
Prelims Exam Topics

PV NARASIMHA RAO

Context

The Prime Ministers Museum and Library (PMML) celebrated the 105th birth anniversary of former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao.

About PV Narasimha Rao

- Narasimha Rao born in Hyderabad State. He was a freedom fighter, academician, linguist, and served as the **9th Prime Minister of India (1991–1996)**.
- He has published ‘SahasraPhan’, a Hindi translation of late Shri Viswanatha Satyanarayana’s famous Telegu Novel ‘Veyi Padagalu’; ‘Abala Jeevitam’, Telugu translation of late Shri Hari Narayan Apte’s famous Marathi Novel, “Pan Lakshat Kon ghetu”.
- **Economic Liberalization (1991):** Dismantled the **License Raj**, cut bureaucratic red tape, and boosted industrial competitiveness.
- **Foreign Policy Shifts:**
 - Launched the **Look East Policy** to deepen strategic ties with Southeast Asia.
 - Formally established **diplomatic relations with Israel**.
- **Constitutional Reforms:** Enacted the **73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts**, constitutionally empowering rural (Panchayats) and urban (Municipalities) local bodies.

OPERATION AMISTAD

Context

In response to earthquakes that recently struck Venezuela, the Government of India has officially launched ‘Operation Amistad’.

About Operation Amistad

- **Strategic Airlift Framework:** The emergency mission is anchored by two **Indian Air Force (IAF) C-17 Globemaster III** heavy-lift strategic transport aircraft, deployed to ensure the rapid transcontinental delivery of critical relief supplies.
- **BHISHM Cube Technology:** The cargo includes two **BHISHM** (*Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita and Maitri*) cubes. These are cutting-edge, completely portable, and modular field hospitals designed to be deployed within minutes. They provide advanced trauma care in active disaster zones without requiring pre-existing infrastructure.

PASSPORT IS NOT PROOF OF CITIZENSHIP

Context

The Ministry of External Affairs clarified that an Indian passport is primarily a travel document and not conclusive proof of Indian citizenship.

About Indian Citizenship:

- Articles 5–11 (Part II) of the Constitution provide the foundational framework for citizenship.
- Citizenship is acquired through: birth, descent, registration, naturalisation, or incorporation of territory.
- Citizenship is a legal status, not a documentary status. No law identifies any single document as definitive proof.

Why a Passport is NOT Conclusive Proof?

- Passports Act, 1967 empowers the Central Government to issue a passport even to a non-citizen in exceptional cases of public interest.
- Has been used for: stateless persons, Tibetan refugees, Sri Lankan Tamil refugees.
- This provision directly confirms that a passport is fundamentally a travel document, not a citizenship certificate.

SAHARIYA TRIBE

Context

During a visit to Kuno National Park, the President of India met with members of the Sahariya tribe

About Sahariya Tribe

- **Status:** Classified as a **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG)**.
- **Geographic Distribution:** Primarily located across **Madhya Pradesh** and **Rajasthan**.
- **Cultural Identity:** Renowned for the **Saharia Swang**, a traditional dance performed annually during the **Holi festival**.

GLOBAL CHEMICALS MONITORING PROGRAMME

Context

The Global Chemicals Monitoring Programme (GCMP) has been officially rolled out to establish a unified, science-based tracking network for hazardous pollutants

About Global Chemicals Monitoring Programme

- **Founders:** Jointly launched by the **UNEP** and the **GEF**.

- **Objective:** Evaluate the efficacy of the **Stockholm Convention** (on POPs) and the **Minamata Convention** (on Mercury).

About GEF

- **Origin:** Conceived on the eve of the **1992 Rio Earth Summit** to address urgent global ecological crises.
- **Mandate:** Functions as a joint family of funds targeting five interconnected planetary challenges: biodiversity loss, climate change, pollution, land degradation, and marine ecosystem strain.
- **Headquarters:** Secretariat is located in **Washington, D.C.**
- The **GEF Trust Fund** channels financial assistance specifically to **developing countries** and **economies in transition** to fulfill their obligations under five landmark international treaties:
 1. **UNFCCC** (Climate Change)
 2. **UNCBD** (Biological Diversity)
 3. **UNCCD** (Desertification)
 4. **Stockholm Convention** (Persistent Organic Pollutants)
 5. **Minamata Convention** (Mercury)

About Stockholm Convention

- The **Stockholm Convention** is a legally binding international treaty designed to protect public health and ecosystems from **Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)**.
- **Timeline:** Adopted in **2001** (Stockholm, Sweden); entered into force in **2004**.
- POPs are carbon-based, synthetic chemical compounds possessing distinct, hazardous properties that trigger widespread ecological and health disruptions. For e.g., DDT, Dioxins, Polychlorinated Biphenyls and Chlorpyrifos etc.

About Minamata Convention

- The Minamata Convention is a legally binding international treaty created to protect human health and the global environment from the adverse impacts of mercury pollution.
- **Timeline:** Adopted in 2013 (Kumamoto, Japan); entered into force in August 2017..
- **About Mercury and Mercury Pollution**
 - Mercury is a naturally occurring heavy metal (Atomic Number: 80) and the only metal that remains liquid at room temperature.
 - When elemental mercury enters aquatic ecosystems through industrial runoff or atmospheric deposition, bacteria convert it into methylmercury—an organic, highly toxic form.

- It aggressively attacks the central nervous system, crossing the blood-brain barrier. It causes neurological deficits, tremors, and vision/hearing loss.

BABA BANDA SINGH BAHADUR (1670–1716)

Context

The Union Home Minister paid tribute to the iconic Sikh commander on his **Martyrdom Day**, honoring his sacrifices and administrative reforms.

About Baba Banda Singh Bahadur

- **Early Life & Identity:** Born as *Lachman Dev* in Rajouri (Jammu & Kashmir). After becoming a devoted disciple of **Guru Gobind Singh**, he was given the name **Banda Singh Bahadur**.
- **Military Leadership:** He served as a commander of the **Khalsa army**, successfully defeating regional Mughal forces, and establishing Sikh rule in the Punjab region.
- **Martyrdom:** Captured during the reign of Mughal Emperor **Farrukhsiyar**, he refused forced conversion to Islam despite enduring severe torture. He was executed at **Mehrauli, Delhi**.
- **Agrarian Land Reform:** He **abolished the exploitative Zamindari system**, directly transferring ownership and land rights to the actual tillers of the soil.
- **Sovereignty & Currency:** He asserted political independence by introducing **Nanak Shahi coins**, which served as a symbol of Khalsa sovereignty.

GOLDEN LANGUR

Context

Seven **Golden Langurs** rescued from an interstate wildlife trafficking network in **Assam** were successfully rehabilitated and released into **Sikhna Jwhlwao National Park**.

About Golden Langur

- **Geographic Distribution:** Exclusively **endemic** to the transboundary region of **Bhutan** and Northeast India (**Assam**).
- **Dietary Adaptation:** They are specialized **folivorous (leaf-eating) primates**.
- **Behavior:** **Diurnal** (active entirely during daylight hours) and predominantly **arboreal** (tree-dwelling).
- **Conservation Status:**
 - IUCN: Endangered
 - Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule-I

- CITES: Appendix I

JEJU FORUM FOR PEACE AND PROSPERITY

Context

India's External Affairs Minister addressed the **Jeju Forum for Peace and Prosperity 2026**, emphasizing the critical imperative to deepen bilateral cooperation and strategic partnership between India and South Korea.

About the Jeju Forum

- Fosters regional peace, stability, and international synergy to systematically tackle evolving global crises.
- **Origin:** Established in **2001** (initially designated as the *Jeju Peace Forum*) to serve as a premier multilateral dialogue platform.
- **Hosted By:** A collaborative framework involving South Korea's **Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, the **Jeju Special Self-Governing Province**, the **International Peace Foundation**, and the **East Asia Foundation**.

VOLCÁN DE FUEGO

Context

Guatemala's **Volcán de Fuego** ("Volcano of Fire") recently experienced a violent, major eruptive episode, prompting regional monitoring.

About Guatemala

- Enclosed by the **Pacific Ocean** to the south and the **Gulf of Honduras** to the northeast. It shares international land borders with **Mexico, Belize, Honduras, and El Salvador**.
- The nation's highest geographical elevation is **Volcán Tajumulco**, which peaks at 4,220 meters.



HURUN GLOBAL UNICORN INDEX 2026

- India slipped one spot to **4th place globally**, overtaken by the UK (70). The US (806) and China (381) maintain the top two positions.
- **Top Hubs:** Bengaluru remains India's unicorn capital, followed by Mumbai with 13.

TERMS IN NEWS

Open-Weight AI Models

- An artificial intelligence model whose finalized, trained parameters (**weights**) are made publicly accessible for download.
- **Utility:** This distribution model empowers users to execute the system locally on their own hardware, audit its internal mechanics, and customize or fine-tune its architecture for specialized use cases.



Mains Exam Topics

INDIA'S MSMEs: TIME TO STEP UP

Context

The Economic Survey 2025-26 has highlighted India's MSME sector as a critical economic cornerstone contributing 31.1% to GDP and employing 32.8 crore people, while flagging their failure to transition from micro to mid-sized firms as a major structural constraint for the nation's next growth phase.

In What Ways Do MSMEs Fuel India's Economic Engine?

- **Macroeconomic Value & Trade:** The sector contributes **31.1% to India's GDP**, 35.4% to manufacturing output, and **48.58% to total exports**. They act as critical suppliers of intermediate goods (e.g., Pune auto components, Noida electronics) to both domestic heavy industries and Global Value Chains (GVCs).
- **Demographic Absorption:** As the second-largest employer after agriculture, MSMEs support over **32.8 crore livelihoods**. Labor-intensive clusters like Tirupur (textiles) and Kanpur (leather) convert India's surplus rural and semi-urban labor into manufacturing productivity.
- **Grassroots Inclusion & Equity:** The sector democratizes capital. Women own approximately 40% of registered units, and operations naturally disperse across Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities (e.g., Uttar Pradesh hosts over 86 lakh units). This slows rural-to-urban migration and fosters equitable regional growth.
- **High-Tech Innovation:** Moving beyond low-skill manufacturing, specialized small businesses now supply precision components to sectors like defense and aerospace, evidenced by MSMEs manufacturing critical sub-assemblies for ISRO's Chandrayaan-3.

What Structural Bottlenecks Constrain MSME Growth?

- **The "Dwarfishness" Trap:** Over 99% of registered MSMEs remain perpetually micro. Firms intentionally suppress their scale to avoid regulatory compliance and retain small-business benefits, creating a "missing middle" of mid-sized companies that drive true productivity.
- **Severe Credit and Liquidity Deficits:** There is an estimated **₹30 lakh crore credit gap**. Commercial banks rely on rigid, collateral-backed underwriting, which disadvantages unincorporated micro-firms that possess minimal fixed assets.
- **Delayed Payments & Cash-Flow Crises:** Despite the 45-day legal mandate under the MSME Development Act, delayed payments from large corporates and public sector enterprises routinely drain MSME working capital. Weak enforcement leaves small suppliers highly vulnerable to bankruptcy.

- **Asymmetric Technology Adoption:** While retail digital payments are ubiquitous (90% adoption), integration of operational technology is minimal. Only 18% of MSMEs use digital lending, and their overall productivity stands at a mere 18% of large enterprises.
- **Vulnerability to Price Shocks:** Lacking bulk bargaining power, small units absorb the full force of raw material price spikes, which frequently wipe out their razor-thin operating margins.

How Can Policy Catalyze and Scale the Ecosystem?

- **Cash-Flow Based Algorithmic Lending:** Move away from collateral dependency. By integrating the Udyam portal, GSTN, and Account Aggregators (AA), banks can dynamically underwrite working capital loans based on real-time invoice matching and digital ledger health.
- **Deepening Liquidity Markets:** Pool verified trade receivables from platforms like TReDS into sovereign-backed **Asset-Backed Securities (ABS)**. Trading these in secondary markets will seamlessly channel institutional capital into MSME liquidity.
- **Democratizing Technology Access:** Establish "Plug-and-Play" Digital Common Facilities in Tier-II and Tier-III hubs. Providing shared access to advanced infrastructure—like 3D printing, precision CNC testing, and AI tools—on a pay-per-use model removes high capital barriers.
- **Grassroots Formalization & Green Incentives:** Deploy a decentralized network of "Corporate Mitras" (trained local commerce graduates) to handle compliance and intellectual property filings for micro-units. Additionally, link **Zero Defect Zero Effect (ZED)** sustainability certifications to automatic interest subventions to encourage green transitions.
- **Frictionless Global Integration:** Create specialized E-Commerce Export Fulfillment Hubs near multimodal logistics parks. Co-locating customs clearance, quality testing, and integrated warehousing will drastically reduce transit timelines and compliance friction for export-ready MSMEs.