

Today's Prelims Topics

Operation Chakra-V

Context

CBI arrested 6 members of a cybercrime syndicate under **Operation Chakra-V** for running fake tech support call centers that cheated Japanese citizens by posing as Microsoft representatives.

About Operation Chakra-V

- **Launched by:** Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)
- **Objective:**
 - Dismantle transnational **cybercrime networks** defrauding **foreign nationals**.
 - Syndicates posed as **Microsoft technical support** to extort money.
- **Coordination:**
 - **International cooperation** with:
 - **National Police Agency of Japan**
 - **Microsoft Corporation**
 - Helped identify and track the cybercriminals' network.
- **Operations Conducted:**
 - **19 locations** raided in **Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh**
 - **Two illegal call centers** dismantled
- **Modus Operandi:**
 - Call centers posed as **tech support**
 - Informed Japanese victims their devices were "hacked"
 - Extracted money via remote access and fake repair fees
- **Previous Operations:** Operation Chakra-IV targeted organized cyber-enabled financial crimes via a globally coordinated response using INTERPOL channels.

Source: [The Hindu](#)

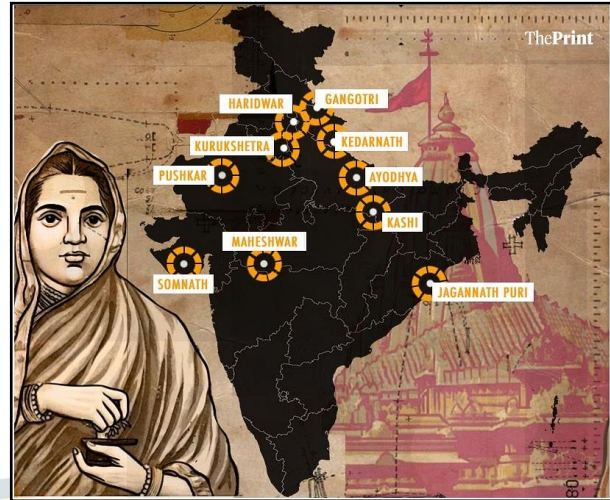
Ahilya Bai Holkar

Context

May 31, 2025 marked the 300th birth anniversary of the Maratha queen Ahilya Bai Holkar.

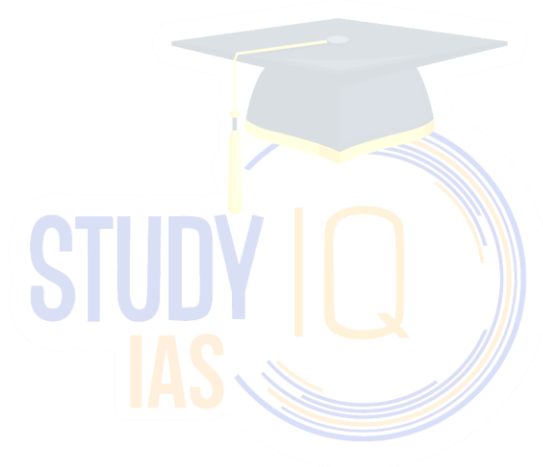
About Ahilya Bai Holkar

- **Birth:** Ahilya Bai Holkar was born in 1725 in a shepherd (Dhangar/Gadariya) family in Chondi village, Ahmednagar district (Maharashtra).
- **Marriage:** Married to **Khanderao Holkar** in 1733 (at the age of 8).
- **Ascension to Power:** After the death of her husband **Khande Rao Holkar** in the **Battle of Kumbher** against the king of **Bharatpur** in **1754**, Ahilya Bai broke through the patriarchal limitations of her time to rule as a monarch.
- **Leadership and Administration:** In 1767, the Peshwa granted Ahilyabai permission to take over **Malwa**.
 - She ascended the throne and became the **ruler of Indore on 11 December 1767**.
 - For the next 28 years (1767 to 1795), Maharani Ahilyabai ruled over Malwa in a just, wise, and knowledgeable manner
 - Under Ahilyabai's rule, Malwa enjoyed relative peace, prosperity, and stability, and her capital, Maheshwar, was turned into an oasis of literary, musical, artistic, and industrial pursuits.
 - Known for her **administrative ingenuity and political impartiality**, she managed the kingdom with a keen sense of welfare for her subjects.
 - She appointed **Tukoji Holkar**, a trusted soldier under her father-in-law Malhar Rao Holkar, as the **commander of her army**.
- **Religious and Cultural Contributions:**
 - **Faith and Philosophy:** A devout Hindu, Ahilya Bai attended Purana recitals and yagnas, integrating her spirituality into her governance.
 - **Temple Restorations and Contributions:**
 - In 1780, Ahilya Bai Holkar led the **reconstruction of the Kashi Vishwanath Temple** in Varanasi, almost 100 years after it was demolished by the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb.
 - She was responsible for **building the Somnath Temple in 1783**.
 - Ahilya Bai Holkar also contributed to the enhancement of other sacred sites including Badrinath, Dwarka, Omkareshwari, Gaya, and Rameswaram.
 - Additionally, she supported the construction of resting lodges for pilgrims and public ghats.
 - **Economic and Social Development:**
 - **Maheshwari Sarees:** Ahilya Bai promoted the production of Maheshwari sarees, which provided income for weavers and became a cultural emblem.
 - **Urban and Environmental Development:** She contributed to the **development of Indore and the conservation of forests and wildlife**.
 - **Trade and Commerce:** Under her rule, trade flourished, enhancing the prosperity of her state.



- **Social Inclusion and Legacy:**
 - **Inclusivity:** Her governance included efforts to mainstream marginalised communities such as the Bhil and Gond castes.
 - **Recognition:** Although revered regionally more than nationally, she received acclaim from historians like Jadunath Sarkar, Annie Besant, and John Keay.
 - **John Keay**, the British historian, gave the queen the **title of 'The Philosopher Queen'**.
 - **Impact on Gender Norms:** Ahilya Bai's rule is noted for transcending gender norms and setting a precedent for effective governance.

Source: [The Hindu](#)



National Florence Nightingale Award

Context

President Droupadi Murmu conferred the National Florence Nightingale Awards.

About the Award

- **Instituted by:** Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- **Named After:** Florence Nightingale
- **Established in:** 1973
- **Purpose:** To honor **outstanding nursing professionals** for their selfless service, excellence in patient care, innovation in nursing practices, and dedication to the healthcare sector
- **Eligibility:** Registered nurses, auxiliary nurse midwives (ANMs), and lady health visitors (LHVs) working in:
 - **Government, private, or voluntary sectors**
 - **Rural and urban** healthcare setups
- Conferred **annually** on **International Nurses Day** or an associated date

Who is Florence Nightingale?

Founder of modern nursing

Famous for work in Crimean War (improved soldier care)

Established first nursing school (Nightingale School, 1860)

Advocated hygiene & statistics to save lives

Nicknamed "Lady with the Lamp"

Wrote *Notes on Nursing* (core nursing principles)

Pioneered healthcare reforms worldwide



Source: [PIB](#)

Emblems and Names (Prevention of Improper Use) Act, 1950

Context

SC rejects plea to include **Savarkar** name in **Emblems Act**.

Key Features of the Act

- **Purpose:** Prevents unauthorized commercial or personal use of certain **national emblems, names, and symbols** to safeguard their dignity.
- **Prohibited Uses (Section 3):**
 - Restricts the use of **names, emblems, or official seals** of the **Government of India, UN, WHO, etc.** without permission.
 - Bars misuse of names like "**Mahatma Gandhi**", "**Jawaharlal Nehru**", or any other name specified by the central government.
- **Legal Penalty:** Violations can lead to **finest** (upto Rs.500) or **imprisonment**.
- **The Previous Sanctions for Prosecution:** No legal action for any offense punishable under this Act can be initiated without prior approval from the Central Government or an authorised officer designated by the Central Government through a general or specific order.
- **Power to Amend the Schedule:** The Central Government has the authority to modify or expand the Schedule by issuing a notification in the Official Gazette.

Naveen Jindal vs Union of India (2004)

SC Ruling: Held that flying the National Flag is a Fundamental Right under Article 19(1)(a) (freedom of expression).

Regulating Laws:

Emblems and Names Act, 1950 – Prevents misuse of national symbols.

Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971 – Penalizes disrespect to the flag.

Flag Code of India 2002: Challenged but upheld with reasonable restrictions to maintain dignity.

Judgment Impact: Citizens can display the flag privately with respect, balancing rights & restrictions.

Source: [Indian Express](#)

Dark Factories

Context

In the TCS Annual Report for FY2025, Tata Sons Chairman N. Chandrasekaran emphasized a significant transformation in IT and business services, marked by a move toward autonomous operations powered by AI agents and robotics, paving the way for the emergence of 'dark factories'.

What is Meant By Dark Factories?

- Dark Factories, also known as **Lights-Out Manufacturing**, are fully automated facilities where production is **carried out without any human presence**.
- These factories rely on a **combination of robotics, artificial intelligence (AI), and the Internet of Things (IoT)** to manage all manufacturing operations.
- With no human workers on-site, the facility can operate in complete darkness—hence the term “dark factory.”
- **Key Advantages:**
 - **Continuous Operations:** Machines operate round the clock without the need for breaks, holidays, or shift transitions.
 - **Enhanced Efficiency:** Automation minimizes errors and significantly speeds up production cycles.
 - **Cost Reduction:** Limited human involvement lowers expenses related to salaries, insurance, and workplace safety.
 - **Improved Safety:** Robots can take on dangerous tasks, reducing the risk of accidents and injuries.
 - **Scalability:** AI-driven systems can quickly adjust to changing demands without requiring employee retraining.

Challenges and Limitations

High Initial Investment: Significant capital is needed for robotics, AI systems, and supporting infrastructure.

Job Displacement: Replacing human labor with automation raises social concerns around unemployment and inequality.

Operational Risks: A single technical failure can potentially shut down the entire production line.

Limited Flexibility: Unlike human workers, machines require complex reprogramming to adapt to new tasks or changes.

Cybersecurity Vulnerabilities: Automated systems are susceptible to hacking, data breaches, and other cyber threats.

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Honey Production In India

Context

PM Narendra Modi highlighted the transformative journey of India's honey industry over the past decade.

Information on Honey Production in India

- **Annual Production:** India produced approximately **1,46,000 metric tonnes (MT)** of honey (as per the 3rd advance estimate for 2023–24).
- **Exports in FY24:**
 - **Volume:** 1,07,963.21 MT
 - **Value:** USD 177.52 million
- **Top Export Destinations:** USA, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Libya.
- **Key Honey-Producing States:**
 - **Uttar Pradesh:** 17%
 - **West Bengal:** 16%
 - **Punjab:** 14%
 - **Bihar:** 12%
 - **Rajasthan:** 9%
- **Global Ranking:**
 - **India:** 7th largest producer and exporter of honey.
 - **China:** World's largest producer and exporter.



Initiatives to Boost Honey Production in India

Honey Mission Programme

- **Launched by:** Khadi & Village Industries Commission (KVIC)
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)
- **Year of Launch:** 2017–18
- **Objective:** To promote beekeeping and generate self-employment for farmers, tribal communities, and unemployed youth, particularly in remote and economically backward regions.
- **Support Provided:** Beneficiaries receive bee boxes, live bee colonies, beekeeping tool kits, and training.

National Beekeeping & Honey Mission (NBHM)

- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare
- **Implemented By:** National Bee Board (NBB)
- **Type:** Central Sector Scheme
- **Aim:** To promote scientific beekeeping across India and achieve the goal of the 'Sweet Revolution'.

Case Study: Sonhani Organic Honey – Korea District, Chhattisgarh

- **Product:** 'Sonhani' – a pure, organic honey made from forest flowers.
- **Produced By:** Tribal farmers in Korea district.
- **Support:** The project is funded by the **District Mineral Fund**.
- **Farmer Training:** Ten farmers were selected and trained at specialized beekeeping hubs.

Fact

- **World Bee Day:** Celebrated every year on **May 20** to raise awareness about the importance of bees and beekeeping.

UPSC PYQ (2025)

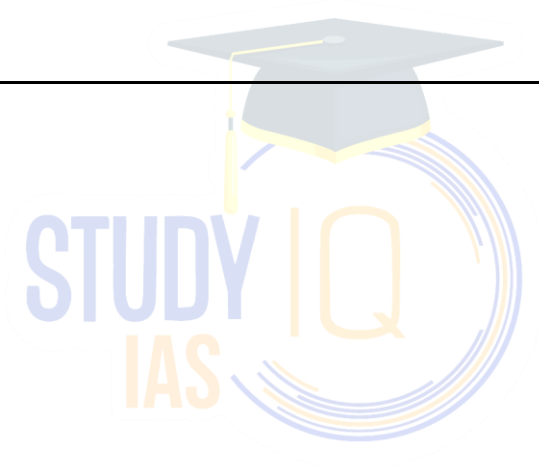
Q. Consider the following statements about turmeric during the year 2022–23:

- I. India is the largest producer and exporter of turmeric in the world.
- II. More than 30 varieties of turmeric are grown in India.
- III. Maharashtra, Telangana, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are major turmeric producing States in India.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) I and II only
- (b) II and III only
- (c) I and III only
- (d) I, II and III

Source: [News On Air](#)



Statehood day of Goa

Context

PM Narendra Modi, has greeted the people of Goa on the occasion of their Statehood Day.

About Goa

- **Location:** Situated on the **southwestern coast of India** in the **Konkan region**, Goa is geographically separated from the Deccan Plateau by the **Western Ghats**.
- **Capital:** Panaji
- **Official Language:** **Konkani** (included in the Eighth Schedule).
- **Borders:**
 - **North:** Maharashtra
 - **East & South:** Karnataka
 - **West:** Arabian Sea
- **Background**
 - In 1510, Alfonso de Albuquerque captured Goa and defeated Adil Shah of Bijapur.
 - After India gained independence on **15th August 1947**, it requested the **Portuguese** to surrender their Indian territories. The request was denied.
 - In **1961**, India conducted **Operation Vijay**, successfully annexing **Goa, Daman, and Diu** into the Indian Union.
 - **Goa Liberation Day** is celebrated on **19th December** every year to mark this event.
 - Notably, the **Portuguese** were the **first Europeans** to arrive in India in **1498** and the **last to leave** in 1961.
 - On **30th May 1987**, Goa was granted **statehood**, while **Daman and Diu** remained a **Union Territory**.
- **Geography**
 - **Highest Point:** Sonsogor
 - **Major Rivers:**
 - Zuari
 - Mandovi
 - Terekhol
 - Chapora
 - Sal
- **Wildlife Sanctuaries and National Parks in Goa**
 - Dr. Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary
 - Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary
 - Netravali Wildlife Sanctuary
 - Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary
 - Bhagwan Mahaveer Sanctuary
 - Mollem National Park

Source: [PIB](#)

Editorial Summary

Transforming Remittances Landscape in India

Context

Recently released RBI data highlighted record remittances of \$118.7 billion in 2023–24, amid global economic uncertainties.

Trend of Remittances

- A shift from low-skilled Gulf workers to high-skilled professionals and students in Advanced Economies (AEs) is observed.
 - The **United States** alone contributed **27.7%** of total remittances in 2023–24, up from **23.4%** in 2020–21.
 - **Collectively**, the **U.S., U.K., Canada, Australia, and Singapore** now account for **51.2%** of total remittance inflows.
 - This share has surpassed that of **Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nations**, which stands at **37.9%**.
- **States Distribution:**
 - **Maharashtra, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu** receive about **51%** of total remittances.
 - **Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan combined** receive **less than 6%**.
- **Digital Channels:**
 - Digital platforms processed **73.5%** of remittance transactions.
 - Sending **\$200 to India** costs **4.9%**, lower than the **global average (6.65%)** but still above the **SDG target of 3%**.
- **Cross-Country Variation:**
 - **UAE (76.1%)** and **Saudi Arabia (92.7%)** show high digital adoption.
 - Adoption remains low in **Canada (40%)**, **Germany (55.1%)**, and **Italy (35%)**, due to **regulatory and infrastructure challenges**.

What are the Implications?

Positive Implications

- **Greater Stability of Remittance Inflows:** Remittances from **high-skilled migrants in Advanced Economies (AEs)** are more stable and less sensitive to economic cycles.
 - These flows offer **predictable support to foreign exchange reserves and current account balances**.
- **Higher Remittance Values:** A small proportion of **high-value transactions (₹5 lakh and above)** contribute disproportionately to total remittance volumes, reflecting increased **diaspora earning power**.
- **Digital Transformation Enhances Efficiency:** Digital remittance channels (73.5%) **reduce transaction costs** and processing time.
 - Encourages a **shift from informal to formal channels**, improving transparency and regulation.
- **Potential for Development Impact:** With proper policy support, remittances can be **channeled into savings, investment, and entrepreneurship**, promoting financial inclusion and economic development.

Negative Implications

- **Over-Reliance on High-Income Countries:** AEs now dominate remittance sources (over 50%), making India **vulnerable to policy changes**, such as tighter immigration rules or labor market disruptions abroad.

- **Concentration Risk:** Heavy reliance on a **small number of high-value transactions** and migrants increases **exposure to income shocks** affecting those individuals.
- **Digital Divide:** Uneven adoption of digital remittance channels (e.g., Canada, Italy) points to **regulatory and infrastructure bottlenecks** that could hinder efficiency and inclusion.
- **Regional Inequality:** States like **Kerala, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu** dominate remittance receipts, while **poorer states (Bihar, UP, Rajasthan)** are left behind—**widening regional disparities**.
- **Data Deficiency:** Lack of **household-level data** on remittance usage hinders **informed policymaking**.
 - It remains unclear whether remittances are used for **productive purposes** or limited to **consumption**, reducing their developmental potential.

Source: [The Hindu: Examining the RBI's remittances survey](#)

