
Prelims Exam Topics

RAM PRASAD BISMIL

Context

11th June marked the birth anniversary of revolutionary freedom fighter Ram Prasad Bismil (born 1897, Shahjahanpur, UP).

About Ram Prasad Bismil

- Indian revolutionary, poet and writer who fought against British colonial rule; hanged at Gorakhpur Jail on 19 December 1927, aged 30.
- Associated with Arya Samaj; drew inspiration from Satyarth Prakash by Dayananda Saraswati.
- Inspired to revolt after the death sentence given to Arya Samaj missionary Bhai Parmanand
- **Contribution to Freedom struggle**
 - Founded **Matrivedi** (with Genda Lal Dixit): mobilised youth against British rule
 - **Mainpuri Conspiracy (1918)**: distributed prohibited literature and pamphlets
 - Co-founded **Hindustan Republican Association (HRA)** (1924) With Sachindra Nath Sanyal, Ashfaqullah Khan, Jogesh Chandra Chatterjee
 - HRA aimed at establishing a "*Federal Republic of United States of India*" through armed revolution; Later renamed Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA).
 - **Kakori Train Robbery (1925)**: looted British government treasury train; led to death sentences for Bismil, Ashfaqullah Khan, Rajendra Lahiri, and Roshan Singh.
- **Literary Contributions**: Wrote in Hindi and Urdu under pen names: Bismil ('wounded/restless'), Ram, Agyat
 - Notable works: Sarfaroshi Ki Tamanna (anthem of revolutionaries), Mera Rang De Basanti Chola, autobiography written in Lucknow Central Jail
 - Kranti Geetanjali (published posthumously, 1929)

TRADEMARK PROTECTION FOR SHREE JAGANNATH TEMPLE

Context

In a first for any Indian shrine, the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) obtained trademark protection for key terms and symbols associated with the temple.

What was trademarked?

- **Wordmarks (protects specific words):** Patitapabana ('Saviour of the Fallen') and Ananda Bajara (sacred Mahaprasad dining area within the temple)
- **Logomark (protects visual symbol/design):** Official logo of SJTA featuring the Neelachakra (sacred eight-spoked metal disc atop the temple spire).

About Shree Jagannath Temple

- Located in **Puri, Odisha**; also called the **White Pagoda**
- Believed to be built by **Anantavarman Chodaganga Deva** of the **Eastern Ganga Dynasty** (12th century CE)
- Architecture: **Kalinga style** (sub-style of Nagara/North Indian temple architecture)
- **Deities: Lord Jagannath** (incarnation of Vishnu), **Devi Subhadra**, and **Lord Balabhadra**
 - Idols carved out of wood (unlike conventional stone/metal idols)
 - Main structure believed to cast no visible shadow at any time of day
- One of the four **Char Dhams** (alongside Dwarika, Badrinath, and Rameswaram)
- Centre of the world-famous **Ratha Yatra**

Trademark

- An IPR that protects a distinctive word, logo, symbol, or phrase to identify and distinguish goods/services of an entity.
- Governed by **Trade Marks Act, 1999** and **Trade Marks Rules, 2017**
- Administered by **Trade Marks Registry** under **CGPDTM**, attached to **DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce & Industry**
- Valid for **10 years; renewable**
- India is a member of the **Madrid Protocol** (facilitates international trademark registration)

RETAIL INFLATION

Context

India's retail inflation rose to 3.9% in May 2026, up from 3.5% in April, a 16-month high, driven by rising food prices.

About Retail Inflation

- Tracks change in retail prices of a **fixed basket of goods and services** purchased by households for daily consumption

- The change in Consumer Price Index (CPI) over a period of time is referred to as **CPI-based or retail inflation**
- Published monthly by **National Statistical Office (NSO)** under **MoSPI**, released at All-India and state level for Rural, Urban, and Combined sectors
- **What Does CPI Tell Us?**
 - Cost of living for average households
 - Purchasing power of consumers and the Indian rupee
 - Real value of salaries, wages, and pensions
 - Relative expensiveness of goods and services over time
- **How is CPI Calculated?**
 - CPI compares the general price level in the current period against a **base year** (benchmark)
 - **Formula:** $\text{CPI} = \left(\frac{\text{Cost of fixed basket in current year}}{\text{Cost of fixed basket in base year}} \right) \times 100$
 - Current base year: **2024 = 100** (revised from 2012; weights derived from **Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) 2023–24**)
 - Basket expanded from 299 to **358 items**; aligned with **COICOP 2018** framework
- **CPI Sub-Indices**
 - **CPI-Rural** and **CPI-Urban** → combined to form headline **CPI-Combined** (compiled by NSO/MoSPI)
 - **CPI-Industrial Workers (IW)** and **CPI-Agricultural Labourers (AL)** → compiled by **Labour Bureau**, Ministry of Labour;
- **Uses of CPI**
 - Primary indicator for **RBI's monetary policy** under the Flexible Inflation Targeting (FIT) framework
 - Used as a **deflator** in national accounts to convert nominal GDP to real GDP
 - Basis for **indexation** of wages, pensions, DA, and income tax brackets

Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose (COICOP)

- An **international statistical standard** developed by the **United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD)**

- Provides a uniform framework for classifying household consumption expenditure into categories and sub-categories

MUSCAT PLAN OF ACTION

Context:

The UN Secretary-General launched the Muscat Plan of Action.

About Muscat Plan of Action

- A multi-stakeholder initiative developed under the leadership of **Oman**, the **UN Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect (UNOSAPG)**, and the **Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers**
- **Aim:** to combat hate speech, avert genocide and atrocity crimes, and foster peace through **mediation, dialogue, and local peacebuilding efforts**
- Underscores the critical role of **traditional and indigenous actors** in preventing atrocity crimes and countering hate speech.

GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (GAHR)

Context

The UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR) launched the Global Alliance for Human Rights (GAHR).

About Global Alliance for Human Rights (GAHR)

- A long-term initiative anchored to the **80th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) on 10 December 2028**
- Aim: to place human rights at the core of governance, innovation, and economic policy to build accountable, inclusive, and equitable societies.
- Three Guiding Principles: Imagine (envision a better future) → Dialogue (foster inclusive discussions) → Act (translate commitments into action)

Pathway	Initiative	Focus
Rights at Home	Human Rights Cities & Local Governments Movement	Rights-based public services and participatory governance at local level
Rights in Action	Global Helpdesk on Business and Human Rights	Advisory support to companies for implementing UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
Rights in Mind	Research for Rights Platform	Connecting academic institutions for multidisciplinary human rights research
	ReachOut	Outreach strategies to make human rights more personal and relevant
	21st Century Philosophers' Circle	Thought leaders deepening public discourse on human dignity and rights
Rights for the Future	RightsX Summit	Advancing digital innovation that respects human rights
	Human Rights-based Environmental Action	Integrating human rights into climate and environmental action
	Human Rights in Every Classroom	Embedding human rights education in schools and higher education institutions

- **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR):** Landmark UN declaration adopted on **10 December 1948**; establishes a common global standard of fundamental civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights for all individuals, serving as the foundation of international human rights law.
- **OHCHR:** Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights; principal UN body mandated to promote and protect human rights globally.

GLOBAL PEACE INDEX (GPI) 2026

Context

India ranked 127th and Sri Lanka climbed 14 places to 67th in the 2026 Global Peace Index.

About GPI

- Published by: Institute for Economics & Peace (independent, non-partisan think tank)
- Covers 163 countries and territories
- Assesses peacefulness across 23 indicators under three domains: Societal Safety & Security, Ongoing Domestic & International Conflict, and Militarisation
- **GPI 2026**
 - **Top ranked:** Iceland, followed by New Zealand, Switzerland, Slovenia, Ireland

- **Bottom ranked:** Russia (last), followed by Sudan, DRC, Ukraine, Israel

Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP): independent and non-partisan think tank, also publishes the Global Terrorism Index and Ecological Threat Report. Headquartered in Sydney, Australia.

DRDO'S NEXT-GEN DEFENCE CAPABILITIES

Context

DRDO conducted three consecutive flight tests, demonstrating multi-layered BMD capability and maiden flight test of NASM-MR.

About Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) System

- A system designed to **detect, track, and intercept** incoming ballistic missiles before they reach their targets
- India's BMD programme has two phases:
 - **Phase-I:** Low-altitude interception (endo-atmospheric)
 - **Phase-II:** High-altitude interception (exo-atmospheric), capable of engaging up to **ICBM class** threats
- Developed **indigenously** by DRDO

About Naval Anti-Ship Missile-Medium Range (NASM-MR)

- Indigenously developed anti-ship cruise missile by DRDO for the Indian Navy
- Designed to strike hostile surface warships: frigates, corvettes, destroyers at medium range
- Comparable in class to the US-origin Harpoon missile

Ballistic vs Cruise Missile A **ballistic missile** follows a high-arc trajectory determined by gravity after initial powered flight (like a projectile). A **cruise missile** is self-propelled throughout flight, flying at low altitude like an aircraft.

Mains Exam Topics

DISABILITY PENSIONS AND THE CASE FOR A MINIMUM UNIVERSAL

DISABILITY PENSION FLOOR RATE (MUDPFR)

Context

India has 4.5–6 crore Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), yet disability pensions remain fragmented, discretionary, and determined by geography rather than need.

What are current challenges in Disability Welfare in India?

- **Legal Framework Exists but Implementation Lags:** The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016 guarantees social security including pensions, but actual delivery falls far short.
 - *E.g.*, The Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS) covers only a fraction of eligible PwDs, with monthly amounts ranging from just ₹300 to ₹500 in most states.
- **Chronic Underfunding:** India spends only 0.02% of GDP on disability welfare including pensions, lowest among comparable economies
 - *E.g.*, South Africa spends 0.12–0.15% of GDP; Brazil 0.45–0.50%; and OECD countries average 2.2%
- **Exclusion from Digital Welfare Architecture:** Less than 40% of PwDs possess the disability identity card required to access benefits. This creates a structural exclusion from DBT-linked entitlements.
- **Geographic inequality in Pension Delivery:** Pension amounts, eligibility norms, and disbursement timelines vary sharply across states.
 - *E.g.*, While some states offer ₹1,000–₹3,000 per month, others continue with sub-₹500 amounts, with no portability for PwDs who migrate.
- **Institutional Fragmentation:** Responsibility for disability pensions is split between the Ministry of Rural Development and the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities. This leads to duplication, delays, and diffused accountability.

Why Is a MUDPFR Economically and Constitutionally Necessary?

MUDPFR (Minimum Universal Disability Pension Floor Rate) is a proposed national minimum pension guarantee that ensures no PwD receives below a set amount regardless of which state they live in.

- **Disability Inclusion as Economic Investment:** Excluding PwDs from productive participation carries a measurable GDP cost. Disability income raises household stability, rural consumption, and labour participation.
 - *E.g.*, The World Bank and UNDP estimate that low- and middle-income countries lose 3–7% of GDP from excluding PwDs from education, employment, and social security.
- **High Fiscal Multiplier:** Disability pension spending generates stronger economic returns than many other forms of expenditure, with fiscal multipliers estimated at 1.4–1.6.
- **Constitutional Obligation:** Article 41 of the Directive Principles obligates the state to provide public assistance to PwDs. A MUDPFR gives this obligation a concrete, enforceable floor.
- **Fiscally Manageable:** A MUDPFR of ₹8,000/month for 40 lakh beneficiaries would cost approximately ₹38,400 crore annually, just 0.08% of GDP
- **International Legal Commitments:** India's obligations under Article 28 of the UNCRPD, ILO Recommendation No. 202, and SDG 1.3 all mandate inclusive social protection floors.

What Are the Key Challenges in Implementing a MUDPFR?

- **Federal Fiscal Tensions:** Centre-state friction, especially for states with limited fiscal capacity.
- **Identification and Registry Gaps:** With less than 40% of PwDs holding valid disability certificates, a reliable, real-time national registry does not yet exist.
- **Leakage and Targeting Risks:** Expanding coverage without robust beneficiary verification may lead to exclusion errors) or inclusion errors, undermining fiscal credibility.
- **Employment-Pension Disconnect:** Pension systems remain isolated from employment support, limiting PwDs to passive welfare rather than productive economic participation.

What Is the Way Forward?

- **Establish a National Disability Pension Authority (NDPA):** Create a single statutory body responsible for eligibility norms, a national registry, portability, digital integration, grievance redress, and state-wise performance monitoring.
 - *E.g.*, South Africa's SASSA, Australia's NDIA, Brazil's INSS, and Ireland's Department of Social Protection.
- **Introduce a Phased MUDPFR:** Begin with ₹3,000/month and index it to inflation, with a clear legislative roadmap to reach ₹8,000–₹10,000/month over five years, following the model of PM-KISAN and MGNREGS.

- **Build a Real-Time Disability Registry:** Link the UDID (Unique Disability ID) portal with Aadhaar, DBT, and state health records to ensure accurate, portable identification and seamless benefit delivery.
- **Integrate Pensions with Employment Support:** Combine MUDPFR with employer incentive schemes under a strengthened Disability Employment Incentive Scheme to move PwDs from survival to productive participation.
 - *E.g.*, The UK's Access to Work programme, Australia's wage subsidies, and Nigeria's employer tax incentives

