided to enforce the MCC more strictly.

- However, the **ECI argues against making it legally binding.**
  - According to it, elections must be completed within a relatively short time or close to 45 days and **judicial proceedings typically take longer, therefore it is not feasible to make it enforceable by law.**



**Model Code of Conduct in Action**  
Key guidelines to ensure free, fair & transparent elections

**For Political Parties**

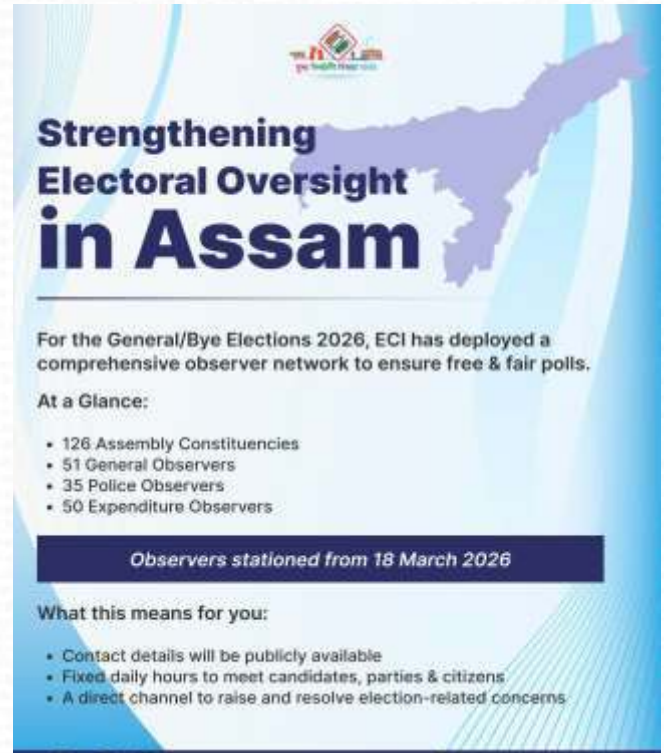
- Inform the police in advance about meetings & rallies
- Adhere to all prohibitory orders in force
- Obtain permission for loudspeakers & campaign activities
- Book public spaces seamlessly via SUVIDHA (ECINET)

**For Government Officials**

- Uphold complete neutrality in all duties

**For Ministers**

- Keep official responsibilities separate from campaign activities
- Do not use government vehicles, staff, or resources for campaigning



**Strengthening Electoral Oversight in Assam**

For the General/Bye Elections 2026, ECI has deployed a comprehensive observer network to ensure free & fair polls.

**At a Glance:**

- 126 Assembly Constituencies
- 51 General Observers
- 35 Police Observers
- 50 Expenditure Observers

**Observers stationed from 18 March 2026**

**What this means for you:**

- Contact details will be publicly available
- Fixed daily hours to meet candidates, parties & citizens
- A direct channel to raise and resolve election-related concerns

- **Is the MCC Legally Enforceable?**
  - Though the **MCC does not have any statutory backing**, it has come to acquire strength in the past decade because of its strict enforcement by the EC.
    - Certain provisions of the MCC may be enforced through invoking corresponding provisions in other statutes such as the **IPC 1860, CrPC 1973 (now BNSS)**, and **RPA 1951**.
  - In 2013, the Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice recommended making the MCC legally binding and recommended that the MCC be made a part of the RPA 1951.

### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. MCC is a statutory code enacted by Parliament.
2. It comes into force immediately after election dates are announced.
3. It is enforced by the Election Commission of India.

**Options:**

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

Ans: b

**Sol:** MCC is not a law (non-statutory), but enforced by the Election Commission of India. It comes into force once elections are announced.



### Voter ID (EPIC)

- The **Voter ID Card**, officially called the **Elector's Photo Identity Card (EPIC)**, is an identity document issued by the Election Commission of India to eligible citizens for the purpose of voting in elections.
- **What is it used for?**
  - To **establish identity** of a voter at the polling booth
  - To prevent **impersonation and bogus voting**
  - Also accepted as a **general identity proof** in many situations
- **When was it started?**
  - The EPIC system was **introduced in 1993** by the Election Commission of India
  - It was launched during the tenure of **T. N. Seshan**, who emphasized electoral reforms

### Contains:

- **Name, age, gender**
- **Photograph**
- **Unique EPIC number**
- **Linked to the electoral roll of a constituency**

**Voter ID Made Simple**

**Know the Basics Before You Vote**

<p><b>Minor errors? No problem!</b></p> <p>Even if your voter ID has small spelling mistakes, it can still be accepted- as long as your identity is clearly established.</p>	<p><b>Different constituency EPIC? Still valid!</b></p> <p>You can use your EPIC even if it was issued from another Assembly Constituency.</p>
<p><b>One key condition</b></p> <p>Your name must be in the Electoral Roll of the polling station where you're voting.</p>	<p><b>Mismatch in photo/details?</b></p> <p>If your identity cannot be confirmed, simply carry an alternative photo ID.</p>

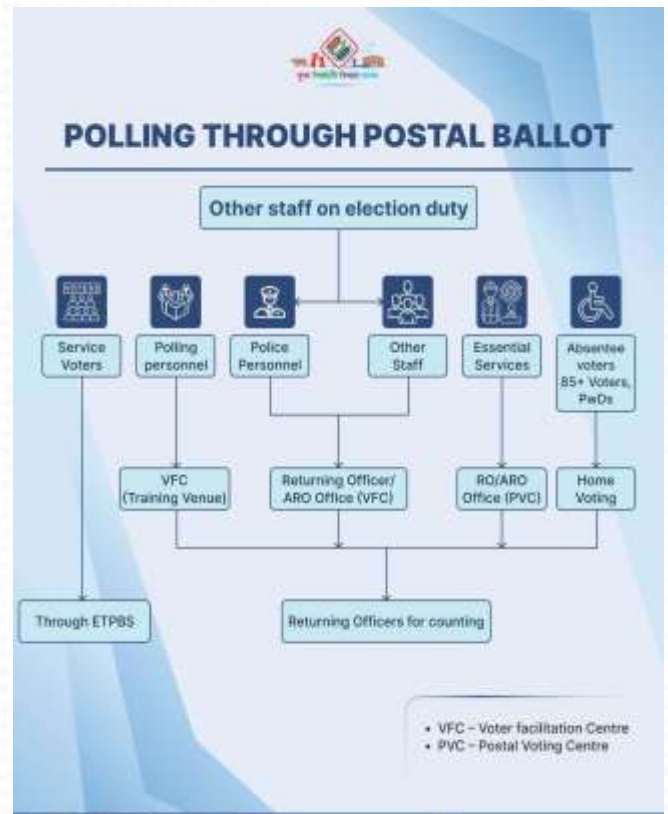
### Postal Ballot

- The **Postal Ballot System** allows certain categories of voters to **cast their vote remotely (by post)** instead of physically

visiting a polling station. It ensures that eligible voters who cannot be present still ex

### Who can vote through Postal Ballot?

- Eligible categories include:
  - **Service Voters**
    - Members of the Armed Forces
    - Central Armed Police Forces
    - Government employees posted abroad
  - **Absentee Voters**
    - Senior citizens (85+ years)
    - Persons with Disabilities (PWD)
    - COVID-affected persons (introduced temporarily earlier, partly retained in practice)
  - **Election Duty Staff**
    - Polling officers, security personnel, etc.



### How does it work?

- The Election Commission of India sends a **postal ballot paper** to eligible voters
- Voter marks their choice and sends it back before counting day
- Ballots are kept secure and counted along with EVM votes

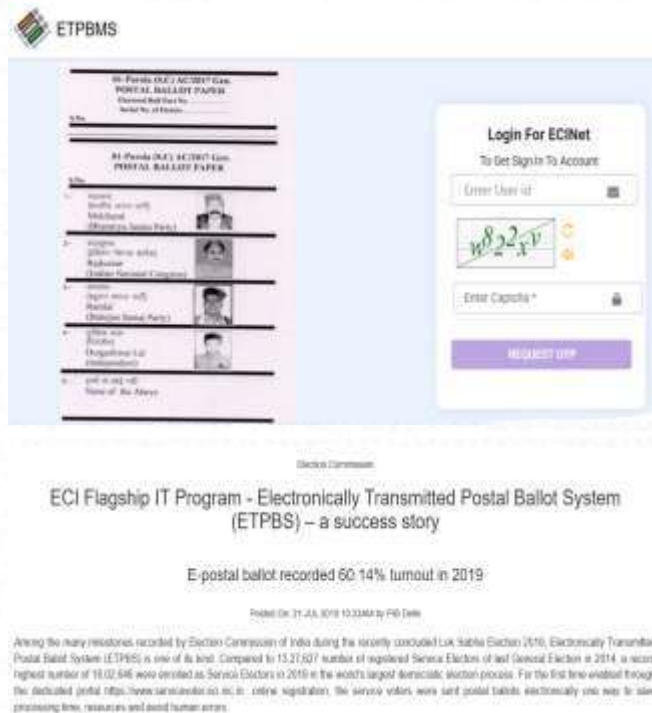


### Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System (ETPBS)

- Introduced for **service voters**
- Ballot is sent electronically, but voting is done offline and returned by post
- Speeds up the process while maintaining secrecy

#### Legal Basis

- **Representation of the People Act, 1951**
- **Conduct of Election Rules, 1961 (Rule 23, 27 etc.)**
- Administered by the **Election Commission of India**



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Consider the following statements regarding the 2026 Assembly Elections:

1. Elections in Assam are being conducted in a single phase.
2. West Bengal is going for more than one phase of polling.
3. The Model Code of Conduct comes into force only after the completion of polling.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 3: Incorrect** – MCC comes into force immediately after the announcement of the schedule

**Q.** Consider the following statements about eligible voters under Postal Ballot:

1. Members of the Armed Forces and Central Armed Police Forces are eligible.
2. Senior citizens above 85 years are eligible as absentee voters.
3. All government employees are eligible for postal voting.

**Options:**

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

Ans: b

**Sol: Statement 3 is incorrect** — only specific categories (like service voters or election duty staff) are eligible, not all government employees.

### Form 12-D

- **Form 12D** is a specific application form used in India's election process for **postal ballots**

**What is Form 12D?**

- Form 12D is the **application submitted to the Returning Officer** by certain eligible voters to **vote through a postal ballot instead of physically visiting a polling station.**

### Form 13

- **Form 13A** – Declaration by the voter
- **Form 13B** – Cover A (inner envelope for ballot paper)
- **Form 13C** – Cover B (outer envelope addressed to Returning Officer)
- **Form 13D** – Instructions for the voter





**Postal Ballot Facility via Form 12D**

Eligible electors can avail postal ballot services using Form 12D:

- Persons with Disabilities (PwD)
- Senior Citizens (85+)
- Electors in Essential Services (health, fire, electricity, transport, etc.)
- Media Personnel (authorized for poll day coverage)

app to display the approximate **voter turnout percentage for each state, district, and constituency.**

- **Features of the Voter Turnout App:**
  - Displays the approximate voter turnout percentage for each state, district, and constituency.
  - Uses real-time data from the ECI's Voter Turnout ENCORE Server.
  - Allows users to filter the data by election type, state, district, and constituency.
  - Allows users to share the data on social media.



### Home Voting

- Home Voting has commenced, further strengthening efforts towards a **more inclusive and accessible electoral process.**
- Through this initiative, senior citizens aged **85+ and Persons with Disabilities (PwDs)** are able to exercise their **right to vote** with dignity, reflecting the true spirit of participatory democracy.



**Home Ballot in Action Across District**  
“গৃহ ভোটদান প্রক্রিয়া চলি আছে”

### Real Time Update

- This is one of the renowned applications of the Election Commission of India (ECI) which is an **in-house developed** mobile



#SVEEP Assam

**From Booth to Screen**  
Every vote counts. Every update matters

VOTING COMPARTMENT

Now, voter turnout isn't just counted- it's tracked in **REAL TIME**, with updates every **TWO HOURS** by Presiding Officers.

**Why it matters?**

- Greater transparency in the voting process
- Real-time insights for better monitoring
- Builds public trust in elections



## Auxiliary Polling Stations

Auxiliary polling stations have been proposed in multiple districts of Assam to ensure **smooth, accessible, and efficient voting.**

- **District-wise Developments**
  - **Goalpara** (13 Goalpara West ST)
    - Auxiliary PS **90A** set up at *Saplengkata Damal LP School*
    - Works alongside existing PS 90
  - **Tinsukia** (85 Makum)
    - Auxiliary PS **184(A)** added at *Rajgarali TE Staff Club*
    - Complements PS 184
  - **Biswanath** (71 Behali SC)
    - *Balipukhuri MV School* hosts PS 39 and auxiliary PS **39A**
  - **Sribhumi** (Patharkandi)
    - *470 No. Pratap Nagar LP School* operates PS 102 and auxiliary PS **102A**

**Dhemaji** (80 Jonai ST)

- Polling station shifted from *Kabu Sivaguri LP School* to *Silai ME School*
- Reason: **natural causes**, ensuring continuity with better facilities

**#SVEEP Assam**

**ECI Approves Auxiliary Polling Stations in Assam**

To ensure a smoother and more accessible voting experience, particularly in areas where the number of voters exceeds the prescribed limit per polling station.

**Districts Covered:** Goalpara • Tinsukia • Biswanath • Sribhumi

**What this means for voters?**

- ✓ Reduced crowding at polling stations
- ✓ Shorter waiting times
- ✓ Greater convenience and accessibility

- **Reduces overcrowding** at polling stations
- Enhances **voter accessibility**, especially in rural/remote areas
- Improves **administrative efficiency & queue management**
- Ensures **continuity of polling** in case of disruptions (e.g., natural causes)

- Reflects proactive efforts aligned with free & fair elections by **Election Commission of India**

**#SVEEP Assam**

**Planned with Care - Designed for You**

Across all **Polling Stations**, including **Auxiliary Polling Stations**, every detail is taken care of to ensure a safe, smooth, and voter-friendly experience.

**What's ensured:**

- No polling stations in disputed areas
- Assured Minimum Facilities (basic amenities for voters)
- Clear demarcation of polling areas
- Polling stations within 2 km reach
- No overcrowding beyond prescribed limits
- Transparent planning with political party consultation

**Better planning. Better access. Better voting.**


## For Senior Citizens & PwDs

- Facilities provided by the **Election Commission of India:**
  - Polling stations located on the **ground floor** for easy access
  - Availability of **ramps, wheelchairs, and volunteer assistance**
  - **Priority voting सुविधा** (no long queues)
  - **Seating arrangements** including benches for comfort
  - **Optional home voting facility** through postal ballot
  - **Transport facility** for voters with mobility issues
- **Digital Support**
  - **Saksham Module** in **ECINET App** enables PwDs to **avail and request facilities** at polling stations



Special Care for Senior Citizens & PwDs

- Polling Station on Ground Floor
- Ramps, Wheelchair & Volunteer Facility
- Priority in Voting
- Seating arrangements, Benches
- Optional Home Voting Facility through Postal Ballot
- Transport Facility



Saksham Module in ECINET App for PwDs to avail facilities at Polling Station



### Saksham ECI App

- The Election Commission of India is working towards easing the voter identification and registration process for people with disabilities (PwDs) by offering them customized services.
- The Saksham App provides a number of features to help PwDs **register to vote, find their polling station, and cast their vote**. These features include:
  - **Voice assistance:** The app provides voice assistance for PwDs who are visually impaired.
  - **Text-to-speech:** The app provides text-to-speech for PwDs who are hearing impaired.
  - **Accessibility features:** The app has a number of accessibility features, such as large fonts and high-contrast colors, to make it easier for PwDs to use.
  - **Information on polling stations:** The app provides information on polling stations, including the location of the polling station, the accessibility features available at the polling station, and the contact details of the polling officials.
  - **Complaints:** The app allows PwDs to file complaints about any problems they

face while participating in the electoral process.



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to Saksham App, consider the following:

1. It allows PwDs to file complaints related to electoral participation.
2. It provides text-to-speech support.
3. It replaces the need for physical polling stations for PwDs.

**Options:**

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

Ans: a

**Sol:** Statement 3 is incorrect — PwDs still vote at polling stations or via permitted alternatives, not through the app.

### Electoral Literacy Club

- Initiative under **Election Commission of India**
- Implemented through **SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation)** in Assam

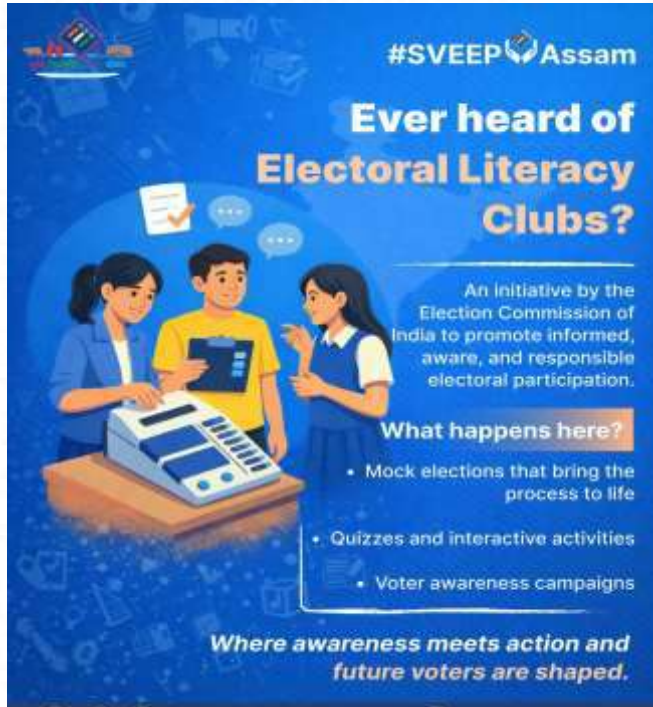
**Objective**

- Promote **informed, aware, and responsible electoral participation**
- Develop **future voters** and strengthen democratic values



### Key Activities

- **Mock elections** → Practical understanding of voting process
- **Quizzes & interactive activities** → Engagement and learning
- **Voter awareness campaigns** → Promote registration & participation



### Pink Booths

- A **polling station managed entirely by women staff**
- Includes:
  - Presiding Officer
  - Polling Officers
  - Security personnel (in many cases)

### Objective

- Promote **women empowerment in electoral processes**
- Encourage **higher participation of women voters**
- Create a **safe, comfortable, and inclusive voting environment**

### Key Features

- Entirely **women-operated staff**
- Often decorated with **pink theme** to signify women-centric initiative
- Enhanced **security and facilitation for women voters**
- Sometimes includes:
  - Separate queues
  - Childcare/feeding spaces (in select locations)



### Women Candidates in Lok Sabha Elections 2024:

- Out of **8360** candidates analysed in the **Lok Sabha elections 2024**, Only **800 (9.6%)** candidates were women.
- Out of **543** constituencies, **152 (28%)** constituencies had zero women candidates.

### Women Candidates in Current Assemblies:

- Out of **43348** candidates analysed from current State and UT Assemblies, only **4295 (10%)** candidates were women.
- Out of **4123** constituencies across the country in the current assemblies, **1698 (41%)** constituencies had zero women candidates.

Women's engagement in politics as voters and candidates has gradually increased since independence.

Table 1: Women political participation of Assam legislative elections

Year of election	Total candidates	Male candidates	Female candidates	Total elected candidates	Percentage of elected women
1952	458	449	6	2	1.90
1957	312	304	6	5	4.68
1962	409	405	4	4	3.81
1967	492	486	6	4	3.17
1972	522	510	12	0	0
1978	938	916	22	1	0.79
1985	1133	1124	29	5	3.96
1991	1657	1607	50	5	3.97
1996	1228	1183	45	6	4.76
2001	916	861	55	10	7.94
2006	997	927	70	13	10.32
2011	981	896	85	14	11.11
2016	1064	973	91	8	7.28
2021	946	870	76	6	4.56

(Sources: Election commission of India.)



### One Nation One Election App

- Your vote doesn't just count- it updates the nation in real time.
- On polling day, Presiding Officers will upload voter turnout data on the **ECINET app**, ensuring every vote is reflected instantly.
- Because every vote matters, every update builds trust, and every moment strengthens democracy.



#SVEEP Assam

### One Nation, One Election App

- ▶ One app. All election services
- ▶ Easy access- anytime, anywhere
- ▶ Fast, simple, and user-friendly
- ▶ Reliable and transparent information
- ▶ Designed for every voter



### Voter Information Slips

- A document issued by the Election Commission of India to registered voters before elections
- Contains:
  - Voter's name & serial number in electoral roll
  - Polling station location
  - Date & time of voting

### Suvidha Module

- **SUVIDHA** is an online system developed by the Election Commission of India to facilitate transparent and time-bound permissions for candidates and political parties during elections.

### Key Features

- **Online application** for permissions such as:
  - Public meetings
  - Rallies/processions
  - Use of loudspeakers
  - Temporary party offices
- **Time-bound approvals** (often within 24 hours)
- **First-come, first-served basis**
- **Real-time tracking** of application status
- Ensures **transparency** and **accountability**





#SVEEP Assam

**'Suvidha' Module- Fast. Transparent. Fair.**

Candidates and political parties can apply for campaign-related permissions online through ECINet's Suvidha module- anytime, anywhere.

24h

**Why use Suvidha?**

- Easy online application
- Quick approvals
- Fully transparent and impartial process

Applications are processed on a First Come, First Served basis, **within 24 hours.**

## Voter Assistance Booths (VABs)

Your guide at the booth  
Making voting simple, smooth,  
and stress-free.

### What they offer:

- Available at every polling station
- On-ground support from BLOs & election officials
- Help locating your booth & electoral roll details
- Clearly marked for easy access



## Voter Facilitation Poster

### What is it?

- A display poster placed at polling stations by the Election Commission of India
- Provides essential information to voters at a glance

### Key Information Displayed

- Polling station number & location details
- List of voters (part-wise/section-wise) or directions to find them
- Important instructions for voters
- Queue management guidance
- Information on:
  - Voter Assistance Booth (VAB)
  - Facilities for PwDs & senior citizens

## Voter Assistance Booths

- Help desks set up outside or near polling stations to assist voters on polling day
- Established by the Election Commission of India

### Objective

- Ensure smooth and hassle-free voting experience
- Help voters locate their details and polling station
- Reduce confusion and queue delays

### Key Functions

- Provide information on:
  - Name in electoral roll
  - Serial number & part number
  - Polling booth location
- Guide voters about:
  - Required ID documents
  - Voting process
- Distribute:
  - Voter slips (if needed)
- Assist:
  - Senior citizens & PwDs





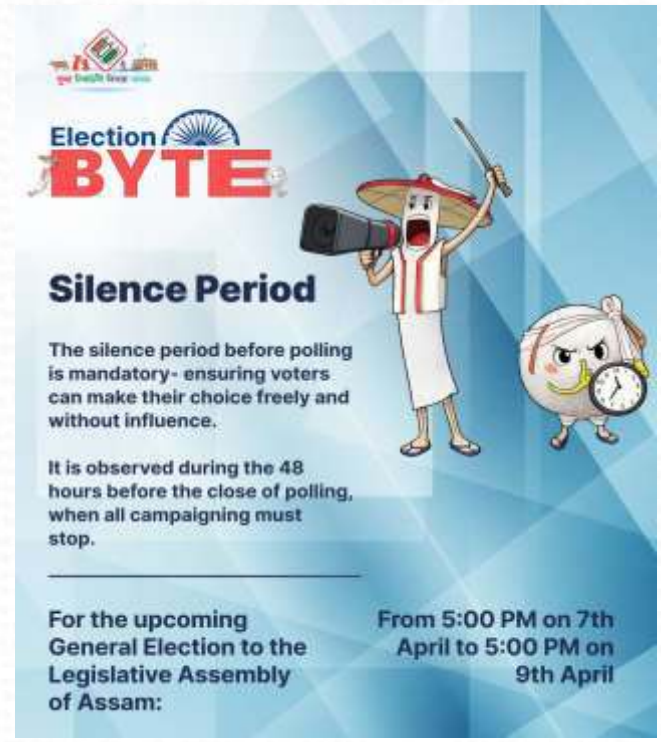
**Voter Facilitation Poster (VFP) at Your Booth**

At every polling station, you'll find four clear and standard VFPs to help you vote with ease and confidence.

**What's on them?**

- Polling station details
- List of candidates
- Do's & Don'ts
- Approved ID documents
- Step-by-step voting process

*Everything you need- right where you vote.*



**Election BYTE**

**Silence Period**

The silence period before polling is mandatory- ensuring voters can make their choice freely and without influence.

It is observed during the 48 hours before the close of polling, when all campaigning must stop.

**For the upcoming General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Assam:**

From 5:00 PM on 7th April to 5:00 PM on 9th April

**Silence Period**

**What is Silence Period?**

- It is a **mandatory 48-hour period** before the end of polling during which all election campaigning must stop.

**Legal Basis**

- Governed by **Section 126 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951**
- Enforced by the Election Commission of India

**Objective**

- To provide voters a **calm, pressure-free environment**
- To allow **independent decision-making**
- Prevent last-minute manipulation or misinformation

**Penalties for Violation**

- Imprisonment up to **2 years**, or
- Fine, or both

**Key Prohibitions**

**1. Campaigning Ban**

- No Public meetings, Speeches, Processions, Any activity influencing voters

**2. Media Restrictions**

- No Political advertisements (TV/radio), Interviews or conferences related to elections

**3. Social & Public Influence**

- No campaigning by: Individuals, Celebrities, Organisations

**4. Ban on Liquor**

- Sale/distribution of liquor prohibited in polling areas
- Punishable offence (up to 6 months jail/fine)

**5. Movement Restrictions**

- Party workers from outside constituency not allowed

**Prelims Practice Question**

**Q.** Consider the following statements regarding the Silence Period:

1. It is a 48-hour period before the end of polling.
2. It is governed by Section 126 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.
3. It allows limited campaigning through social media.

**Options:**

- (a) 1 and 2 only



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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 3 is incorrect** — all forms of campaigning, including social media, are prohibited.

**Exit Polls**

**What are Exit Polls?**

- Exit polls are sample-based post-voting surveys
- Aim to **predict election results** based on voters' responses

**Who conducts them?**

- Media houses
- Survey agencies
- Research organisations

**Legal Position in India**

- Regulated by the **Representation of the People Act, 1951**
- **Publication/broadcast is banned:**
  - During polling
  - Until polling in all phases is completed (multi-phase elections)



**Election BYTE**

**Ban on Exit Polls**

The ECI mandates that conducting or publishing exit polls is strictly prohibited during the notified period- from the commencement of polling in the first phase to 30 minutes after the close of polling in the last phase in any State/UT- to ensure a free and fair election.

For the upcoming General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Assam and other poll-going States/UTs: From 7:00 AM on 9th April to 5:30 PM on 29th April

**Election Mascots**

- Meet #UTSAH, our vibrant river dolphin mascot, inspired by the lifeline of Assam's rivers, UTSAH encourages every citizen to stay vigilant and responsible during elections.




**UTSAH - The Spirit of Voting**

Stay alert, stay responsible! Use the iVIGIL App to report any violation of the Model Code of Conduct or suspicious election-related activities instantly.

For any election-related assistance! Contact 1950 - Voter Helpline Number

Let's come together to ensure a free, fair, and transparent election.

Inspired by the lifeline of Assam's rivers, UTSAH encourages every citizen to stay vigilant and responsible during elections.

**Overseas Voter**

- An Indian citizen residing abroad who is eligible to vote
- Registered as an **"Overseas Elector"** under the **Representation of the People Act, 1950**

**1. Registration Process**

- Apply using **Form 6A** (online/offline)
- Submit:
  - Passport details (mandatory)
  - Overseas address proof
- Name is added to the **electoral roll of the constituency of ordinary residence in India**



## 2. How Do They Vote? (Current System)

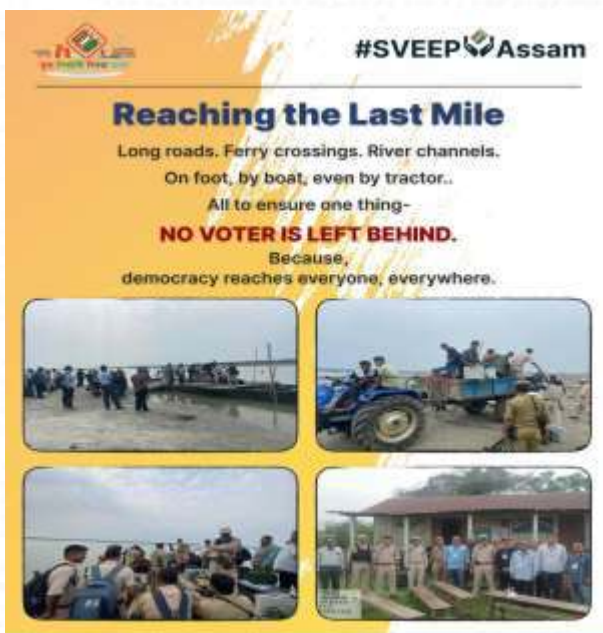
- Must be **physically present in India**
- Vote at their **designated polling station**
- Cannot currently vote via:
  - Postal ballot
  - Proxy voting (only allowed for service voters)

## Proposed Reforms (Not yet fully implemented)

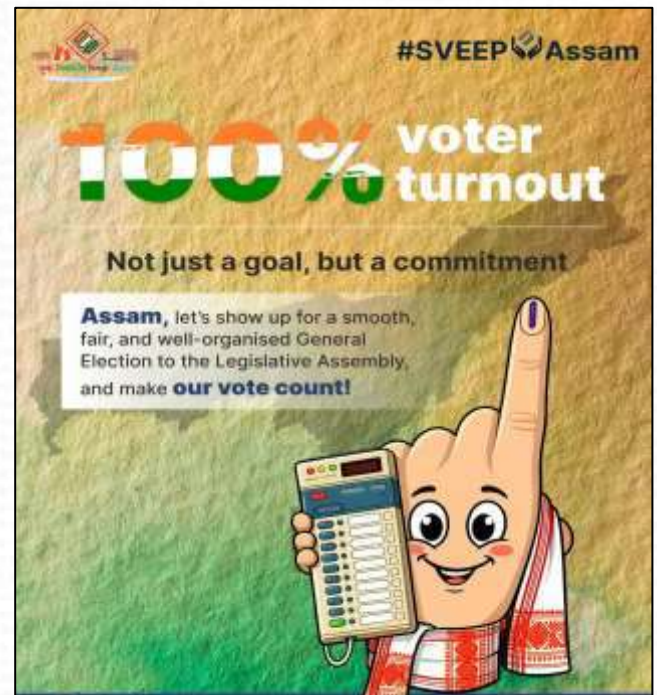
- **E-postal ballot system** for NRIs (discussed by Election Commission of India)



## Reaching the last Mile



## Your vote your Duty



**Q1. Discuss the role of the Election Commission of India in ensuring free and fair elections in the context of Assam Legislative Assembly Elections 2026. Highlight the significance of tools such as Model Code of Conduct, EPIC, and Voter Information Slips. (250 words)**

### Introduction

- Election Commission of India ensures free & fair elections under **Article 324**.
- Assam Elections 2026 reflect its role in **transparency, neutrality, inclusiveness**.

### Body

- **MCC**: Ensures level playing field; checks misuse of power (non-statutory).
- **EPIC**: Prevents bogus voting; ensures voter authenticity.
- **Voter Information Slips**: Facilitate participation by giving polling details.
- **Inclusivity**: Home voting (Form 12-D), auxiliary polling stations for remote/elderly/PwD voters.
- **Monitoring**: Observers, expenditure control, flying squads.

### Conclusion

- ECI ensures **credible elections through regulation + facilitation**.
- Need stronger legal backing for MCC.



## Assam's Fiscal Health Index

### Syllabus - GS Paper V

#### Context

- Fiscal Health Index (FHI) 2026 released by NITI Aayog
- Assesses fiscal performance of **10 Northeastern & Himalayan states**

#### Top Performers

- **Arunachal Pradesh** – Rank 1 (Score: 59.5)
- **Uttarakhand** – Rank 2
- **Tripura** – Rank 3
- **Assam** – Rank 5
- Middle: **Meghalaya, Assam**
- Bottom: **Himachal Pradesh, Manipur**

## FISCAL HEALTH INDEX (FHI) 2026

### ARUNACHAL PRADESH

ranks #1 with a score of 59.5 among Northeastern and Himalayan states.



### Parameters of FHI

Main Parameter	Sub-Parameters	What it Measures
<b>1. Quality of Expenditure</b>	- Capital Expenditure / Total Expenditure - Development Expenditure Ratio - Social Sector Spending (Health, Education) - Revenue Expenditure Ratio - Committed Expenditure (Salaries, Pensions, Interest)	Efficiency and productivity of government spending
<b>2. Revenue Mobilisation</b>	- Own Tax Revenue / GSDP - Own Non-Tax Revenue - GST Collection Efficiency - Revenue Growth Rate - Dependence on Central Transfers	State's capacity to generate internal revenue
<b>3. Fiscal Prudence</b>	- Fiscal Deficit / GSDP - Revenue Deficit / GSDP - Primary Deficit - Compliance with FRBM targets - Interest Payments / Revenue Receipts	Financial discipline and deficit management
<b>4. Debt Index</b>	- Outstanding Liabilities / GSDP - Debt Composition (Internal vs External) - Per Capita Debt - Debt Growth Rate	Overall debt burden of the state
<b>5. Debt Sustainability</b>	- Interest Payments / Revenue Receipts - Debt-GSDP Ratio Trend - Growth Rate vs Interest Rate (r vs g) - Debt Servicing Capacity - Contingent Liabilities (Guarantees)	Ability to sustain and repay debt over time

### Assam's Fiscal Profile

#### Strengths

- Strong **Revenue Mobilisation**
- Good **Debt Index performance**
- Developmental expenditure ↑ by **~39% (2020–21 to 2023–24)**
- Own revenue grew:

○ ₹20,033 crore → ₹34,081 crore (~14% CAGR)

#### Weaknesses

- Weak **Fiscal Prudence**
- High **committed expenditure** (>62% of revenue receipts)



- Heavy dependence on **Central transfers** (38.4%)
- Rising **debt & interest burden**:
  - Liabilities ↑ 67%
  - Interest payments ↑ 57%



Fiscal prudence refers to **responsible and disciplined management of government finances**, ensuring that:

- Spending is controlled
- Borrowing is sustainable
- Deficits are kept within limits

#### Key Indicators

- **Debt-to-GDP Ratio** → Most important metric
- **Interest Payments to Revenue Receipts**
- **Debt Composition** (internal vs external)
- **Debt servicing capacity**



#### Deficit Trends

- GFD:
  - 3.6% (2020–21) → 5.9% (2022–23) → 3.7% (2023–24)
- Indicates **partial fiscal consolidation**

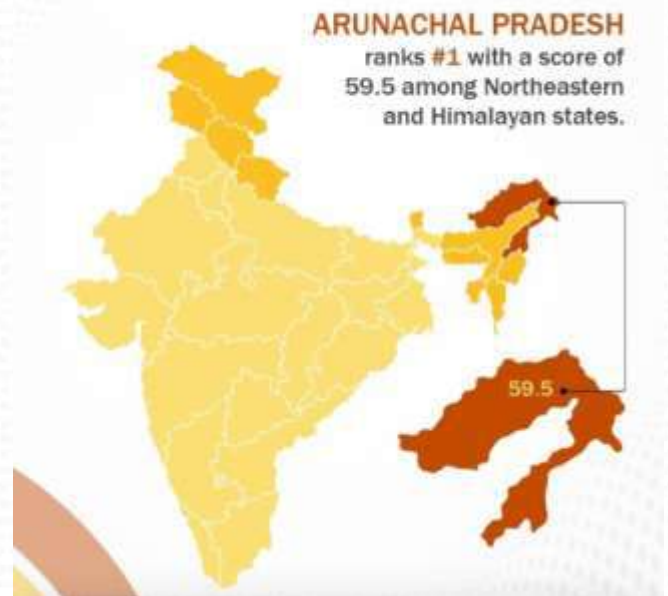
#### Concerns

- High **revenue expenditure dominance**
- Declining share in **Central tax devolution**
- Rising burden of welfare schemes:
  - **Orunodoi** (~₹5,580 crore/year)
  - **NFSA** (~₹5,280 crore/year)
  - Total burden > ₹10,860 crore/year

#### Overall Assessment

- **Mid-level ranking** due to:
  - Balance between **growth spending vs fiscal discipline**
- Needs:
  - Better **fiscal prudence**
  - Higher **own revenue generation**
  - Controlled **debt & deficits**

#### FISCAL HEALTH INDEX (FHI) 2026



#### Recommendations (FHI)

- Improve **revenue mobilisation**
- Rationalise **expenditure**
- Strengthen **fiscal planning**
- Enhance **transparency & governance**

#### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to the Fiscal Health Index (FHI) 2026, consider the following statements:

1. Arunachal Pradesh ranked first among Northeastern and Himalayan states.
2. Assam performed strongly in Fiscal Prudence.
3. The index evaluates states on parameters including Revenue Mobilisation and Debt Sustainability.



4. Assam is highly dependent on Central transfers for its revenue.  
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 2 - Incorrect** (Assam is weak in fiscal prudence)

## Foreign Mercenary in Assam

### Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper V

#### Current Issue

- Foreign nationals (1 American, 6 Ukrainians) arrested after returning from Myanmar
- Entered India via Assam (no permit required)
- Travelled to Mizoram by road
- Crossed into Myanmar via **porous border**
- Trained rebel group:
  - Kachin Independence Army (KIA)
- Focus: **Drone warfare training**

#### What are Private Mercenaries?

They are individuals or groups hired to:

- Provide combat support
- Train armed forces
- Offer security services
- Conduct intelligence/logistics operations

Unlike traditional soldiers, they are **not directly part of a national army** but operate on contracts.



#### Examples -

##### Wagner Group

- Active in Ukraine, Syria, Africa
- Allegedly linked to Russian state interests

#### Blackwater (Academi)

- Played major role in Iraq War 2007
- Highlighted accountability gaps

#### Protected Area Regime (PAR)

##### What is it?

- Foreigners require **Protected Area Permit (PAP)** to enter certain sensitive regions

##### Current Status

- Protected states in Northeast:
  - Arunachal Pradesh
  - Nagaland
  - Mizoram
- Assam is **not under PAP**, making it a **transit vulnerability**



#### Inner Line Permit (ILP)

- The concept of **ILP** goes back to the **Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation**, also known as the **Inner Line Regulation, 1873**.
  - It was the **British's first administrative policy in the North East**.
- ILP is an **official travel document** issued by the state government to regulate the entry of **non-residents** into restricted areas of certain states
- Currently, four states require an ILP for entry:
  - Arunachal Pradesh,
  - Nagaland,
  - Mizoram and
  - Manipur (ILP extended in 2019)





## Security Concerns

### 1. Transit Route Misuse

- Foreign actors exploiting:
  - Easier entry into Assam
  - Weak monitoring on inter-state movement

### 2. Porous India–Myanmar Border

- Facilitates:
  - Illegal crossings
  - Movement of insurgents, arms, and trainers
- Border is difficult to regulate due to:
  - Terrain
  - Ethnic linkages across borders



### 3. External Involvement in Myanmar Conflict

- Foreign mercenaries training rebel groups like KIA (Kachin Independence Army)
- Raises concerns of:
  - Internationalization of regional conflicts
  - Spillover effects into Northeast India

### 4. Internal Security Implications for India

- Potential risks:
  - Radicalisation / insurgent linkages
  - Arms & technology transfer (e.g., drones)
  - Threat to regional stability





### Legal Aspect

- Arrests made for:
  - **Violation of Protected Area Permit rules**
- Entry into Mizoram without valid permit = offence

### Suggested Measures

- Strengthen:
  - **Border management** (India-Myanmar)
  - **Surveillance & intelligence sharing**
- Consider:
  - Revisiting PAP regime for transit control
- Improve:
  - Monitoring of **foreign movement within India**



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to the Protected Area Permit (PAP) regime in Northeast India, consider the following statements:

1. Foreigners require a Protected Area Permit to visit Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, and Mizoram.
2. Assam is currently under the Protected Area Permit regime.
3. The Protected Area Permit is primarily intended to regulate the movement of Indian citizens in sensitive border areas.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 2: Incorrect** – Assam is not under PAP.

**Statement 3: Incorrect** – PAP applies to foreigners, not Indian citizens.

## Jyotiprasad Agarwala's Sonpakhili

**Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper V**

### Staging of Sonpakhili in Nagaon –

#### What happened?

- A local theatre group '**Sattradhar**' staged the play *Sonpakhili* in Nagaon.
- The play was originally written by Jyotiprasad Agarwala but remained incomplete.
- It was later completed by Atul Chandra Hazarika.
- The performance was well received, especially for its **young cast and technical quality**



#### About the Play – *Sonpakhili* -

- A **symbolic / allegorical play**
  - Storyline:
    - Journey of **five friends** searching for "*Sonpakhili*"
- Meaning of *Sonpakhili*:
  - Represents **knowledge, peace, and love**



## Cultural Significance

### 1. Legacy of Jyotiprasad Agarwala

- Jyotiprasad Agarwala is a pioneer of:
  - Assamese drama
  - Literature
  - Cinema
- His works often:
  - Blend **art with social message**
  - Promote **Assamese identity and reformist ideas**

### 2. Continuity of Cultural Heritage

- Completion of the play by Atul Chandra Hazarika shows:
  - **Preservation of unfinished literary works**
  - Inter-generational contribution to culture

### 3. Role of Local Theatre Groups

- Groups like 'Sattradhar':
  - Keep **regional theatre alive**
  - Provide platform to **young artists**
  - Promote **experimental and innovative productions**

### 4. Revival of Theatre Culture

- Indicates:
  - Strong **grassroots theatre movement** in Assam
  - Continued relevance of **stage performances despite digital media**



## Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to the play *Sonpakhili*, consider the following statements:

1. The play *Sonpakhili* was originally written by Jyotiprasad Agarwala.
2. The play was completed by Atul Chandra Hazarika after being left incomplete.
3. The theme of the play revolves around a historical battle in Assam.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 3: Incorrect** – The play is symbolic, focusing on the search for “Son pakhili” (symbol of knowledge, peace, and love), not a historical battle.

## Golden Boy Gilbertson

### Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper V

#### Key Facts

- Name: Gilbertson Sangma
- Born: 21 April 1955, Dibrugarh, Assam
- Died: April 2026 (aged 71)
- Nicknames:
  - *Golden Boy of Assam Football*
  - *Man with the Golden Boot*
- Played as: Attacking player (No. 10 role)
- **Recognition**
  - Awarded **Assam Saurabh (2022)**
  - Remembered as:
    - A symbol of Assam's **footballing golden era**



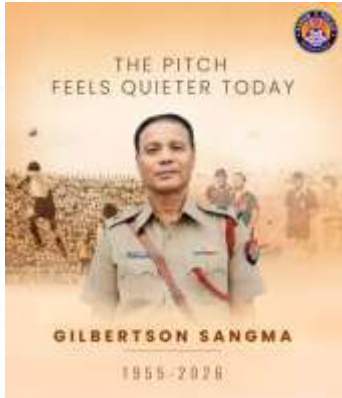
## Football Career

### Domestic Career

- Played primarily for:



- Assam team
- Assam Police
- Career span: Nearly **two decades**
- Known for:
  - Ball control
  - Finishing ability
  - Leadership on field



### Tournaments Represented

#### Santosh Trophy

- Represented Assam in Santosh Trophy
- Key achievement:
  - 1974–75: Scored crucial goal vs Kerala
  - Helped Assam reach **quarterfinals**

#### Bordoloi Trophy

- Premier football tournament of Assam
- Played against top clubs:
  - Mohun Bagan
  - East Bengal
  - Mohammedan Sporting
- Highlight:
  - **1981 Final** – Scored winning goal for Assam Police vs Dempo SC

#### International Representation

- Represented **India (1975)** in friendly matches



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to Gilbertson Sangma, consider the following statements:

1. He represented Assam in the Santosh Trophy and later played for the Indian senior team.
2. He spent his entire domestic career playing for clubs like Mohun Bagan and East Bengal.
3. He was honoured with the Assam Saurabh award in 2022.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 2: Incorrect** – He played for Assam and Assam Police, though he competed against clubs like Mohun Bagan and East Bengal.

### Women In Politics

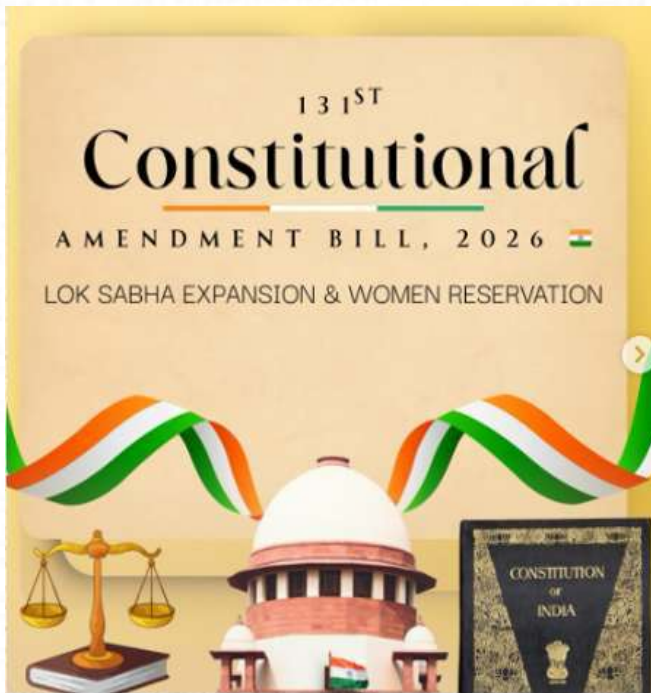
#### Syllabus - GS Paper II/IV

#### Current News

- The 106<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment in 2023 introduced reservation of one-third of seats for women in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.
- This reservation will be based on the first census after the commencement of the 2023 Act.
- The reference date for the ongoing census is March 1, 2027.
- Considering that the next Lok Sabha elections will be held in 2029, it is unlikely that delimitation exercise based on the 2027 census will be completed before the 2029 elections.



- This would imply that reservation for women will not apply to the 2029 Lok Sabha election.
- The last Delimitation Commission was constituted in 2002, and its orders were finalised in 2008.
- Hence, the Constitution (131<sup>st</sup> Amendment) Bill, 2026 seeks to increase the size of Lok Sabha, seek to enable delimitation based on the 2011 census, and enable reservation for women to be based on this delimitation.



### Introduction

- Women **constitute nearly half of India's population**, yet their presence in legislative bodies remains disproportionately low.
- This mismatch between **demographic strength and political representation** raises fundamental questions about the inclusiveness of Indian democracy.
- The demand for women's reservation is rooted **not merely in equity, but in the need** to make governance more representative, participatory, and effective.

## WOMEN'S RESERVATION BILL

A NEW CHAPTER OF NARI SHAKTI BEGINS

For decades, women were denied their **rightful share**

---

Women constitute **48.5%** of the country's population

---

Representing **15%** in the 18th Lok Sabha and **13%** in the Rajya Sabha

---

The Act ensures **33% reservation** for women in Parliament and State Assemblies



### Historical Context of Women's Political Participation

- Women have played a crucial role in India's political evolution:
  - During the freedom struggle, leaders like **Sarojini Naidu** and **Kanaklata Barua** were at the forefront.
  - India also witnessed powerful leadership under Indira Gandhi, one of the longest-serving Prime Ministers.

Despite this legacy, women's representation in elected bodies has remained limited:

- **Lok Sabha:** From ~5% in 1952 to ~15% today
- **Rajya Sabha** → ~17%
- **State Assemblies:** Generally below 10% in most states

This indicates that **formal equality (right to vote)** has not translated into **substantive equality (right to representation)**.

Country	% of elected women	Quota in Parliament	Quota in political parties
Sweden	46%	No	Yes
South Africa	45%	No	Yes
Australia	38%	No	Yes
France	38%	No	Yes
Germany	35%	No	Yes
U.K.	40%	No	Yes
U.S.	29%	No	No
Pakistan	16%	Yes	No
Bangladesh	20%	Yes	No

\*(as of September 2023) |





## Status of Women's Representation in Assam

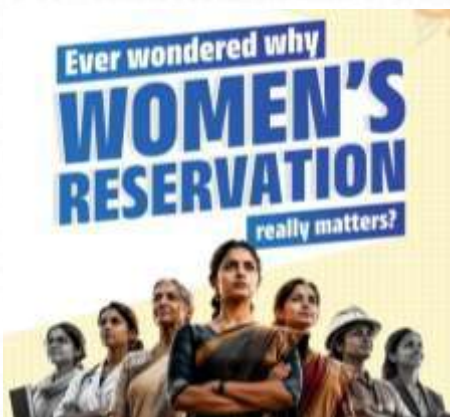
### 1. Historical Trends

- **1952 Assam Assembly:** Only 3 women out of 105 members
- Peak representation in **2011:** 14 women (~11%)
- **2021 Assembly:** Only 6 women MLAs (lowest in two decades)

Women's representation has **never crossed 11%** in Assam Assembly.

### 2. Leadership Representation

- Only one woman Chief Minister:
  - Syeda Anwara Taimur (1980–81)
- Present notable leader:
  - Ajanta Neog
- *Leadership roles remain highly male-dominated.*



### 3. Electoral Participation

- Increase in women candidates over time:
  - 1952: 1 candidate
  - 2016: 89 candidates
  - 2021: 85 candidates vs 1000+ male candidates
- Political parties:
  - Field **very few women candidates (often <10%)**

- Avoid nominating women in "safe seats"

## The Women's Reservation Act, 2023

- A major step toward correcting this imbalance is the **Women's Reservation Act, 2023**, also known as the **Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam**.

### Key Provisions

- **33% reservation** for women in:
  - Lok Sabha
  - State Legislative Assemblies
- Reservation within **SC/ST quotas**
- Applicable for **15 years**
- To be implemented after:
  - Next Census (Began Apr, 2026)
  - Delimitation exercise



## Rationale for Women's Reservation

### 1. Correcting Structural Barriers

- Women face systemic challenges:
  - Patriarchal norms
  - Limited access to resources and networks
  - Political party bias in ticket distribution
  - Reservation acts as a **level-playing mechanism**.

### 2. Enhancing Quality of Governance

- Studies from Panchayati Raj institutions show:



- Greater focus on **health, education, water, and welfare**
- Improved responsiveness to grassroots issues

### 3. Strengthening Democracy

- A democracy is truly representative only when:
  - Decision-making bodies reflect social diversity
  - Marginalised voices are included

### 4. Role Model Effect

- Increased representation:
  - Inspires political participation among women
  - Breaks stereotypes about leadership roles

### Global Perspective

Many countries have adopted gender quotas:

- Rwanda → Over 60% women in Parliament
- Sweden → Strong party-based quotas
- Norway → Balanced representation

These examples show that **institutional mechanisms can accelerate gender parity.**

### Concerns and Criticisms

#### 1. Delayed Implementation

- Linking the Act to delimitation may postpone its actual enforcement.

#### 2. Proxy Representation

- Risk of **“sarpanch pati”** phenomenon:
  - Male relatives exercising real power

#### 3. Lack of OBC Sub-Quota

- Debate over inclusion of backward-class women

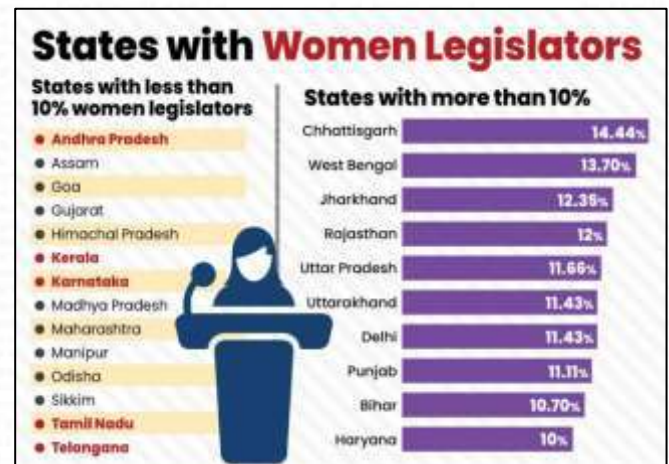
#### 4. Merit vs Reservation Debate

- Critics argue reservation may undermine merit
- However, this ignores structural disadvantages women face



### Way Forward

- **Timely Implementation**
  - Fast-track Census and delimitation
- **Political Party Reforms**
  - Mandatory ticket quotas for women
- **Capacity Building**
  - Training, leadership development, financial support
- **Addressing Social Barriers**
  - Education, awareness, and gender sensitisation
- **Ensuring Effective Participation**
  - Prevent proxy politics through legal safeguards



**Q. “Women’s reservation in legislatures is essential for achieving substantive democracy in India.” Discuss in the context of the Women’s Reservation Act, 2023, with special reference to Assam.**

### Introduction

- Substantive democracy = **representation + participation**, not just voting rights
- Women ≈ 48% population but only ~14% in Lok Sabha → **democratic deficit**

### Women’s Reservation Act, 2023

- Provides **33% reservation** in:



- Lok Sabha
- State Assemblies
- Includes **SC/ST sub-quota**
- Linked to **delimitation (delay concern)**
- Objective: **correct structural barriers**

### Need for Reservation

- Patriarchal norms limit women's entry
- Political parties give **fewer tickets**
- Lack of resources, networks, funding
- Ensures **minimum critical mass** in decision-making

### Assam: Status of Women's Representation

- 1952: **3 women MLAs**
- 2011 (highest): **14 (~11%)**
- 2021: **only 6 MLAs**
- Never crossed **~11% representation**
- Only woman CM:
  - Syeda Anwara Taimur
- Parties field **<10% women candidates**, rarely in safe seats

### Challenges

- Implementation delay (delimitation)
- Risk of **proxy representation**
- Reservation alone ≠ empowerment

### Way Forward

- Ensure **timely implementation**
- Mandate **party-level ticket quotas**
- Leadership training & funding support
- Promote women from **local bodies to Assembly**

## Silpi Sadhana Award 2026

### Syllabus - Prelims

#### About Bhabakanta Saikia

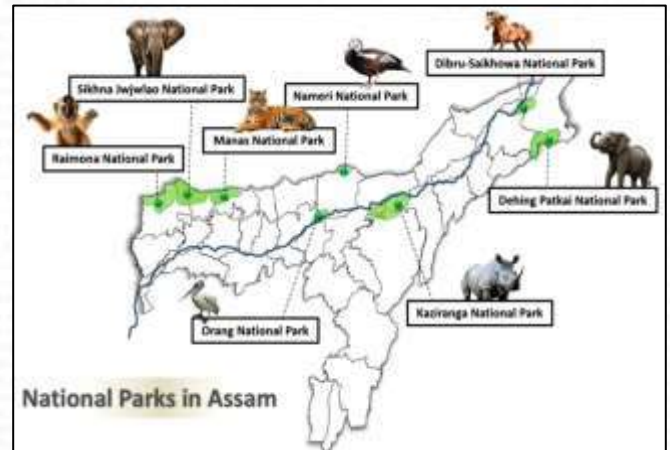
- A noted **visual artist and painter from Golaghat, Assam**
- Currently a **teacher at Golaghat Charu Kala Vidyalaya**
- Known for:
  - **Figurative and contemporary painting**
  - Preservation of **Assamese cultural heritage through art**
  - Connecting **local artistic traditions with national platforms**
- Plays a key role in **mentoring young artists**

## Assam's Tiger Reserves

### Syllabus - GS Paper III/IV

### Context

- Assam has **4 Tiger Reserves (all National Parks)**:
  - Kaziranga National Park (2006)
  - Manas National Park (2007-08)
  - Orang National Park (2016)
  - Nameri National Park (1999-2000)
- These reserves are facing **acute financial stress** due to:
  - Delayed and reduced central funding
  - Budget cuts under **Project Tiger & Elephant**



### Project Tiger & Elephant

- Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS)
- Implemented through:
  - National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)
- Objectives:
  - Tiger conservation
  - Habitat protection
  - Human-wildlife conflict mitigation
  - Biodiversity preservation
- In June 2023, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) officially merged **Project Tiger** and **Project Elephant** into a single division called the **Project Tiger and Elephant Division**.
- This initiative consolidates funding and administrative oversight under a unified centrally sponsored scheme.
- States now submit a consolidated Annual Plan of Operation (APO) for both species rather than separate proposals.





**Nature of the Crisis**

Tiger Reserve	Required Funds	Sanctioned	Released
Kaziranga	~₹50 crore	₹18 crore	< ₹8 crore
Manas	₹4.87 crore	N.A.	~₹50 lakh
Orang	₹2.42 crore	N.A.	~₹16 lakh
Nameri	Not specified	N.A.	Inadequate

Reserve	Outstanding Dues
Manas	Fuel bills ~₹60 lakh
Orang	Fuel bills ~₹15 lakh

**Key Issue: Even sanctioned funds are not fully released**

**Budget Cut**

- Budget reduced by **47%**:
  - BE 2025–26: ₹290 crore
  - RE 2025–26: ₹153.04 crore



**Reasons for Fund Crunch**

**1. Administrative & Technical Transition**

- Shift to:
  - **SNA-SPARSH payment architecture**
  - SNA-SPARSH stands for System for Payments and Reporting Across Sectors Holistically
  - Launched in 2024, it replaces **advance fund releases** with a demand-driven digital payment system, ensuring that public money moves only when an actual expenditure is approved.
- Problems:
  - Delays in fund release
  - Reconciliation issues
  - Administrative bottlenecks



**4. Reduced Budget Allocation**

- Fiscal compression at Union level
- Environmental schemes often face cuts

**5. Ground-Level Impact**

**A. Operational Disruptions**

- Severe shortage for:
  - Daily operations
  - New conservation works
  - Staff wages



**Special Case Analysis**

**Kaziranga Advantage**

- Generates **own revenue (tourism, fees)**
- Less affected compared to others

**Worst Affected**

- Orang & Manas:
  - No strong independent revenue base
  - Highly dependent on central funds

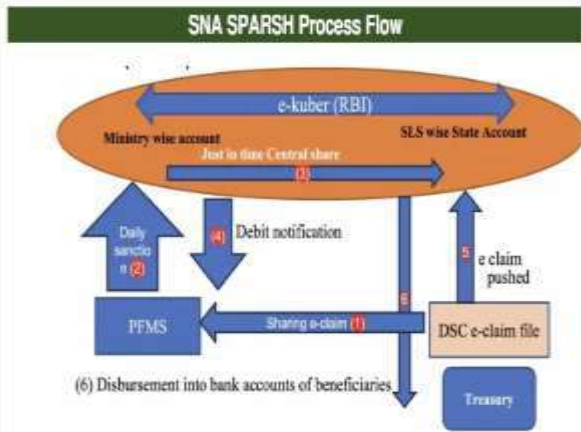
**2. Merger Issues**

- Integration of:
  - Project Tiger + Project Elephant
- Result:
  - Transitional confusion
  - Slower fund flow

**3. Perception of Low Expenditure**

- Centre cited:
  - “Low pace of expenditure”
- Reality:
  - Caused by **systemic delays**, not inefficiency

Public Financial Management System - PFMS  
Dr. G. K. Saha, Comptroller General of Accounts, Ministry of Finance





## Way Forward

### Short-Term

- Immediate release of pending funds
- Emergency financial support to worst-hit parks

### Medium-Term

- Streamline SNASPARSH implementation
- Decentralize fund disbursement mechanisms

### Long-Term

- Create:
  - Dedicated Wildlife Conservation Fund
- Increase:
  - Budget allocation for Project Tiger & Elephant
- Encourage:
  - Public-private partnerships
  - Eco-tourism revenue models



## Institutional Reforms

- Strengthen role of:
  - National Tiger Conservation Authority
- Improve:
  - Monitoring & accountability

**Q. Budgetary constraints and administrative inefficiencies are undermining wildlife conservation in India. Examine with reference to tiger reserves in Assam.**

- Assam hosts key tiger reserves like Kaziranga National Park and Manas National Park. Recent funding shortages under Project Tiger & Elephant have exposed structural issues in conservation financing.

### Causes

#### 1. Administrative Bottlenecks

- Transition to **SNASPARSH system**
- Delays in fund release & reconciliation

#### 2. Policy-Level Issues

- Merger of Project Tiger & Elephant
- Reduced prioritisation in Union Budget

#### 3. Misinterpretation of Low Spending

- "Low expenditure" used as justification for cuts
- Actually due to procedural delays

### Impacts

#### A. Operational

- Delay in staff salaries
- Pending contractor payments
- Fuel shortages

#### B. Conservation

- Weak anti-poaching patrols
- Disruption in habitat restoration
- Increased human-wildlife conflict

#### C. Institutional

- Weakening of National Tiger Conservation Authority effectiveness

### Way Forward:

- Release pending funds
- Emergency support for worst-hit reserves
- Streamline SNASPARSH
- Increase budget allocation
- Diversify funding (eco-tourism, PPP)

## Meghalaya Official Languages

### Syllabus - GS Paper III/IV

#### 1. Context

- The Meghalaya Cabinet approved an ordinance declaring:



- Khasi
- Garo
- as **official languages of Meghalaya**, apart from **English (previously only English was the official language)**.
- Cabinet passed the **Meghalaya Official Languages Ordinance 2026** by repealing the **State Language Act, 2005**.



## 2. Key Features of the Ordinance

### A. Official Language Status

- Khasi and Garo to be used in:
  - Government communication
  - State legislature proceedings

### B. Legislative Changes

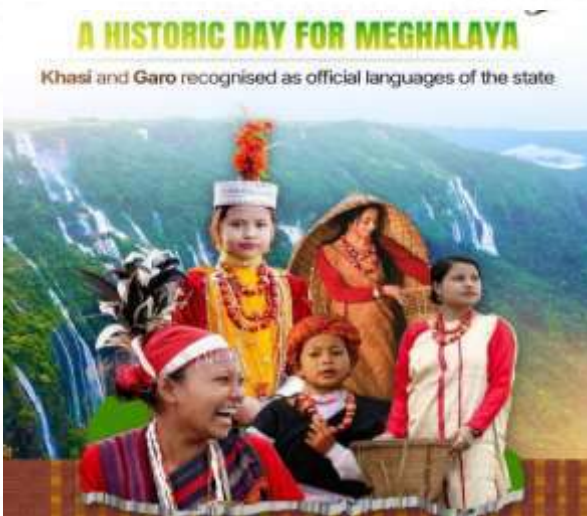
- Amendment proposed to:
  - Meghalaya State Legislature (Continuance of the English Language) Act, 1980

### C. Administrative Expansion

- Use in:
  - Official documents
  - Governance processes

### D. Education & Examinations

- Competitive exams to be conducted in:
  - Khasi
  - Garo
  - English



One of the driving forces behind declaration of Khasi and Garos as the official languages is also to put pressure on the Central Government to recognise these two languages under the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

## Official Languages in Assam

### 1. Constitutional Background

- Language policy in India governed by:
  - Article 345 of the Constitution of India → State legislature can adopt any language as official language
- **Assam Official Language Act, 1960**
  - Key legislation governing language use in Assam
  - Declared:
    - **Assamese** as the official language of the State



## Present Official Languages

### A. Assamese (Primary Official Language)

- Used across most of the State for:
  - Administration
  - Government communication

### B. Bengali (Barak Valley)

- Official language in:
  - Cachar
  - Karimganj
  - Hailakandi

### C. Bodo

- Recognised as official language in:
  - Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR)
- Linked to:
  - Bodoland Territorial Council



**D. English**

- Used for:
  - Higher administration
  - Judiciary
  - Official communication alongside regional languages

**Linguistic Map of Assam**



**Prelims Practice Question**

**Q.** With reference to the official language policy of Assam, consider the following statements:

1. Assamese is the sole official language of the entire State.
2. Bengali is recognised as an official language in Barak Valley.
3. Bodo is an official language in the Bodoland Territorial Region.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: b

**Sol: Statement 1:** Assam has a multilingual structure, not a single-language system.

**Kamrup District Day**

**Syllabus - GS Paper I/V**

**Kamrup District Day Celebration**

**Key Facts**

- **Event:** Kamrup District Day
- **Location:** Kamrup

**Objective:** To commemorate the district's historical legacy and cultural heritage

- **Organised by:** District Administration

**Etymology of 'Kamrup'**

- Derived from **mythological and historical roots**
- Associated with **ancient Kamarupa kingdom** (linked to Kamakhya tradition)



**Historical Significance of Kamrup**

- **Ancient & Medieval Importance**
  - One of the **earliest historical regions of Assam** (ancient *Kamarupa*)
  - Mentioned in **epigraphic records** like:
    - **Kanai Boroshi Bowa rock inscription** (important early inscription of Assam)
- **Ahom & Military History**
  - Site of the historic Battle of Saraighat
  - Leadership of Lachit Borphukan:
    - Symbol of **Assamese resistance and nationalism**



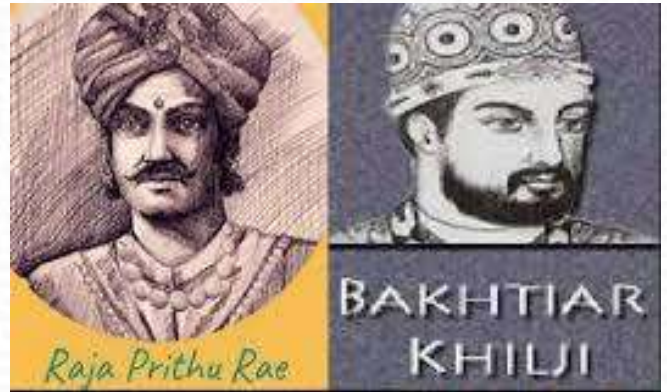


**Kanai Boroshi Bowa rock inscription**

- This area appears to be of significant strategic importance as is revealed by three important rock inscriptions – all relating to military victories of regional powers over foreign invaders that attacked Assam

**Rock Inscription 1 - This inscription records the destruction of the Turks who invaded Kamrupa in 1206 A.D.**

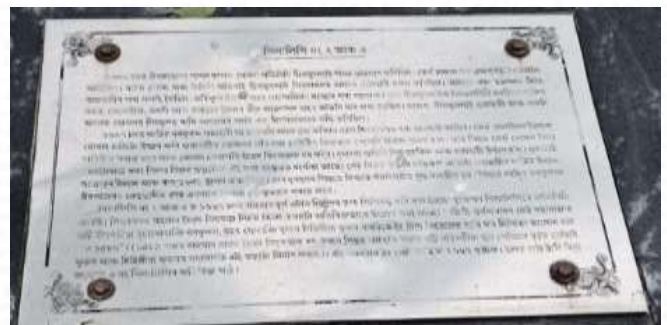
- Muhammad-Ibn-Bakhtiyar Khilji an intrepid and bold Turko-Afghan leader after conquering Bihar and Bengal invaded Assam with an Army of 12,000 horsemen in 1206.
  - In Bihar he had destroyed the World famous Nalanda University and burnt its Library.
- King Prithu of Kamrupa decided to lay an ambush near this site.
  - The central arch of the stone bridge on Barnadi was destroyed.
  - All boats were removed.
  - Prithu struck when the Turko-Afghan army was trying to cross the river.
  - The invading army was decimated.
  - Most of its soldiers and horses were drowned in the River. Bakhtiyar Khilji with a handful of horsemen escaped but was killed soon after.
- This account is given in Tabakat-i-Nasiri by a contemporary chronicler Minhajuddin Abu-Umar-i-Uzman.



**Rock Inscription 2 –**

- This inscription records that the Ministers Burah Gohain, Borphukan, Brahat Gohain Phukan and Dihingiya Sandikai Phukan of Swarganarayan Deo (Chakra Dhvaj Singha) caused the erection of a **Rampart** (a high thick wall) here in 1665 A.D. after having defeated and slain Syed Sana and Syed Firoz.

**Rock Inscription 3 ~ This inscription records that the Ministers Burah Gohain, Borphukan, Brahat Gohain Phukan and Dihingiya Sandikai Phukan of Swarganarayan Deo (Chakra Dhvaj Singha) caused the erection of a Rampart (a high thick wall) here in 1667 A.D.**



**Cultural & Heritage Significance**

**Important Sites**

- Hajo
  - Includes Hayagriva Madhab Temple
  - Powa Mecca
- Chamaria Satra (established in 1588)



- Sualkuchi – “Manchester of the East”



**Q. Examine the historical and cultural significance of Kamrup district in Assam. How does local commemoration contribute to heritage preservation?**

**Model Pointers**

- Ancient Kamarupa – **political & cultural centre**
- Military legacy – Battle of Saraighat
- Colonial resistance – role in freedom struggle
- Cultural diversity – temples, satras, Islamic sites (Hajo)
- Economic traditions – silk (Sualkuchi), bell metal craft
- District Day:

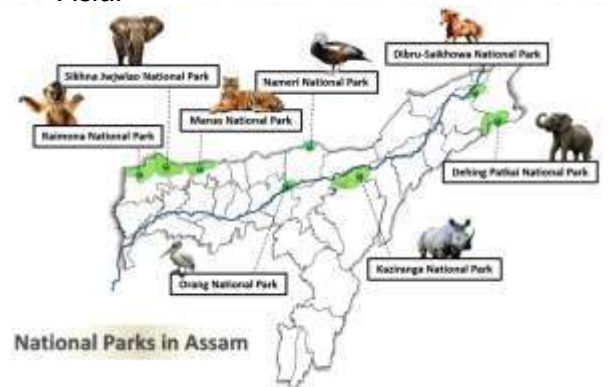
- Enhances **public historical consciousness**
- Promotes **community participation**
- Aids **sustainable cultural tourism**

**Cyrtodactylus Raimonaensis**

**Syllabus - GS Paper III/IV**

**Current News**

- Recently, a new species of bent-toed gecko has been discovered in Assam and researchers named it as “**Cyrtodactylus raimonaensis**”.
- A gecko is a small, primarily nocturnal, insectivorous lizard found in warm climates worldwide, known for specialized sticky foot pads that allow them to climb smooth surfaces like glass.
- Cyrtodactylus is a diverse genus of **Asian geckos**, commonly known as **bent-toed geckos** or bow-fingered geckos.
  - It has at least 195 described species at present, which makes it the largest of all gecko genera.
- **Bent-toed geckos (Cyrtodactylus)** are a diverse group of lizards, known for their adaptability and wide distribution across Asia.



**About Cyrtodactylus raimonaensis**

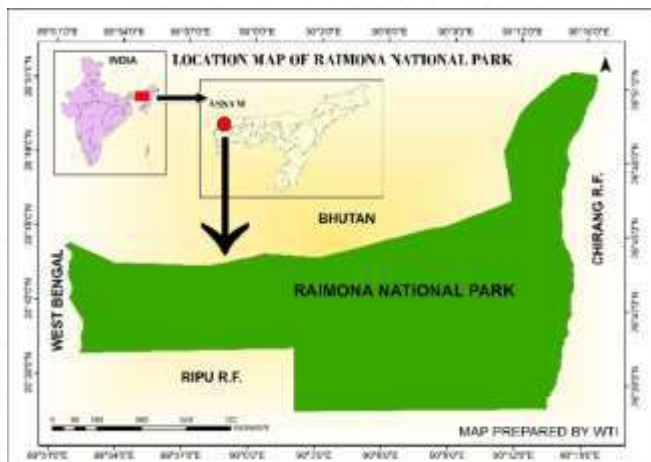
- It is a species of **bent-toed gecko**.



- It belongs to the **Cyrtodactylus** genus which is amongst the largest groups of geckos worldwide.
- It has been found near **Raimona National Park** in Kokrajhar district, Assam and named after the park itself.
- Features:
  - It exhibits a moderate adult size, with a maximum **snout-vent length of 71.1 mm**.
  - It is characterized by **rounded, bluntly conical, and weakly keeled dorsal tubercles**.
  - This specific kind is known for their **curved toes** that help them grip surfaces with ease.
  - These **'bent' or 'bow-fingered' toes**—an evolutionary adaptation that allows it to navigate the vertical, moss-covered rock faces and ancient tree trunks of the region's tropical evergreen forests.

### Raimona National Park

- Location: It is located in the **north-western part of Assam**.
- It lies along the **India-Bhutan border** and is situated at the foothills of the Eastern Himalayas.
- It forms a transboundary landscape with **Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary** and **Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park**.
- Vegetation: Moist Sal forests, Sub-Himalayan semi-evergreen forests, Moist mixed deciduous forests, Savannah forests.
- Flora: Many orchid species and Riverine grasslands
- Fauna: It is famous for the Golden Langur, Asian Elephant and Bengal Tiger



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Consider the following statements regarding *Cyrtodactylus raimonaensis*:

1. It is a species of bent-toed gecko belonging to one of the largest gecko genera in the world.
2. It was discovered near Raimona National Park and named after the park.
3. It is characterized by straight toes adapted for burrowing in dry habitats.
4. It exhibits a moderate body size with distinct dorsal tubercles.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Ans: b

**Sol: Statement 3:** Has curved (bent) toes, not straight; adapted for climbing, not burrowing.

### Advanced ATC at Dibrugarh

#### Syllabus - GS Paper III/IV

#### Context

- Dibrugarh Airport has started **parallel operations** of:
  - Air Traffic Control (ATC) &
  - Communication, Navigation and Surveillance (CNS) systems
- Conducted at a newly built **ATC-cum-Technical Block**
- **Key Features**
  - Project cost: **₹37 crore**
  - Equipped with:
    - Advanced surveillance systems
    - Modern communication technologies
    - Improved navigation support





## Components Explained

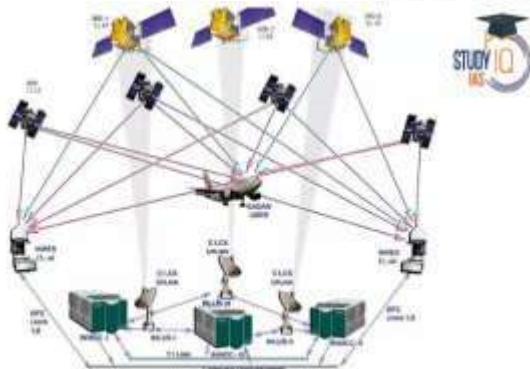
### A. Air Traffic Control (ATC)

- Manages aircraft movement:
  - On ground
  - In airspace
- Ensures safe distance between aircraft

### B. CNS Systems

- **Communication:** Controller–pilot interaction
- **Navigation:** Aircraft route guidance
- **Surveillance:** Real-time tracking of aircraft

*Airports Authority of India uses GAGAN (GPS Aided GEO Augmented Navigation) - Improves navigation over Indian airspace*



**GAGAN (GPS AIDED GEO AUGMENTED NAVIGATION)**

## Air Traffic Control (ATC): Origins & Evolution

### 1. Early Origins (1920s)

- **Beginning:** Early 1920s in the UK
- First control tower:
  - Croydon Airport, UK (25 Feb 1920)
- **Key Personalities:**
  - Jimmy Jeffs
    - Issued first ATC license (1922)
  - Archie League
    - Appointed in 1929 at St. Louis Airport
    - Used **flags for signalling**
- **Features of Early ATC:**
  - Visual signalling (flags, lamps)
  - No electronic systems
  - Ground-based guidance only



### Introduction of Radio & Radar

- **Radio Communication (1930)**
  - First used
    - Cleveland, Ohio, United States
  - Enabled:
    - Two-way communication with pilots
    - Real-time instructions

### Radar Technology (1946)

- First civilian radar installation:
  - Indianapolis International Airport, Indiana, United States
- **Impact:**

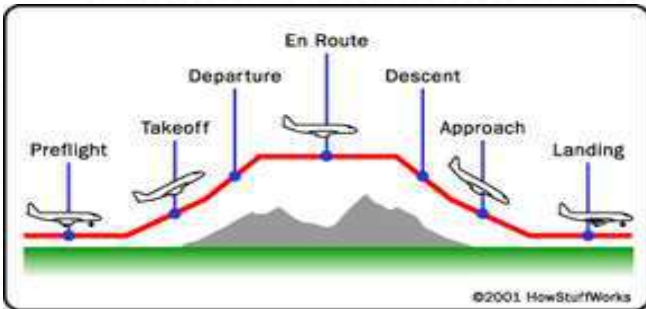


- Aircraft tracking even in:
  - Poor visibility
  - Night conditions
- Shift from passive monitoring → active control

## Flight Profile & ATC Process

### Flight Stages

- A typical flight follows 6 stages:
  - **Preflight** → Checks, flight plan filing, taxi
  - **Takeoff** → Aircraft accelerates and lifts off
  - **Departure** → Climbs to cruising altitude
  - **En route** → Travels across airspace sectors
  - **Descent** → Starts coming down near destination
  - **Approach & Landing** → Aligns with runway and lands



Aircraft uses **transponder** → sends flight data to radar

## How Air Traffic Control (ATC) Functions

### 1. Preflight Stage (On Ground)

- **ATC Role**
  - Receives and approves the flight plan
  - Generates tracking data (flight progress strip)

### 2. Takeoff Stage

- **ATC Role**
  - Controls runway operations
  - Maintains safe separation between aircraft

### 3. Departure Stage

- **ATC Role**
  - Guides aircraft after takeoff
  - Assigns heading, speed, and climb rate

### 4. En Route Stage (Cruise Phase)

- **ATC Role**
  - Continuous monitoring using radar/transponder

- Maintains minimum separation between aircraft
- Adjusts route, altitude, and speed based on conditions

### 5. Descent Stage

#### ATC Role

- Initiates landing sequence
- Instructs aircraft to reduce altitude and speed

### 6. Approach Stage

#### ATC Role

- Aligns aircraft with runway
- Guides precise descent

### 7. Landing and Taxi

#### ATC Role

- Tower Controller: Gives landing clearance
- Ground Controller: Guides aircraft to gate

## Significance

### A. Aviation Safety

- Better real-time monitoring
- Reduced risk of collisions

### B. Operational Efficiency

- Streamlined air traffic flow
- Reduced delays

### C. Regional Importance

- Strengthens Northeast as an aviation hub
- Supports increasing air traffic demand

### D. Strategic Value

- Enhances connectivity in remote region
- Improves disaster response and logistics



*Transition from legacy ATC to modern CNS-integrated system marks a major upgrade in aviation infrastructure in Northeast India*



**Prelims Practice Question**

**Q.** With reference to aviation infrastructure, consider the following statements:

1. Air Traffic Control (ATC) is responsible for managing aircraft movement both on the ground and in the air.
2. Communication, Navigation and Surveillance (CNS) systems are used only for military aviation.
3. Parallel operations in aviation refer to simultaneous functioning of old and new systems during transition.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 2:** CNS used in civil + military aviation.

**Kalicharan Brahma Award**

**Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper V**

**What is the News About?**

- The Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma Trust has announced the recipients of the 8th Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma Award (2026).

**About the Award**

- Named after:
  - Kalicharan Brahma
- Given for:
  - Contributions to **education, society, and public life**
- Presented on:
  - **Birth anniversary of Kalicharan Brahma (April 18)**



**Who are the awardees?**

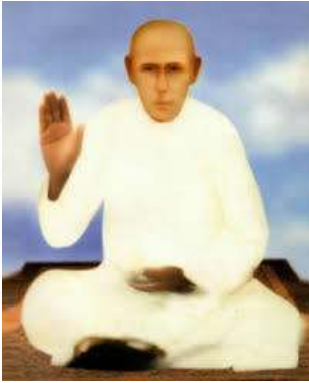
- **Ramesh C Bhardwaj**
  - A renowned scholar of:
    - Vedic studies
    - Mimamsa philosophy
    - Indian knowledge systems
  - Former:
    - Head, Department of Sanskrit (University of Delhi)
    - Vice-Chancellor, Maharshi Valmiki Sanskrit University
- **Karendra Basumatary (Posthumous award)**
  - Former President of:
    - All Bodo Students Union
  - Former MLA (Assam Assembly)
  - Known for:
    - Contribution to Bodo community welfare
    - Socio-political leadership

**Kalicharan Brahma**

- Kalicharan Brahma was a **prominent social and religious reformer of the Bodo community in Assam** during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He is widely regarded as a **key figure in the socio-cultural awakening of the Bodos**.
- **Founder of Brahma Dharma (Bodo Reform Movement)**
- Introduced a **reformed monotheistic faith** among the Bodos
  - Opposed:
    - Superstitions
    - Animal sacrifice
  - Promoted:
    - Simplicity in worship
    - Moral and ethical living



- Education among Bodos



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to the Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma Award 2026, consider the following statements:

- It is presented by the Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma Trust.
- The award is given exclusively for contributions to religious reform movements.
- It is presented on the birth anniversary of Kalicharan Brahma.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol:** Award recognises broader contributions (education, society, public life), not just religion.

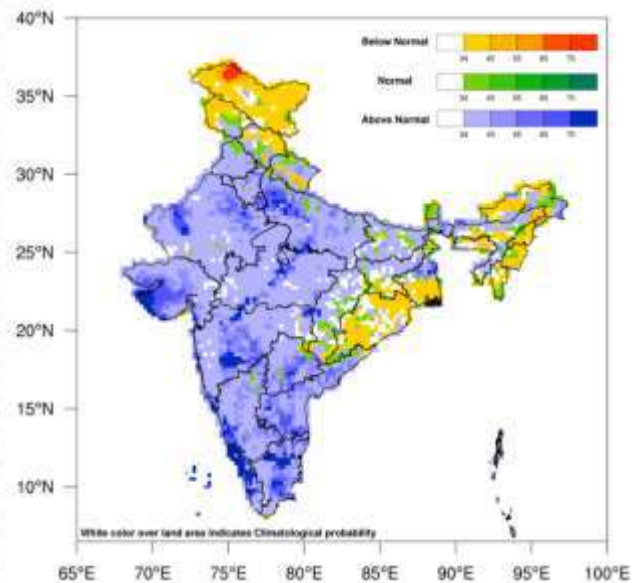
## IMD's Monsoon Forecast

### Syllabus - Prelims/ GS Paper V

#### Current News

- After five consecutive years of below-normal monsoon rainfall, the Northeast may see a good monsoon season (June-September) this year.
- The recent forecast by the **India Meteorological Department** indicates a **complex and uneven monsoon pattern**:
  - Indian monsoon this year : **~92% of Long Period Average (LPA)**, so below normal
  - Northeast India: **normal to above-normal rainfall in parts**
  - Assam: **mixed scenario**
    - Some regions → above-normal rainfall
    - Western & Eastern Assam → **deficit rainfall likely**

Tertile probability rainfall forecast for 2024 southwest monsoon season



LPA is the average rainfall recorded over a specific region (or countrywide) for a given interval—such as a month or season—calculated over a 50-year period

#### Climate Drivers

- El Niño
  - Warms Pacific Ocean
  - Weakens Indian monsoon → **reduces rainfall**
- Indian Ocean Dipole
  - Positive IOD → Warmer western Indian Ocean



- Can enhance Indian monsoon rainfall

**The Paradox: Less Rainfall, More Flooding**

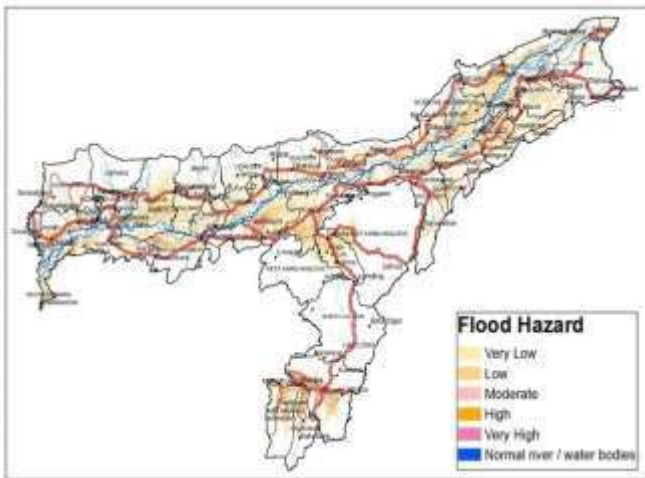
- Despite **five consecutive years of below-normal monsoon**, Assam has seen that reduced rainfall has not translated into reduced flooding.
- **Increasing flood inundation**
  - 2020: ~12.86 lakh hectares
  - 2022: ~12.15 lakh hectares
- Flood-affected districts: **30+ annually (2017–2023)**

This clearly shows:

- **Floods are no longer rainfall-driven alone**  
They are **structural and ecological in nature**

**Geographical Vulnerability of Assam**

- Dominated by the **Brahmaputra River**
- Features:
  - **Braided river system**
  - **Very high sediment load** (one of the highest globally)
  - Frequent **channel shifting & erosion**



**Environmental Degradation: Root Cause**

**a) Loss of Wetlands**

- Assam historically had numerous wetlands (beels)
- **~80% of 37 major wetlands lost**

**Impact:**

- Reduced natural water absorption
- Faster runoff → urban & rural flooding

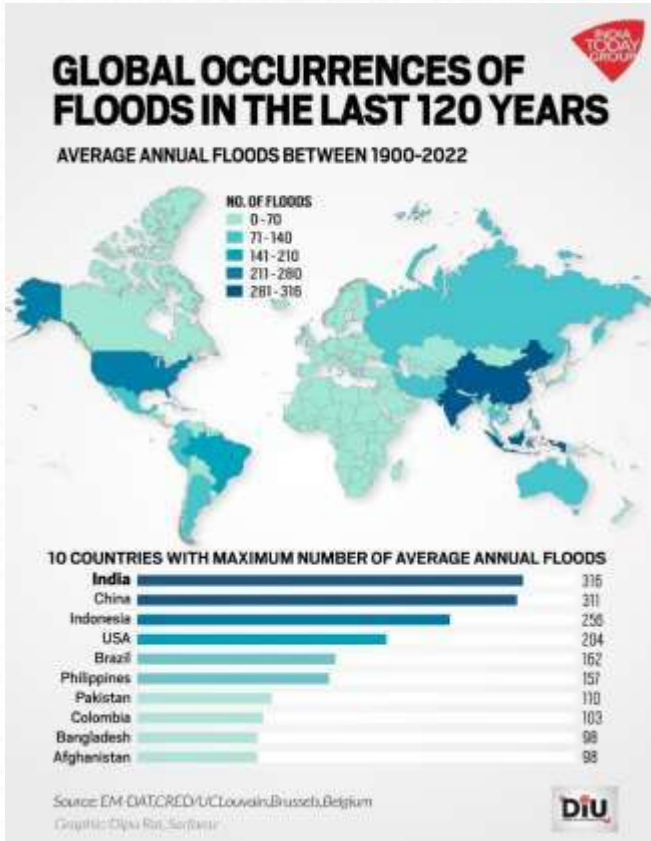
**b) Deforestation & Land Use Change**

- Hill cutting, urbanisation, encroachment
- Increased soil erosion → more silt in rivers

**c) Sedimentation**

- Heavy silt deposition in floodplains (e.g., Dhemaji, Lakhimpur)
- Permanent damage to fertile land





- Fragmented approach:
  - Each year → new proposals
  - No continuity or learning

### Human & Economic Impact

- Loss of lives (as seen in recent Guwahati floods)
- Urban flooding due to:
  - Poor drainage
  - Open drains
- Agricultural devastation:
  - Crop loss
  - Land abandonment
- Forced migration & livelihood insecurity



### Failure of Structural Flood Control Measures

#### Current Approach

- Embankments
- Dredging
- Revetments
- Geo-textile sandbags

#### Problems

- Embankments often **breach during floods**
- Alter natural river flow → **waterlogging elsewhere**
- Dredging is **temporary and localized**



### Governance & Policy Gaps

- Lack of **long-term river basin planning**
- Poor implementation of existing policies
- No systematic **evaluation of past flood control measures**

### Need for a Paradigm Shift

#### From Flood Control → Flood Management

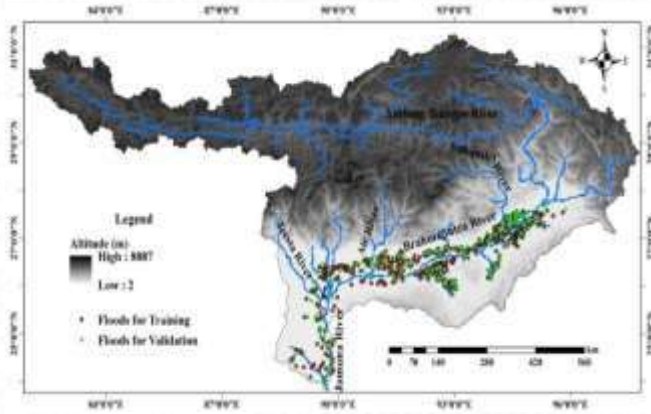
##### 1. River Basin Approach

- Integrated management of entire **Brahmaputra basin**
- Coordination with:
  - Arunachal Pradesh
  - Meghalaya
  - Neighboring countries (China, Bhutan)

##### 2. Wetland Restoration

- Revive natural drainage systems
- Protect beels and floodplains





**3. Non-Structural Measures**

- Floodplain zoning
- Early warning systems
- Climate-resilient agriculture

**4. Urban Planning Reform**

- Scientific drainage in cities like Guwahati
- Ban encroachment on wetlands

**5. Community-Based Adaptation**

- Local flood-resilient housing
- Crop diversification

**Prelims Practice Question**

**Q.** With reference to monsoon forecast in Northeast India, consider the following statements:

1. The India Meteorological Department has predicted below-normal rainfall for the entire Northeast region.
2. Some parts of Northeast India are likely to receive normal to above-normal rainfall.
3. Assam may experience spatial variation in rainfall distribution.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: b

**Sol:** IMD predicts uneven rainfall; Northeast not entirely below-normal.

**Sati Sadhani Divas**

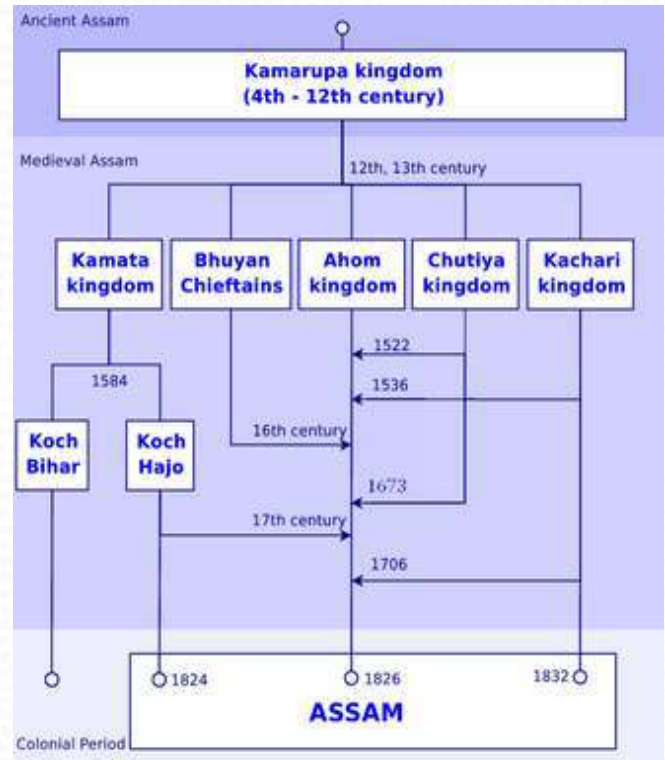
**Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper V**

**Sati Sadhani**

**Historical Context**

- The story is set in **medieval Assam**, after the decline of the **Pragjyotisha-Kamrupa kingdom**.

- Regional kingdoms emerged:
  - Chutiyas (Upper Assam)
  - Kacharis
  - Ahoms
  - Koches
- Society was largely **monarchical and patriarchal**, though women sometimes influenced governance.



**Early Life and Background**

- **Sati Sadhani** was born in Sadiya to King **Dhirnarayan (Dharmadhvajpal)** and Queen Srikanti.
- Named "**Sadhani**" as she was born after her parents performed religious penance.

**Sadhani's Swayamvar**

- Condition: groom must shoot a running squirrel.
- A cowherd boy, Nitipal, succeeded and married her.
- This reflects:
  - Merit over birth
  - Folk traditions of Assam





### Political Role and Governance

- **Husband Nitipal (Chandranarayan):**
  - Inefficient ruler
  - Removed experienced ministers
- **Consequences:**
  - Administrative breakdown
  - Internal rebellion
- **Sati Sadhani:**
  - Intervened in governance
  - Took steps to stabilise the kingdom



### Conflict with the Ahoms (1524)

- The Ahom Kingdom attacked due to:
  - Weak leadership
  - Internal instability
- Attack occurred during the **Bihu festival**, when the kingdom was unprepared.

### Leadership in War

- Sati Sadhani organised resistance:
  - Formed a **female force of about 120 women**
  - Assisted in warfare

- Used hill-based defence tactics (rolling stones, etc.)
- Demonstrates:
  - Military leadership
  - Active role of women in conflict



### Defeat and Collapse

- **Causes:**
  - Internal betrayal by former ministers
  - Strategic deception by the Ahoms
- **Outcome:**
  - King Nitipal and his son were killed
  - Chutia kingdom collapsed

### Sacrifice

- The Ahoms proposed marriage with their governor (Sadiyakhowa Gohain).
- Sati Sadhani refused surrender.
- She chose death over dishonour and jumped from **Chandragiri Hills (1524)**.



*CM Himanta Biswa Sarma unveils grand statue of Birangana Sati Sadhani at Sarupathar, Golaghat*



### Significance and Legacy

- Symbol of:
  - Courage
  - Loyalty
  - Patriotism
  - Self-respect

### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to Sati Sadhani, consider the following statements:

1. She belonged to the Chutia kingdom of medieval Assam.
2. She married a cowherd boy named Nitipal through a swayamvar.
3. She surrendered to the Ahoms after the fall of her kingdom.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol:** She chose death over surrender.

## Assam Tea Auction

### Syllabus - Prelims/ GS Paper V

#### What is the Current News

**1. Core Issue: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry**, through a gazette notification mandated:

- The Tea Board of India has **re-enforced a rule (Feb 2026 circular)**:
  - At least **50% of tea must be sold through public auctions**
  - **100% of dust tea** must also go through auctions

**Tea bodies from Assam & West Bengal have:**

- **Written to PM** demanding rollback/modification
- Called the rule **“burdensome and impractical”**



*Dust grade tea is the finest, smallest particle grade of tea, often produced as a byproduct of higher-grade leaf teas*

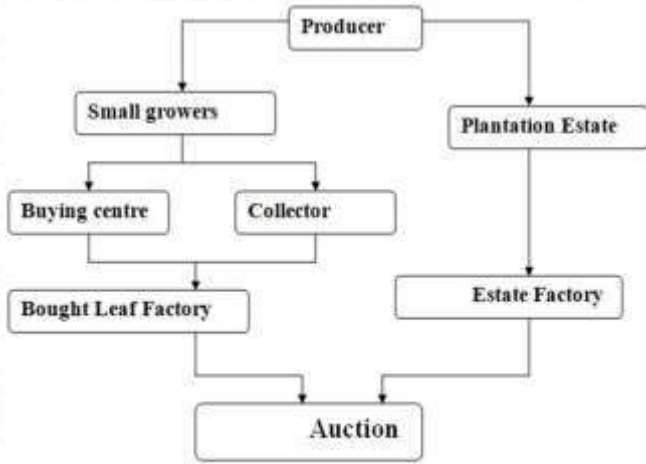


#### Why are they opposing it?

- Auction system:
  - Adds **~₹10/kg cost (~5% of price)**
    - transaction fees and brokerage charges.
  - Causes **delays in selling**
- Reduces flexibility:
  - Cannot directly sell to buyers (ex-factory)
- Impacts already low profit margins
- There are mainly three main modes of disposal of tea.
- These are **(a) through auction (b) ex-factory or ex-garden sale and (c) forward contract** (a tea packer, blender, or trader)

*Public auction system involves higher transaction costs and longer selling cycles compared to ex-factory sales.*





Primary Marketing Chain of Tea

## Assam Tea Industry Under Stress: A Multi-Dimensional Crisis

### 1. Importance of the Tea Industry

- Assam produces ~50% of India's tea
- Major export destinations:
  - Middle East (≈ 40% demand)
  - Europe, North Africa
- Key stakeholders:
  - Large estates
  - Small tea growers
  - Exporters

### 2. Tea Exports :

- India achieved **record exports (~280 million kg in 2025)**
- Strong demand from:
  - Iraq
  - UAE
  - Iran (via Dubai routing)



### Why This Issue Has Become Serious Now

- Because it is happening **at a bad time**:
- (a) **Export Crisis**
  - Freight cost:

- Middle East → up to **10 times**
- Trade disruptions due to geopolitical tensions
- (b) **Rising Costs + Low Prices**
  - Production cost ↑
  - Tea prices not increasing proportionately
- (c) **Structural Stress**
  - Tea gardens being sold
  - Small growers in losses
  - Climate change affecting production



### 4. Structural Issues in the Tea Industry

#### A. Rising Cost, Low Returns

- Increasing:
  - Labour cost
  - Input cost (fertilisers, pesticides)
- But:
  - Prices remain **non-remunerative**

#### B. Crisis in Small Tea Growers

- Once thriving, now:
  - Operating at losses
  - Highly vulnerable to market fluctuations

#### C. Sale of Tea Gardens

- Large companies selling gardens
- Indicates:
  - Long-term **profitability concerns**





### Policy Issue: Compulsory Auction System

#### Government Rule

- At least **50% tea must be sold via public auctions**
- **100% dust tea** via auctions

#### Problems with Auction System

- Higher transaction cost:
  - ~₹10/kg (~5% of price)
- Longer selling cycle
- Less flexibility compared to direct (ex-factory) sales

#### Producers argue:

- Violates **freedom of trade**
- Against **Ease of Doing Business**



#### Industry Demand

- Withdraw/modify mandatory auction rule
- Allow **market-driven choice of sale channel**

### Climate Change & Production Challenges

- **Weather Extremes**
- Excess rainfall
- Prolonged droughts

#### Deeper Structural Problems

- Lack of **innovation and branding**
- Limited **value addition**
- Low domestic consumption
- Overdependence on bulk exports



### Way Forward: Reviving the Tea Industry

#### 1. Policy Reforms

- Relax compulsory auction rules
- Promote **ease of doing business**

#### 2. Export Diversification

- Reduce dependence on Middle East
- Explore new markets (Africa, SE Asia)

#### 3. Branding & Value Addition

- Promote **Assam tea as premium brand**
- Increase packaged & specialty tea exports

#### 4. Domestic Consumption

- Expand internal market demand
- Awareness & marketing campaigns

#### 5. Tea Tourism

- Promote tea estates as tourist destinations
- Boosts:
  - Revenue
  - Brand visibility

#### 6. Support to Small Growers

- Financial support
- Market linkages
- Technology adoption

#### 7. Climate Resilience

- Develop drought/flood-resistant varieties
- Sustainable cultivation practices

### Conclusion

- The Assam tea industry is facing a **triple crisis**:
  - **External shocks** (freight, geopolitics)



- **Structural weaknesses** (low profitability, climate risks)
- **Policy constraints** (auction system)



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to the recent circular issued by the Tea Board of India, consider the following statements:

1. It mandates that at least 50% of tea production must be sold through public auctions.
2. It requires 100% of dust tea to be sold through auctions.
3. The rule has been newly introduced for the first time in 2026.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol:** Rule existed earlier but is now being strictly enforced.



## MAY MONTH

### Dhubri Migrant Labours

#### Syllabus - GS Paper III

#### Current News

- **47 migrant labourers from Dhubri (Assam)** were rescued from a brick kiln in Bihar.
- They had migrated **7 months ago in search of work** but were:
  - Forced into **bonded labour**
  - **Not paid wages**
  - Subjected to **violence, intimidation, and confinement**
- **Women and girls faced sexual abuse**
- Workers lived in:
  - **Poor shelter**
  - **Inadequate food conditions**
- The case exposes a **systemic racket of exploitation**, not an isolated incident.



#### Concept: Bonded Labour

- A system where a person is forced to work to repay a **debt/advance**, often:
  - Without wages
  - With restricted freedom

#### Issues Highlighted in the Article

##### (a) Vulnerability of Migrant Workers

- Migrants lack:
  - Bargaining power
  - Legal awareness
  - Social protection
- Once trapped, **escape becomes nearly impossible**

##### (b) Informal Sector Problems

- No job contracts
- No union protection
- Seasonal and scattered employment

- Weak regulation
- (c) **Governance Failure**
  - Laws exist, but:
    - **Monitoring is weak**
    - **Enforcement is poor**
  - Possible **nexus between officials and employers**



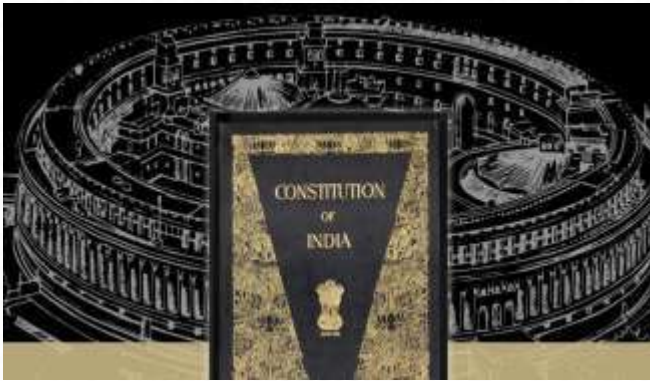
#### Constitutional & Legal Violations

- **Article 21** → Denial of dignified living conditions
- **Article 23** → Direct violation (bonded labour)
- **Article 24** → Children engaged in hazardous work (below the age of fourteen)

#### Relevant Laws

- **Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976**
  - To **abolish bonded labour system** and free all bonded labourers.
- **Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, 1979**
  - To regulate employment and protect **inter-state migrant workers**.
  - Registration, Licensing, Displacement allowance, Wage parity etc.





**Human Rights violations -**

- Conditions amount to **modern slavery**
- Violations include:
  - Right to dignity
  - Freedom from exploitation
  - Protection from sexual violence
- Linked to standards of **International Labour Organization**

**Impact of the incident**

**Physical Health**

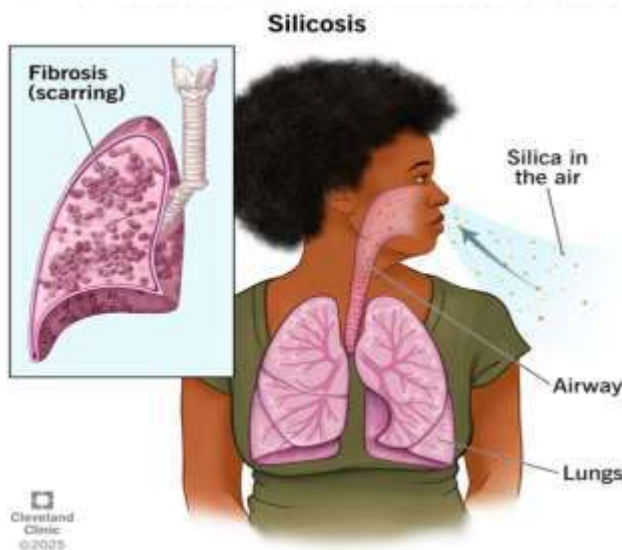
- Dust exposure → **silicosis, TB, lung diseases**
- Extreme heat → **heat stroke, dehydration**
- Heavy labour → **chronic body pain**

**Women-Specific Issues**

- Anaemia, reproductive health complications
- Sexual violence → physical & psychological trauma

**Mental Health**

- Fear, abuse → **depression, anxiety, PTSD**



**Way Forward**

**Legal & Governance**

- Strengthen enforcement of labour laws
- Regular inspections of brick kilns
- Strict punishment for offenders

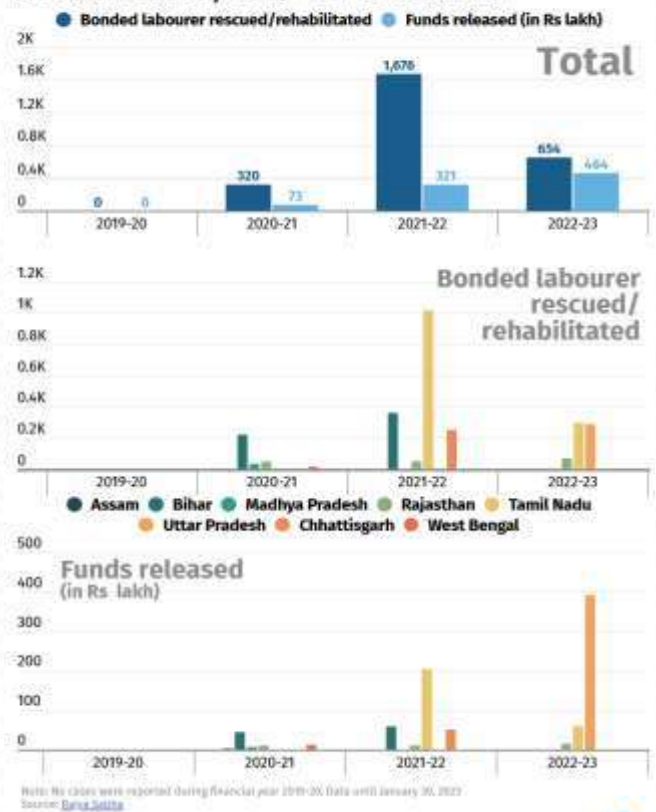
**Worker Welfare**

- Awareness of rights
- Skill development programs
- Social security coverage

**Structural Reforms**

- Formalisation of informal sector
- Strengthening trade unions

**Bonded Labourers Rescued And Rehabilitated, 2019-20 to 2022-23**



**Prelims Practice Question**

**Q.** With reference to bonded labour in India, consider the following statements:

1. Bonded labour is prohibited under the Constitution of India.
2. The Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 provides for the release and rehabilitation of bonded labourers.
3. Article 24 of the Constitution prohibits all forms of labour by children below 14 years.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only



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

Ans: a

**Sol:** Article 24 prohibits child labour only in hazardous occupations, not all forms of labour.

## Breakthrough Prize

### Syllabus - Prelims

#### Current News

- Breakthrough Prize Foundation announced 2026 laureates (April 18).
- Total prize money: **\$18.75 million**
- **6 prizes of \$3 million each** across:
  - Mathematics
  - Life Sciences
  - Fundamental Physics



#### Additional Awards

##### New Awards Introduced

- **Vera Rubin New Frontiers Prize**
  - For early-career women physicists
  - Awarded to **Carolina Figueiredo**

#### Mathematics Prize

##### Frank Merle

Contribution:

- Study of **dynamic systems (waves)**

Showed:

- Stable equations can become **infinite in finite time**



*Frank Merle (born 22 November 1962) is a French mathematician, specializing in partial differential equations and mathematical physics*

#### Life Sciences Prizes

- **CRISPR-based Therapy**
  - **Stuart Orkin & Swee Lay Thein**
  - Work on:
    - **Sickle Cell Disease**
    - **Beta Thalassemia**
  - Key Outcome:
    - Development of Casgevy
      - First CRISPR-based approved therapy
      - Edits patient's blood stem cells



#### (b) Gene Therapy for Blindness

- **Jean Bennett, Katherine High, Albert Maguire**

Achievement:

- First **FDA-approved gene-replacement therapy**
- Treats:



- **Leber Congenital Amaurosis**
- Impact:
  - Restores vision
  - Long-term effectiveness (>10 years)

**(c) Neurodegenerative Diseases**

- **Rosa Rademakers & Bryan Traynor**
- Discovery:
  - Genetic mutation causing:
    - **Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis**
    - **Frontotemporal Dementia**

**Fundamental Physics Prize**

**Awarded to Collaborations at:**

- **CERN**
- **Brookhaven National Laboratory**
- **Fermilab**

**Focus**

- Measurement of **muon magnetic moment**
- Significance:
  - Tests limits of **Standard Model of Particle Physics**
  - Indicates possibility of **new particles/forces**

**Special Prize**

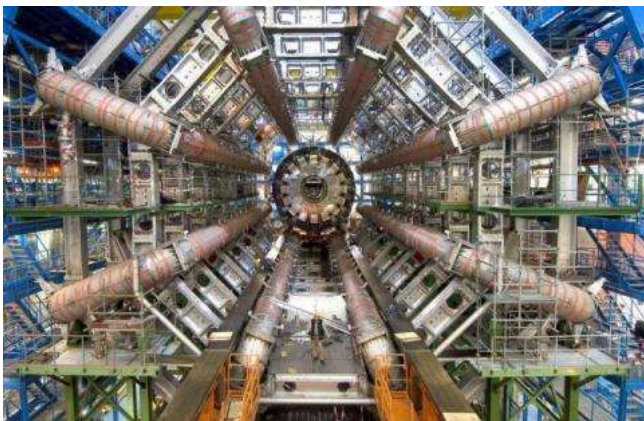
- **David Gross**
- Contribution:
  - Theory of **strong nuclear force (1973)**



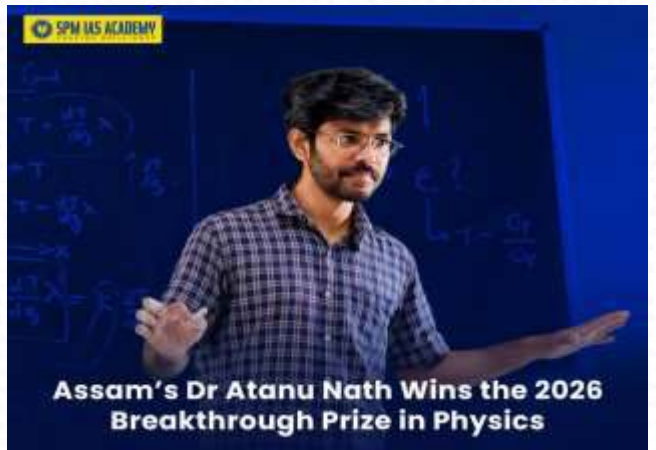
Fermilab (Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory) is the premier U.S. particle physics and accelerator laboratory located in Batavia, Illinois.



Brookhaven National Laboratory is a United States Department of Energy national laboratory located in Upton, New York.



The European Organization for Nuclear Research, known as CERN, Geneva, is an intergovernmental organization that operates the largest particle physics laboratory in the world.



Heartiest congratulations to Dr. Atanu Nath, Assistant Professor of Physics at Tihu College, Assam, on being named a recipient of the 2026 Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics—one of the world's most prestigious scientific honors.

**Why in News**

- **Dr. Atanu Nath**, Assistant Professor at Tihu College, Assam, has been awarded



the **Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics (2026)**.

- Recognised for his contribution to the **Muon g-2 Experiment**.
- He received the award along with **376 researchers**, including **11 scientists from India**.

#### About the Breakthrough Prize

- One of the **world's most prestigious science awards** (often called the "Oscars of Science").
- Founded by tech leaders including **Yuri Milner**.
- Covers fields like:
  - Fundamental Physics
  - Life Sciences
  - Mathematics
- Prize money: among the **highest globally** in science awards.

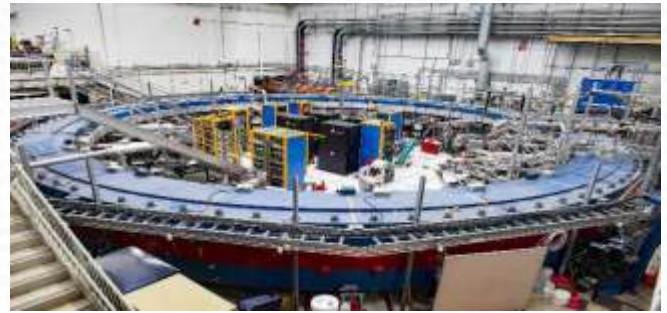


**Dr Atanu Nath**

Asst. Prof., Dept. of Physics, Tihu College  
R&D Research associate at IIT Guwahati, India  
Ph.D from the University of Naples "Federico II", Italy.  
JAM, JEST, NET-JRF

#### Dr. Atanu Nath:

- Earned his postgraduate degree from the S. N. Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences, Kolkata.
- Pursued further academic training at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Mumbai.
- Moved to Italy in 2013 to begin his PhD at the University of Naples Federico II.
- **Joined INFN, Naples as a Postdoc fellow to work on Moun g-2 experiment of Fermilab**
- Returned to India in 2020 and joined IIT Guwahati as a postdoctoral researcher.
- Took up his current teaching position at Tihu College in 2022.



#### About Muon g-2 Experiment

##### What is a Muon?

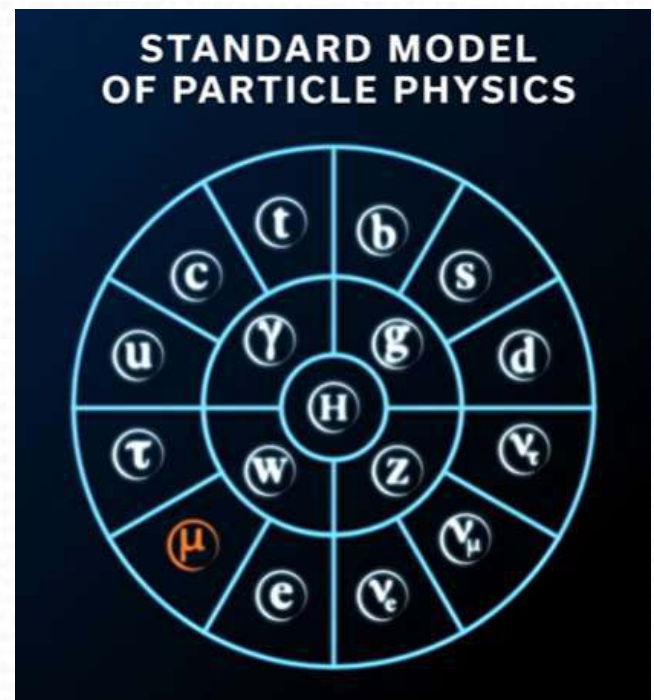
- A **subatomic particle**, similar to an electron but **heavier**.

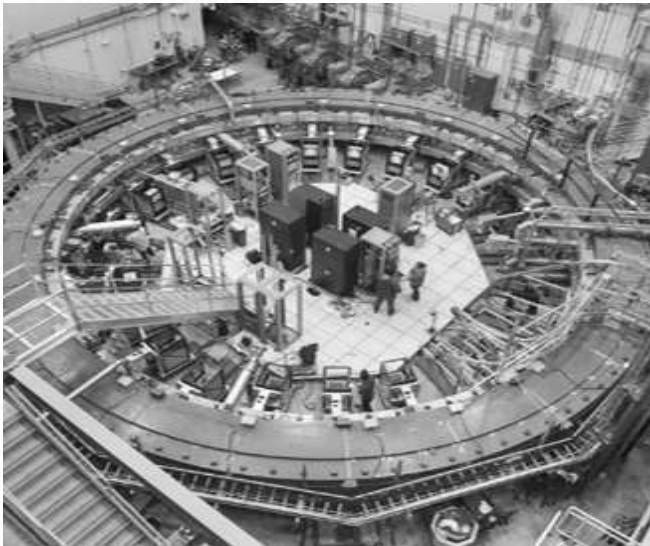
##### Core Concept

- Measures the **magnetic moment** of the muon (how it behaves in a magnetic field).

##### For:

- Multi-decade, groundbreaking contributions to the measurement of the muon's anomalous magnetic moment,
- Pushing the boundaries of experimental precision, and
- Igniting a new era in the quest for physics beyond the Standard Model.





A *g*-factor (also called *g* value) is a dimensionless quantity that characterizes the magnetic moment and angular momentum of a whole atom, a particle, or a nucleus.

### Breakthrough Prize 2025

- **Dr. Pranjal Sarma**, Assistant Professor at **Jagiroad College**, Assam, awarded the **Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics (2025)**.
- Contributed to the **ALICE Experiment** at **CERN**, Geneva.
  - **ALICE** stands for - **A Large Ion Collider Experiment**

### Objective

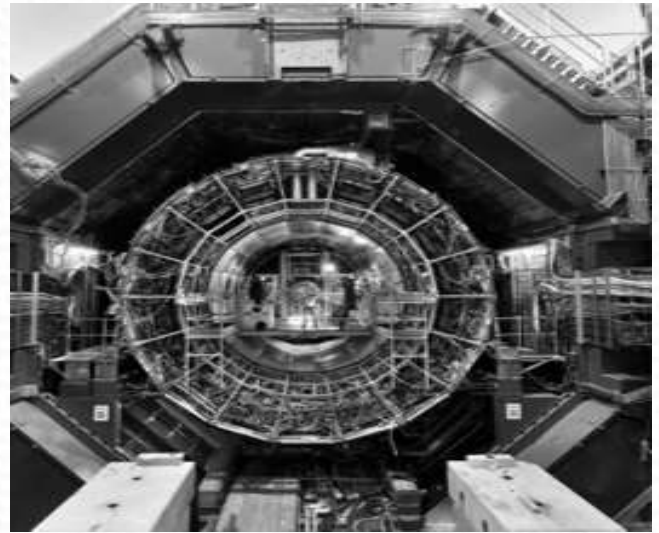
- Study **extreme states of matter** at very high temperature and density

### About:

- Member of Gauhati University ALICE Group
- Team led by Dr Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee
- Hails from Tihu, Nalbari (Assam)

### For:

- Detailed measurements of Higgs boson properties confirming the symmetry-breaking mechanism of mass generation,
- the discovery of new strongly interacting particles,
- the study of rare processes and matter-antimatter asymmetry, and
- the exploration of nature at the shortest distances and most extreme conditions at CERN's Large Hadron Collider.



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to recent scientific developments, consider the following statements:

1. Casgevy is based on CRISPR gene-editing technology.
2. Gene-replacement therapy has been approved for treating certain genetic diseases.
3. The muon magnetic moment experiment confirms that the Standard Model is completely accurate.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 3 is incorrect:** experiments test and may challenge the Standard Model.

### Manuhe Manuhor Baabe

#### Why in News

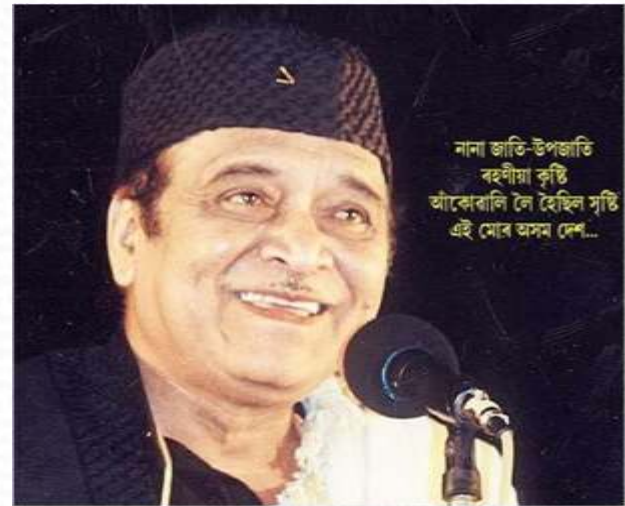
- During birth centenary celebrations of **Bhupen Hazarika**, his iconic song **Manuhe Manuhor Baabe** has been translated into German.
- Released by **Bhupen Hazarika International Foundation** in Jorhat.

#### Key Highlights

- German version titled: "**Der Mensch für die Menschen**"
- Translation by:



- **Dr Binod Kumar Gogoi**
- Assisted by **Ritimoni Gogoi** (A German scholar)
- Sung by:
  - **Ranjan Kumar Dutta**
- Earlier:
  - Song translated into **Spanish** (by Dr Gogoi)
- Future plan:
  - Translation into **Bengali and Hindi**



**Central Theme: Humanism**  
Humans should care for fellow human beings

**Cultural Significance**

- **Globalisation of Assamese Culture**
  - Translation into European languages → **international outreach**
  - Promotes Assam’s cultural heritage globally

**Historical Context**

- Composed during a time of 1960s:
  - Linguistic assertion in Assam
  - Social and political churn
- Reflects:
  - Need for **unity amidst division**
  - Assertion of **identity with inclusivity**

**Musical Influence**

- Inspired by:
  - American folk song “**Hang Down Your Head, Tom Dooley**”
- Shows:
  - Fusion of **global + local musical traditions**

**Prelims Practice Question**

**Q.** With reference to Bhupen Hazarika, consider the following statements:

1. He is popularly known as Sudhakantha.
2. His song “Manuhe Manuhor Baabe” promotes the idea of humanism.
3. The Bhupen Hazarika International Foundation was established after his death.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: d

**White-bellied Heron Conservation**

**Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper III**

**Why in News?**

- A **2-day national workshop at Cotton University** (April 20–21) aimed at creating a **coordinated conservation strategy**.
- Organized by **Nature Conservation Foundation** with multiple scientific institutions.

**About the Species:**

- **White-bellied Heron**
  - One of the **rarest waterbirds globally** (fewer than 50 individuals).
  - Found mainly in **Bhutan** and **northeast India (Arunachal Pradesh)**.



- Requires **undisturbed, fast-flowing river ecosystems.**



### Key Issues Identified

#### 1. Habitat-specific vulnerability

- Species depends on **pristine riverine ecosystems** → highly sensitive to disturbance.

#### 2. Anthropogenic Threats

- **Unsustainable fishing practices**
- **Sand & boulder mining**
- **Hydropower projects & infrastructure expansion**
- **Human disturbance along riverbanks**

#### 3. Emerging Threats

- **Climate change**
  - Alters river flow, sedimentation, and prey availability.



### Institutional Involvement

- Collaboration among major scientific bodies:

- Wildlife Institute of India
- Zoological Survey of India
- Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment
- Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History
- Shows **multi-agency approach** in conservation.

### Key Recommendations from Workshop

#### Policy & Management

- Protect **critical river stretches**
- Regulate **extractive activities** (mining, fishing)

#### Scientific Measures

- Strengthen **monitoring frameworks**
- Promote **evidence-based conservation**

#### Governance

- Improve **inter-state and inter-agency coordination**

### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to the White-bellied Heron, consider the following statements:

1. It is one of the rarest waterbirds in the world.
2. It is endemic only to India.
3. It inhabits fast-flowing river ecosystems.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: b

**Sol:** Not endemic to India (also found in Bhutan); prefers riverine habitats.

### CM's Resignation

#### Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper II/V

#### Context

- Shri Himanta Biswa Sarma resigned as the Chief Minister of Assam after the **15th Assam Legislative Assembly** dissolves and before the formation of the new government.
- This resignation was a constitutional and parliamentary procedure, not due to loss of majority or any controversy.



### Constitutional Conventions Followed -

India follows the Westminster model of parliamentary democracy.

Hence:

- The incumbent CM resigns after elections.
- Even if the same party wins again, a fresh oath is required.



### Formation of New Government: Step-wise Process

1. Assembly election results declared.
2. Outgoing CM submits resignation.
3. Governor accepts resignation.
4. CM may continue as caretaker CM.
5. Majority party/alliance elects legislature leader.
6. Governor invites leader to form government.
7. Oath-taking ceremony conducted.
8. Floor test may be conducted if required.

### Constitutional Basis of CM's Resignation

#### 1. Article 164 – Appointment and Tenure of Chief Minister

- "Article 164(1): Governor appoints the Chief Minister and other Ministers on the advice of the CM"

#### Key Provisions

- The Chief Minister is appointed by the Governor.
- Other ministers are appointed on the advice of the Chief Minister.
- The Council of Ministers remains in office during the pleasure of the Governor.

#### Constitutional Convention

- Although the Constitution does not explicitly mandate resignation after elections, parliamentary democracy requires that:
  - The outgoing government resigns once the new Assembly is elected.

- The Governor then invites the majority party/alliance to form the new government.



### Article 164(2) – Collective Responsibility

- "Council of Ministers shall be collectively responsible to the Legislative Assembly"

#### Significance

- The Council of Ministers derives legitimacy from the confidence of the Legislative Assembly.
- After elections, the previous Assembly ceases to exist.
- Therefore, the existing ministry resigns and seeks a fresh mandate from the newly elected House.



**"Sink or Swim Together":** A vote of no confidence against any single minister is considered a vote against the entire council,



*necessitating a collective resignation, not just the resignation of one minister.*

### Article 174 – Dissolution of Legislative Assembly

- **Provision**
  - The Governor has the power to:
    - Summon
    - Prorogue
    - Dissolve the Legislative Assembly.
- **Relevance**
  - After dissolution and fresh elections:
    - The old ministry becomes a caretaker government.
    - A new government must be constituted based on the composition of the newly elected Assembly.

- Administers oath of office and secrecy under:
  - Third Schedule of the Constitution.



### Important Constitutional Articles

Article	Subject
Article 163	Council of Ministers to aid and advise Governor
Article 164	Appointment, tenure and responsibility of Ministers
Article 174	Sessions, prorogation and dissolution of Assembly
Article 175	Governor's right to address Assembly
Article 356	Failure of constitutional machinery



**After the last session of the 15th Assam Legislative Assembly**



### Caretaker Government Convention

After resignation:

- The outgoing CM and Council of Ministers may continue as a caretaker government until the new ministry is sworn in.
- They avoid major policy decisions during this interim period.

### Role of the Governor

#### Constitutional Role

- The Governor:
  - Accepts resignation of outgoing CM.
  - Invites the leader of majority party/alliance.

### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** With reference to the resignation of a Chief Minister after Assembly elections in India, consider the following statements:

1. The Chief Minister is appointed by the Governor under Article 164 of the Constitution.
2. The Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to the Legislative Council.



3. After Assembly elections, the outgoing ministry usually resigns as part of constitutional convention.
4. The Governor administers the oath of office and secrecy to the Chief Minister according to the Third Schedule of the Constitution.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Ans: b

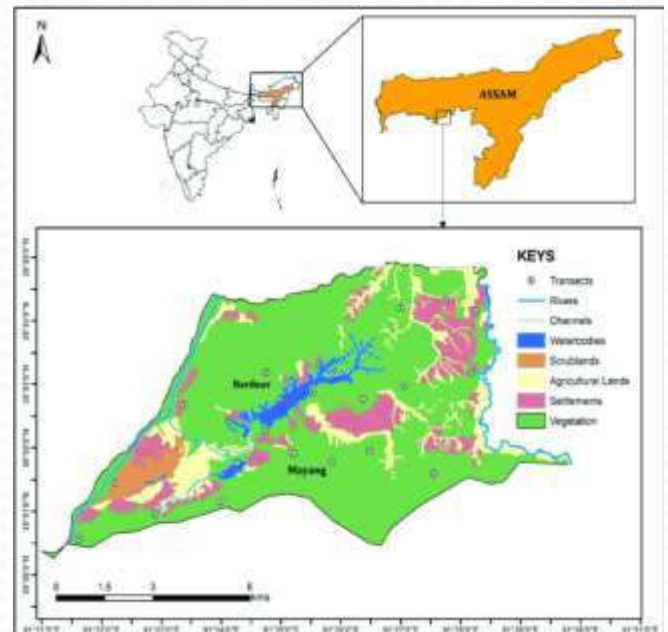
**Sol: Statement 2 is incorrect:** The Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to the Legislative Assembly, not the Legislative Council.

## Loharghat Forest Range

*Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper IV*

### Brief Overview

- **Location:** Loharghat Forest Range under West Kamrup Forest Division (near Palasbari, Assam)
- **Issue:** Large-scale **illegal sand mining** using heavy machinery (JCBs, excavators, tractors)
- **Transport Route:** Sand transported openly via **Mirza Tiniali**
- **Impacts:**
  - Loss of **fertile agricultural land**
  - **Riverbank erosion**
  - **Lowering of groundwater table**
  - Increased **flood vulnerability**
  - Damage to **river ecosystems & biodiversity**
- **Governance Concerns:**
  - Alleged **administrative inaction / nexus**
  - Lack of enforcement (no seizure, checking drives)
- **Legal Aspect:** Mining without **environmental clearance** violates environmental laws (e.g., Environment Protection Act, MMDR Act)



### 1. Nature of the Issue: Organized

#### Environmental Exploitation

- The situation in **Loharghat Forest Range** (West Kamrup) reflects more than isolated illegal activity—it indicates a **systematic and organised sand mining network**.
- The use of heavy machinery and the open, daily transportation of sand through Mirza Tiniali suggest that extraction, transport, and sale are happening in a **coordinated and continuous manner**, despite being illegal.



### 2. Ecological Impact: Disturbance of River Systems

- Sand plays a vital role in maintaining the natural balance of river systems. Excessive extraction disrupts sediment flow, especially in dynamic rivers like the Brahmaputra River, leading to:
  - **Riverbank erosion** and channel instability



- Increased **flood vulnerability**, particularly in Assam
- Reduced **groundwater recharge**, causing falling water tables
- Damage to **aquatic ecosystems and biodiversity**
- Thus, illegal sand mining directly weakens the ecological foundation of the region.



### 3. Impact on Land and Livelihoods

- The conversion of fertile agricultural land into sand mining zones reflects severe **land degradation**. This results in:
  - Loss of **cultivable land** and decline in agricultural productivity
  - **Livelihood insecurity** for farmers and rural communities
  - Long-term socio-economic stress in already vulnerable areas

### 4. Economic Dimension: Parallel Illegal Economy

While sand is a key raw material for construction, illegal mining creates a **shadow economy**:

- Generates **black market profits** without regulation
- Leads to **loss of government revenue** (GST & Royalty)
- Encourages exploitation of natural resources without sustainability

### 5. Governance Failure and Administrative Concerns

- A critical issue highlighted in the news is the **visible lack of enforcement**:
- Continuous movement of sand-laden trucks through Mirza Tiniali without checks
- Absence of **seizure drives or crackdowns**
- Possible **nexus or collusion** between officials and illegal operators

This reflects:

- Weak **implementation of environmental and mining laws**
- Poor coordination among Forest Department, Police, and administration
- Lack of **accountability and monitoring mechanisms**



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Consider the following statements regarding illegal sand mining:



1. Illegal sand mining can lead to riverbank erosion and increased flood vulnerability.
2. Sand mining without environmental clearance is permissible if done on non-forest land.
3. Excessive sand extraction can lower groundwater levels and damage river ecosystems.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 2 – Incorrect:** Environmental clearance is mandatory regardless of land type.

## Digitised Literature

Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper IV

### 1. Digitizing Assam 2.0

Core Idea:

- The “Digitizing Assam 2.0” initiative, led by the Nanda Talukdar Foundation, represents a major shift from **physical, inaccessible archives** to a **fully searchable digital knowledge system**.
  - **Earlier:** Books, manuscripts, journals were scattered in libraries and archives, often difficult to access
  - **Now:** Over **2.76 million pages** are digitized and **keyword-searchable**, making information retrieval instant
- This transforms knowledge from being **static and restricted** to **dynamic and widely accessible**.



### 2. Technological Innovation: AI-driven Language Processing

- A key strength of the project is its use of **advanced Artificial Intelligence** by:
  - Borno Labs
  - Bohniman Systems
- Their work involves:
  - **Decoding old Assamese texts** (including faded manuscripts)
  - **Indexing and organizing data** across formats and time periods
  - Enabling **precise keyword search**
- This is significant because **Assamese language processing is computationally complex**, making this project a major step in India's **multilingual AI ecosystem**.



### 3. Cultural and Linguistic Significance

- The initiative plays a crucial role in:
  - **Preservation of Assamese language and literature**
  - Safeguarding rare documents, manuscripts, and historical records
  - Promoting **cultural historiography** and identity
- For example, searching figures like Bhupen Hazarika or themes like the Brahmaputra River now yields comprehensive, cross-referenced knowledge instantly.





#### 4. Academic and Research Impact

The project opens new possibilities for:

- **Academic research** (history, literature, sociology)
- **Policy analysis** using historical and textual data
- Faster and more efficient **data-driven scholarship**

What earlier required **days of manual searching** can now be done in seconds, improving research productivity and quality.



#### 5. Democratization of Knowledge

A major feature is that digitized content is available in the **open domain**, meaning:

- Equal access for students, researchers, and the public
- Reduction of knowledge barriers between urban and rural users
- Promotion of **inclusive education and awareness**

#### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Consider the following statements regarding the “Digitizing Assam 2.0” initiative:

1. The initiative has made over 2.76 million pages of Assamese archival material keyword-searchable in the open domain.

2. The project uses Artificial Intelligence to decode, index, and organize Assamese texts across different formats and time periods.
3. The initiative is solely funded and implemented by the Government of India under the National Education Policy 2020.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 3 – Incorrect:** It is not solely a Government of India project; it is led by Nanda Talukdar Foundation with support from institutions and funding from Oil India Limited, though it aligns with NEP principles.

### Buffalo translocation

**Syllabus - Prelims/GS Paper III/IV**

#### 1. Translocation of Wild Water Buffalo

**Core Development: Landmark Conservation Initiative**

- A significant wildlife conservation step has been undertaken with the **longest-distance translocation of wild water buffaloes** from Kaziranga National Park to Kanha Tiger Reserve.
  - First batch: **4 buffaloes (3 females, 1 male)** released
  - Target: **50 animals** to be relocated
  - Objective: **Reintroduce the species in central India after ~100 years of local extinction**



**Previous translocations**

Project	From → To	Species	Impact (One Line)
Cheetah Reintroduction	Namibia/ South Africa → Kuno National Park	Cheetah	Restores grassland ecosystem and revives extinct species in India
Rhino Translocation (IRV 2020)	Kaziranga National Park → Manas National Park	Indian One-Horned Rhinoceros	Revived rhino population and reduced pressure on Kaziranga
Barasingha Relocation	Kanha Tiger Reserve → Satpura Tiger Reserve	Barasingha	Created second population to reduce extinction risk
Tiger Reintroduction	Other reserves → Sariska Tiger Reserve / Panna Tiger Reserve	Bengal Tiger	Successfully restored tiger populations after local extinction
Asiatic Lion (Proposed)	Gir National Park → Kuno National Park	Asiatic Lion	Aims to reduce single-population risk and ensure species security

- Assam, especially Kaziranga, is the **global stronghold** of this species, making it critical for conservation-led translocation.



**3. Reason for Reintroduction in Madhya Pradesh**

- The species became **locally extinct in Madhya Pradesh** due to:
  - Habitat degradation
  - Overhunting
  - Human pressures
- A study by the Wildlife Institute of India identified Kanha as suitable because of:
  - Vast **grasslands**
  - Adequate **water availability**
  - Low human disturbance**



**2. Ecological Context: Importance of Wild Water Buffalo**

- The **wild water buffalo (Bubalus arnee)** is:
  - A **keystone herbivore** in grassland ecosystems
  - Plays a role in:
    - Vegetation control through grazing**
    - Maintaining **wetland and grassland dynamics**



#### 4. Scientific Process: Planned and Phased Translocation

The project reflects a **scientifically managed conservation strategy**:

- Selection of **healthy sub-adult buffaloes** from Kaziranga
- Veterinary monitoring to ensure **minimum stress during transport**
- Use of **soft release technique**:
  - Animals initially kept in controlled enclosures
  - Gradual adaptation to the wild environment
- This approach increases survival and adaptation success.

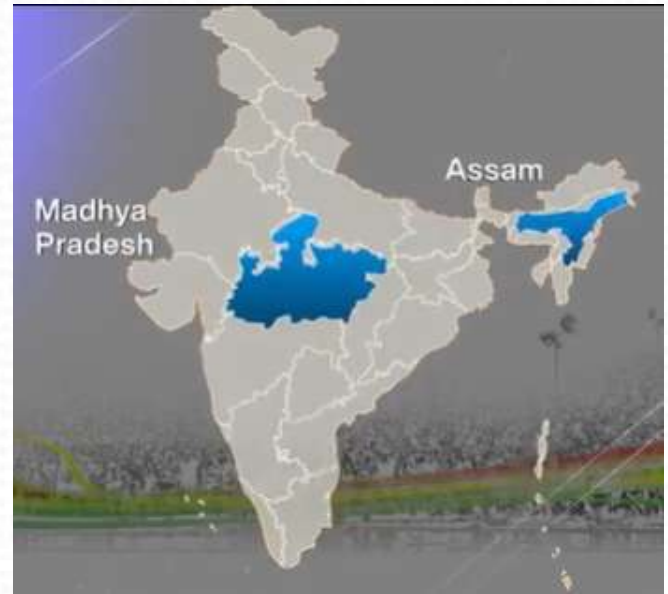
Feature	Wild Water Buffalo
<b>Breeding Season</b>	Typically seasonal, often coinciding with the end of the rainy season (mating peaks around October-November in some regions).
<b>Mating System</b>	Polygynous; a single dominant male will mate with multiple females within a herd.
<b>Gestation Period</b>	Approximately <b>10 to 11 months</b> .
<b>Birth Rate</b>	Females usually produce a single calf every <b>two years</b> .
<b>Maturity</b>	Males reach sexual maturity at about <b>18 months</b> , while females typically take <b>3 years</b> .
<b>Lifespan</b>	Roughly <b>25 years</b> in the wild.

#### 5. Interstate Cooperation and Governance

The initiative highlights strong **cooperative federalism**:

- Collaboration between **Assam and Madhya Pradesh governments**
- Coordination between forest departments, scientists, and veterinary teams
- Political leadership (Chief Ministers of both states) facilitating the project

It sets a precedent for **future inter-state wildlife translocations**, including possible movement of species like rhinos.



#### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Consider the following statements regarding the translocation of wild water buffalo in India:

1. The wild water buffalo has its largest global population concentrated in Assam.
2. The reintroduction of wild water buffalo in central India aims to restore grassland ecosystems.
3. Kanha Tiger Reserve was selected for translocation due to its dense forest cover and high human population.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 3 – Incorrect:** Kanha Tiger Reserve was chosen for its grasslands, water availability, and low human disturbance, not dense forests or high population.



## Aakuti

### 1. Core Development: Assamese Film on Global Platform

- The Assamese feature film **Aakuti**, directed by Snigdha P Roy, has been selected for the **competition section** at the New York Indian Film Festival.
  - Nominations: **Best Debut Film** and **Best Child Actor (Kavisha Mahanta)**
  - Marks Snigdha's **debut as writer-director**
- This reflects the **growing global recognition of regional cinema**, particularly Assamese films.



### 2. Theme & Narrative: Emotional and Psychological Depth

- The film follows **Lakhi, an 8-year-old child**, coping with her mother's death
- Focuses on:
  - Grief, memory, and longing**
  - A child's **inner emotional world**
- Uses subtle storytelling—**silence, gestures, and everyday moments**—rather than dramatic expression

This highlights a shift towards **realistic, sensitive storytelling** in regional cinema.



### Film Industry and Career Dimension

- Snigdha P Roy brings **15+ years of experience** in editing and filmmaking
- Worked on mainstream projects like:
  - Saina
  - ABCD 2
  - Humpty Sharma Ki Dulhania
- Transition from editor to director shows **multi-disciplinary skill evolution in cinema**



### Prelims Practice Question

**Q.** Consider the following statements regarding the film Aakuti:

- It marks the directorial debut of Snigdha P Roy.
- The film has been selected for the competition section at the New York Indian Film Festival.
- The film is based on the life of a historical figure from Assam.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

**Sol: Statement 3 – Incorrect:** The film is a fictional emotional narrative about a child coping with loss, not a biographical story.

