
Mains Topics

Industrial Parks in India

Context

Industrial parks have emerged as a core pillar of India's industrial and innovation strategy, driving manufacturing growth, sustainable development, and investment attraction.

Industrial Parks In India

- **Industrial parks are planned and demarcated tracts of land** developed specifically for industrial activities.
- They may include **ready-built factory sheds or vacant plots**, supported by **shared infrastructure** such as power, water, roads, waste management, logistics, laboratories, training centres and security systems.
- Managed by dedicated authorities, industrial parks act as **institutional and policy tools** to promote industrialisation, enhance productivity, and accelerate economic growth.

Key Essentials of an Industrial Park

- **Regulatory Regime:** Operates under incentive-driven and flexible rules governing labour, land use and foreign investment.
- **Integrated Infrastructure:** Provides shared facilities such as telecom networks, laboratories, clearances, training centres and security systems.
- **Defined Geography:** Developed on clearly demarcated, master-planned land with uniform standards for buildings and facilities.
- **Dedicated Management:** A single authority manages firm entry, ensures regulatory compliance and oversees park operations.
- **Multi-tenant Clusters:** Hosts multiple firms that collaborate, share resources and benefit from clustering effects.

Significance

- **Industrial and Economic Growth:** Industrial parks boost output and accelerate manufacturing growth by providing cost-efficient, ready-to-operate industrial infrastructure.
- **Investment Attraction:** They attract domestic and foreign investment by offering a predictable regulatory environment with streamlined approvals and lower entry barriers.
- **Employment Generation:** Industrial parks generate large-scale direct industrial employment and indirect jobs in logistics, services and local economies.
- **Ease of Doing Business:** Shared facilities and single-point management reduce compliance burdens and enable faster project implementation through plug-and-play infrastructure.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** They ensure environmentally responsible industrialisation by enforcing compliance, promoting resource efficiency, controlling emissions and integrating biodiversity protection.

- **Social Development and Worker Welfare:** Industrial parks strengthen worker welfare through social infrastructure, safe housing, healthcare, occupational safety and gender-inclusive facilities.
- **Community and Institutional Engagement:** Engagement with trade unions, civil society and local communities improves labour conditions, transparency and long-term social trust.

Current Status

- India has **4,500+** industrial parks covering about **7.70 lakh hectares**, with nearly **1.35 lakh hectares** available for industrial use.
- **306 plug-and-play parks and 20 National Industrial Corridor Development Corporation Limited (NICDC)-led parks/smart cities.**
- **₹2,500 crore** allocated in **Union Budget 2025–26** to accelerate their development.
- India ranks among the **top five global destinations for Greenfield FDI projects.**
- **FDI inflows (Apr–Aug 2025–26): USD 43.76 billion**, reflecting strong investor confidence in industrial ecosystems.

Government Initiatives to Promote Industrial Parks in India

- **Plug-and-Play Industrial Parks:** The government has prioritised plug-and-play industrial parks to provide ready-to-use, industry-specific infrastructure that reduces project start-up time and costs.
- **India Industrial Land Bank (IILB):** Developed by the **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)** as a **GIS-enabled national platform**.
 - Provides real-time information on **industrial land availability, infrastructure, connectivity and utilities.**
- **Industrial Park Rating System (IPRS):** A government-led framework to **benchmark performance and quality** of industrial parks.
 - **IPRS 2.0** classified parks into **Leaders, Challengers and Aspirers**, improving transparency for investors.
 - **IPRS 3.0 (launched September 2025)** expanded parameters to include **sustainability, green**
- **Ease of Doing Business Reforms:**
 - **National Business Reforms Action Plan (BRAP), 2014** strengthened single-window systems, inspections, labour reforms and online approvals.
 - **GST implementation** unified indirect taxes, simplifying operations across states.
 - **Startup India** enabled tax benefits, easier compliance and faster IPR processes for park-based enterprises.
 - **Compliance reduction drive** decriminalised over **3,700 legal provisions** and reduced **42,000+ compliances.**

Challenges Associated with Industrial Parks in India

- **Land Acquisition and Under-utilisation:** Delays, fragmented ownership and litigation slow park development, while many allotted plots remain idle.
 - E.g., In Greater Noida, only ~52% of industrial allotments were found functional in a CAG audit.
- **Vacant Land Despite Availability:** Availability of land does not translate into industrial activity due to weak demand alignment and speculative holding.
 - E.g., Over 1.25 lakh industrial plots mapped nationally remain vacant despite policy push.
- **Infrastructure and Connectivity Gaps:** Inadequate road, rail, port connectivity and unreliable power/water supply raise logistics costs and reduce competitiveness.
- **Regulatory and Clearance Delays:** Environmental approvals, land-use conversion and multi-layered state–central compliances increase project timelines and costs.
- **Skill and Workforce Mismatch:** Local labour often lacks industry-specific skills, forcing firms to invest heavily in training or import labour.
- **Environmental and Sustainability Pressures:** Compliance with pollution norms, waste treatment and water management raises costs, especially for MSMEs.
- **Governance and Management Weaknesses:** Absence of empowered single-park authorities leads to poor maintenance, weak enforcement and slow problem resolution.
- **Financing Constraints for MSMEs:** Smaller firms struggle to access affordable credit, reducing park occupancy and limiting value-chain depth.

Way Forward

- **Efficient Land Use:** Enforce time-bound utilisation of allotted land with penalties and clawback provisions to prevent land hoarding.
- **Integrated Infrastructure & Connectivity:** Strengthen last-mile road, rail and multimodal logistics links to reduce costs and improve competitiveness.
- **Single-Window Governance:** Empower park-level authorities with end-to-end clearance powers and clear accountability mechanisms.
- **Skill–Industry Linkages:** Align industrial parks with local skill institutions and industry-led training to address workforce mismatches.
- **Green & Sustainable Parks:** Promote renewable energy, water recycling, waste management and real-time environmental monitoring for sustainable industrial growth.

Source: [PIB](#)

Future of India- Bangladesh Relations

Context

According to recent Parliamentary Committee Report, India is confronting its **most serious strategic challenge in Bangladesh** since the 1971 Liberation War, following the 2024 political transition in Dhaka.

Recent Developments in Bangladesh Posing Strategic Challenges to India

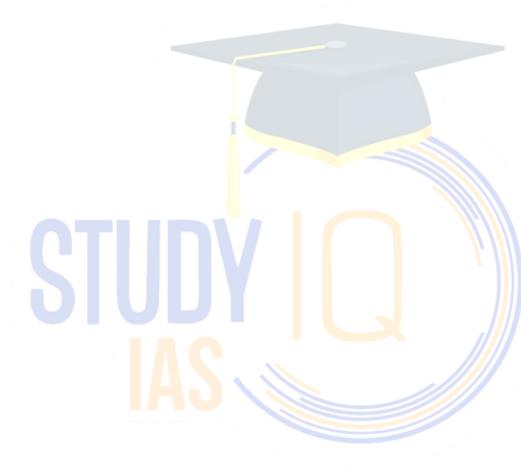
- **Political Realignment in Dhaka:** The August 2024 collapse of the pro-India Awami League government under Sheikh Hasina ended a long phase of political stability in **Bangladesh**, creating strategic uncertainty for **India**.
- **Rise of New and Islamist Political Forces:** The emergence of the National Citizen Party led by student activists, alongside the return of **Jamaat-e-Islami**, has shifted the political landscape towards groups perceived as less India-friendly.
- **Growing External Strategic Influence:** Bangladesh's expanding engagement with **China**, including plans to upgrade the Lalmonirhat airfield near India's Siliguri Corridor, and renewed defence outreach from **Pakistan**, risks eroding India's traditional strategic space.
- **Anti-India Protests and Internal Unrest:** Violent protests following the killing of youth leader Sharif Osman Hadi, including vandalism of India's Assistant High Commission in Chattogram, highlight how domestic instability is spilling over into bilateral relations.
- **Humanitarian Issue Turning Diplomatic Irritant:** India's decision to provide shelter to the ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has strained ties, with Bangladesh's interim government accusing her of inciting unrest from Indian soil and seeking her extradition.
- **Stalled Bilateral Agreements:** The 1996 Ganga Water Treaty, due for renewal in December 2026, remains without formal bilateral talks, increasing the risk of diplomatic friction and strategic vacuum.
- **Changing Societal Attitudes:** A younger generation, less emotionally connected to the 1971 Liberation War, is driving a more assertive nationalism often skeptical of India.
- **Security Spillover Risks:** The convergence of youth nationalism and resurgent Islamist groups has heightened security concerns, underscored by NCP leader Hasnat Abdullah's statements on India's Northeast and alleged support for separatist elements.

Way Forward for Managing India–Bangladesh Tensions

- **Broaden Political and Social Engagement:** Strengthen Track 1.5 and Track II dialogues to counter misinformation and avoid perceptions of partisan alignment.
- **Clear Humanitarian Narrative:** Maintain a consistent and transparent stance on sheltering Sheikh Hasina, framing it strictly as a **humanitarian and civilisational act rather than political support**.
- **Proactive and Transparent Water Diplomacy:** Begin early technical and political talks on the Ganga Water Treaty renewal before 2026 and adopt a basin-wide approach for other shared rivers through joint data-sharing and hydrological cooperation.

- **People-Centric Cultural Outreach:** Revive the spirit of 1971 for younger generations through joint cultural programmes, humanitarian initiatives and community-focused projects that emphasise shared history without political messaging.
- **Enhanced Security Coordination:** Strengthen real-time border coordination between the **Border Security Force** and Bangladeshi border forces through joint hotlines and protocols to prevent infiltration and miscalculation amid rising border pressures.

Source: [The Hindu](#)



Gaps in PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana: CAG Report

Context

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has found several gaps in the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) in its performance audit report released.

About PMKVY

- **Launched in:** 2015
- **By:** Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE).

| Target Group, Eligibility and Geographical Coverage | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| Target Group | Candidates looking for fresh skilling, re-skill/upskill, out of education candidates, school/college dropouts or unemployed youth of India nationality | Marginalized, vulnerable groups, etc. requiring special attention or jobs -roles with focus on future skills. | Candidates with prior learning experience or skills and willing to get assessed and certified. |
| Eligibility | Indian nationals possessing valid Aadhaar and fulfilling eligibility criteria of respective job role. In case of RPL, prior experience will be required in the job role for which RPL certification is being sought and as specified in the job role. | | |
| Age Group | 15-45 years | 15-45 years | 18-59 years |
| Geographical coverage | Special attention to aspirational, backward, border, tribal and Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) affected districts, including skilling requirement for other countries. | | |

Source: Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

What are the Key Gaps Highlighted by the CAG Report

- **Planning and Strategic Gaps:**
 - **Lack of Long-term Strategy:** The scheme was run in three separate phases **without a consolidated National Skill Development Plan**.
 - **Poor Skill Mapping:** While 60% of training was supposed to be in high-demand sectors like construction and logistics, only **22.7%** occurred there. Instead, generic sectors like retail and apparel were over-represented.
- **Data Integrity and Verification Gaps:**
 - **Invalid Bank Account Data:** On the Skill India Portal (SIP), bank account fields for **94.5% of beneficiaries** (90.66 lakh out of 95.9 lakh) were found to be blank, "Null," "N/A," or filled with zeros.
 - **Fake/Duplicate Records:** The audit found dummy account numbers like "**1111111111**" and "**123456**." Additionally, the same photographs were used as evidence for different training programs across multiple states.

- **Weak Enrollment Verification:** Candidates were often enrolled without verifying their age, education, or work experience, meaning the scheme failed to specifically target unemployed youth or school dropouts.
- **Implementation and Monitoring Gaps:**
 - **Non-functional Training Centres:** Physical inspections revealed that several centers were **closed or non-operational**, even though official records showed they were conducting active training batches.
 - **Attendance Failures:** The Aadhaar-enabled biometric attendance system (AEBAS) was either not installed or non-functional in nearly **50% of the training sessions** under PMKVY 2.0.
 - **Questionable Certification:** Certifications were sometimes issued by employers who did not qualify as "Best-in-Class," diluting the industry value of the certificates.
- **Financial and Outcome Gaps:**
 - **Low Placement Rates:** Only **41%** of certified candidates under short-term training were actually placed. In states like Kerala and Uttar Pradesh, placement documents were found to be incorrect or missing.
 - **Payment Failures (DBT):** Despite the goal of Direct Benefit Transfer, successful payments reached only about **18%** of candidates initially. As of late 2025, payouts to over **34 lakh candidates** were still reported as pending due to data errors.
 - **Administrative Overcharging:** The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) was found to have overcharged administrative expenses by **₹24.13 crore** and retained interest that should have been returned to the government.

Way Forward

- **Verification: "Aadhaar or Nothing":** Every registration now requires **Aadhaar-based e-KYC**, which auto-fetches the candidate's name, photo, and address to prevent duplicate or fake enrollments.
- **Monitoring: Geo-tagged Evidence:** All training centers must now provide **geo-tagged and time-stamped images** of training sessions.
- **Strategy: Market-Led Skill Mapping:** Moving away from "easy-to-run" courses (like generic retail), the new focus is on **Industry 4.0**. Skill mapping, specifically prioritizing sectors like **Drone Technology, AI, Mechatronics, and Robotics**.
- **Financials: Strict Payout Tranches:** The funding model has been tightened to ensure taxpayer money is used efficiently:
 - **Tranche 1 (30%):** On commencement (verified by biometric attendance).
 - **Tranche 2 (50%):** On successful certification.
 - **Tranche 3 (20%):** Strictly linked to **verified placement outcomes**.

Source: [India Today](#)

Elimination of Rhino Dehorning

Context

A new scientific study published in *Science* has shown that **systematic dehorning of rhinos in southern Africa led to a sharp reduction in poaching**, offering one of the most effective conservation interventions seen in recent years.

How Africa Reduced Rhino Poaching through Dehorning

- **Dehorning as a Deterrence Strategy:** Removing **90–93% of the rhino horn** eliminated the primary economic incentive for poachers, drastically reducing killings.
- **Strong Statistical Evidence:** Dehorning **2,284 rhinos across eight reserves** led to an immediate **78% fall in poaching**, achieved using only **1.2% of the total anti-poaching budget**.
- **Individual-Level Impact:** Dehorned rhinos had a **95% lower risk of being poached** compared to rhinos with intact horns, proving the deterrent effect was direct and substantial.
- **Limits of Conventional Anti-Poaching:** Heavy investments in patrols, drones, dogs and AI cameras (**\$74 million between 2017–23**) failed to stop losses of nearly **2,000 rhinos**, highlighting enforcement limitations due to corruption and weak justice systems.
- **Why Dehorning Works Better:** Poachers kill rhinos to extract the **entire horn quickly**, but dehorned animals offer minimal payoff, making the risk–reward equation unattractive.
- **Not a Silver Bullet, but a Game-Changer:** While poachers may still target horn stumps, the study shows dehorning is **far more cost-effective** than detection-only approaches.

Contrast with India's Experience (Context)

- In **Kaziranga National Park**, India reduced poaching to **1–2 rhinos over three years** through **community engagement, intelligence-based patrolling and ranger empowerment**, making dehorning unnecessary.
- This highlights that **context matters**: Africa relied on **economic deterrence**, while India succeeded through **institutional and community-led conservation**.

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Prelims Topics

Dulhasti Hydroelectric Project

Context

Union Environment Ministry's expert panel has cleared the 260-MW Dulhasti Stage-II Hydroelectric Project on the Chenab river.

About Dulhasti Hydroelectric Project

- **Type:** Run-of-the-river hydroelectric power project.
- **Location:** Kishtwar district, Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, India.
- **River:** Chenab River.
- **Installed Capacity: Stage I- 390 MW** (3 × 130 MW units), commissioned in 2007.
 - **Dulhasti-II HEP: 260 MW** (2 × 130 MW)
 - Utilises the existing Dulhasti-I dam and diverts surplus water from the Marusudar River via the Pakal Dul reservoir.

Source: [Indian Express](#)

- **Developed by:** Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, in collaboration with research teams from Denmark and Germany.
- **Aim:**
 - To **automate complex laboratory experiments**, reduce human effort and time, and **accelerate scientific discovery**.
 - To enable AI to move beyond passive analysis into **active scientific reasoning and experimentation**, especially in **materials science and experimental physics**.

Source: [Business Today](#)

Gujarat Regains Tiger State Status

Context

Gujarat has regained its 'Tiger State' status after 33 years, following confirmation of a tiger's presence in Ratanmahal Wildlife Sanctuary.

About Ratanmahal Wildlife Sanctuary (Also called the Ratanmahal Sloth Bear Sanctuary)

- **Location & Establishment:** Dahod district of Gujarat, adjoining the Jhabua and Kathiwada regions of Madhya Pradesh,
 - Notified as a wildlife sanctuary in 1982.
- **Flora:** The sanctuary is characterised by **dry teak forests in the foothills** and **mixed deciduous vegetation with dry bamboo thickets** along the periphery, with abundant **Mahua and Jamun trees**, which form vital food resources.
- **Fauna:** It is a **key stronghold for the Sloth Bear**, supporting the **largest population of the species in Gujarat**, and also sustains a **significant leopard population**.

Artificially Intelligent Lab Assistant (AILA)

Context

Researchers at IIT Delhi have developed AILA.

About AILA

- It is an **autonomous AI-powered laboratory assistant** capable of **designing, executing and interpreting real-world scientific experiments** without continuous human supervision.
- Unlike conventional AI systems limited to data analysis, AILA **actively controls laboratory instruments** and **adapts experimental decisions in real time**.

Related Facts

- Gujarat is the **only state in India with all three major big cats**—lion, tiger and leopard.
- **Total Tiger Reserves in India: 57**
 - **54th:** Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve (Madhya Pradesh)
 - **55th:** Dholpur – Karauli Tiger Reserve (Rajasthan)
 - **56th:** Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla Tiger Reserve
- **Madhya Pradesh has highest number of Tiger Reserves in India: 8**
- Also **Madhya Pradesh has the highest number of national parks in India: 11**
- As of 2023, India had **3,682 wild tigers**, which is almost **75% of the world's wild tiger population:**

Source: [Indian Express](#)



Places in News

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Sokoto State - Nigeria</p>  | <p>News ? The United States carried out airstrikes against Islamic State (IS) militants in north-western Nigeria, in Sokoto State.</p> <p>About Sokoto State</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sokoto State is located in north-western Nigeria, bordering Niger Republic to the north. ● It lies in the Sahel–Savanna ecological zone, characterised by semi-arid climate and sparse vegetation. <p>About Nigeria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Location: West African country. (Capital-Abuja) ● Bordering Countries: Niger (north), Chad and Cameroon (east), and Benin (west). ● Bordering Water Bodies: Gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic Ocean. <p>Source: Indian Express</p> |
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