



INSIGHTSIAS

SIMPLIFYING IAS EXAM PREPARATION



**INSIGHTS
DAILY
CURRENT
AFFAIRS + PIB
SUMMARY**

7 JANUARY 2025

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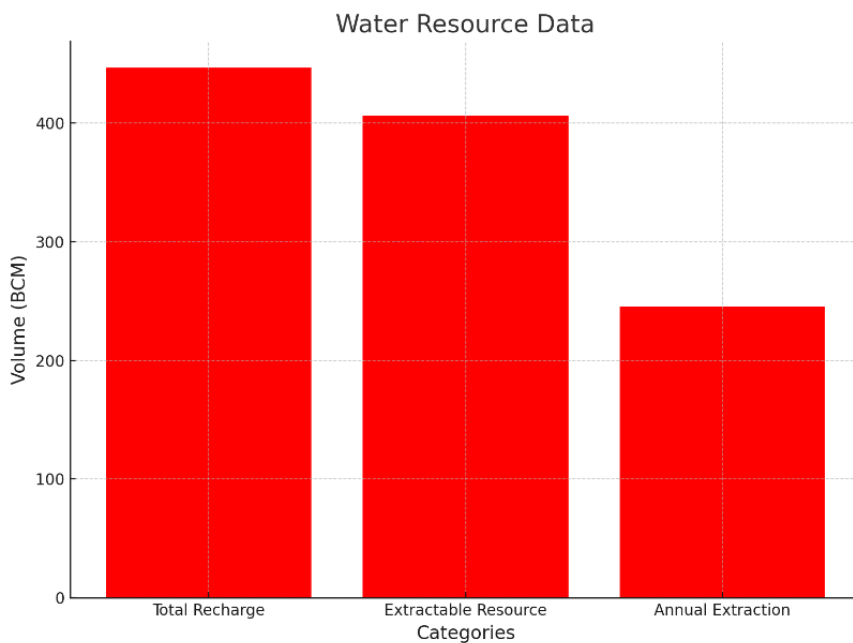
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GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION

Syllabus: Water Resources

Context: Recent reports by the [Central Ground Water Board](#) (CGWB) highlight positive trends in groundwater recharge and reduced extraction, showcasing the potential of collaborative efforts and innovative policies.



- **Improvements (2017–2024):** (Source: National Compilation on Dynamic Ground Water Resources of India, 2024)
 - Groundwater recharge increased by **15 BCM**.
 - Extraction decreased by **3 BCM**.
 - Safe assessment units increased from **62.6% (2017)** to **73.4% (2024)**.
 - Over-exploited units declined from **17.24%** to **11.13%**.
- **Government Initiatives for Groundwater Conservation**
 - **Jal Shakti Abhiyan:** Focuses on rainwater harvesting and water conservation under the “Catch the Rain” campaign.
 - **Atal Bhujal Yojana (2020):** Targets groundwater management in water-stressed regions across seven states.
 - **Mission Amrit Sarovar (2022):** Plans to create/rejuvenate **75 Amrit Sarovars** in each district for water harvesting.
 - **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY):** Expands irrigation coverage and improves water-use efficiency.
 - **National Aquifer Mapping (NAQUIM):** Covers **25 lakh sq. km**, aiding in better planning for groundwater recharge.
 - **Master Plan for Artificial Recharge (2020):** Proposes **1.42 crore rainwater harvesting structures** to harness **185 BCM** of rainfall.
 - **Watershed Development Component of PMKSY (WDC-PMKSY):** Promotes soil conservation and rainwater harvesting.

- **National Water Policy (2012):** Advocates rainwater harvesting and efficient water use.
- **Challenges Facing Groundwater:**
 - **Over-extraction:** Excessive use of groundwater for irrigation and domestic needs is depleting reserves faster than they can recharge.
 - **Pollution:** Groundwater is increasingly contaminated by arsenic, fluoride, nitrates, and industrial pollutants, impacting health and agriculture.
 - **Declining Water Tables:** Unsustainable practices in urban and rural areas are causing groundwater levels to drop alarmingly.
 - **Climate Change:** Shifting rainfall patterns are disrupting groundwater recharge cycles, exacerbating water scarcity.
 - **Urbanization:** Expansion of cities reduces recharge zones and limits infiltration, worsening groundwater depletion.
- **Way Ahead:**
 - **Policy Interventions:** Enforce sustainable groundwater use laws and introduce incentives for adopting conservation techniques.
 - **Technology Integration:** Leverage AI and IoT for real-time groundwater monitoring and optimized water resource management.
 - **Community Engagement:** Foster awareness campaigns and involve local communities in groundwater conservation initiatives.
 - **Integrated Water Management:** Encourage the use of surface and rainwater to complement groundwater and reduce dependence.

Conclusion:

India's significant progress in groundwater recharge and conservation underscores the importance of collaborative efforts. By continuing sustainable practices, technological innovations, and community participation, India can secure its water future and lead the way in global water management.

Insta Links:

1. [Groundwater-conservation-in-India](#)

PYQ:

1. What are the salient features of the Jal Shakti Abhiyan launched by the Government of India for water conservation and water security? (UPSC-2020)
2. Suggest measures to improve water storage and irrigation system to make its judicious use under the depleting scenario. (UPSC-2020)

GS Paper 3:

MINIMUM SUPPORT PRICE

Syllabus: Agriculture

Context: Farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal's indefinite fast entered its 43rd day as the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture, has recommended a "legally binding" MSP.



What is MSP?

- **Definition:** MSP is the price at which the government purchases crops from farmers to ensure they do not incur losses.
- **Established by:** Recommended by the **Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP)** under the Ministry of Agriculture, final approval by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA).
- **Crops Covered:** MSP is declared for **23 crops**, including cereals, pulses, oilseeds, and commercial crops like cotton and jute.
- **Purpose:** Protect farmers from price fluctuations, provide income stability, and ensure agricultural growth.

Need for MSP for Farmers:

- **Income Stability:** MSP protects farmers from losses due to **market price dips** caused by overproduction or low demand.

E.g. In 2024, moong prices in Rajasthan were ₹6,467 per quintal, far below the MSP of ₹8,682 (Indian Express).

- **Inequitable Market Dynamics:** Farmers lack bargaining power compared to traders, leading to lower price realization.

E.g. CACP data shows over 80% of farmers rely on local markets, where prices often fall below MSP.

- **Cost of Production:** Rising input costs and stagnant yields necessitate MSP to ensure profitability.

E.g. Fertilizer and diesel prices increased by **15-20%** between 2020 and 2024 (Ministry of Agriculture).

- **Addressing Rural Poverty:** With **86% of farmers being smallholders**, MSP prevents distress sales, ensuring sustainable livelihoods.

Feasibility of Legalizing MSP:

- **High Fiscal Cost:** Procuring all **MSP crops** could cost ₹7.5 lakh crore annually, consuming 17% of the Union Budget, limiting resources for other developmental initiatives.
- **Direct Compensation Model:** Implementing a compensation mechanism for price differences would require ₹30,000-₹50,000 crore annually, which is financially more viable.
- **Market Intervention:** Establishing floor prices in **APMC** auctions can stabilize market prices and reduce the burden on government procurement.

- **Private Sector Role:** Mandating private buyers to ensure purchases at or above MSP could distribute the financial responsibility across stakeholders, reducing the load on the exchequer.
- **Deficit Payment Scheme:** Compensating farmers for the difference between market price and MSP can ensure price assurance without the need for direct procurement of all crops.

Limitations of Legalizing MSP:

- **Budgetary Stress:** Allocating 17% of the budget for MSP would strain fiscal resources, affecting investments in health, education, and infrastructure.
- **Market Disruption:** Enforcing MSP might deter private sector engagement, reducing efficiency and competitiveness in agricultural markets.
- **Administrative Challenges:** Monitoring and implementing MSP transactions for millions of farmers across diverse crops would require significant infrastructure and human resources.
- **Regional Inequity:** Current MSP procurement disproportionately benefits states like Punjab, Haryana, and UP, sidelining farmers in less developed regions.
- **Risk of Overproduction:** Guaranteed MSP could lead to over-cultivation of certain crops, aggravating issues like environmental degradation and water scarcity.

Way ahead:

- **Targeted Procurement:** Expand MSP-backed procurement to pulses, oilseeds, and millets to ensure inclusivity.
- **FPO Strengthening:** Empower **Farmer Producer Organizations** for collective bargaining and market access.
- **Digital Platforms:** Utilize [e-NAM](#) and blockchain for transparent price discovery and efficient monitoring.
- **Market Reforms:** Enhance APMC efficiency and integrate with global markets to stabilize prices.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Educate farmers on MSP mechanisms and alternative income sources like Agro-processing.

Conclusion:

A legally binding MSP can address farmers' income insecurity but requires balancing fiscal prudence, market efficiency, and inclusivity. Leveraging technology, targeted interventions, and stakeholder collaboration can ensure a sustainable agricultural future for India.

Insta Links:

1. [Legalising-minimum-support-price](#)

PYQ:

1. What are the reformative steps taken by the Government to make the food grain distribution system more effective? (UPSC-2019)

Content for Mains Enrichment (CME)

PUNJAB DE-ADDICTION REGISTRY

Context: Punjab's [Drug Control](#) Policy focuses on prevention, de-addiction, and rehabilitation, with a central registry to monitor treatments and prevent medication misuse.



About Punjab De-Addiction Registry:

- **What it is:** A digital registry leveraging **Aadhaar-based biometric authentication** to uniquely identify patients undergoing treatment for substance abuse.
- **Features:**
 - Tracks treatment progress across 590 **Outpatient Opioid Assisted Treatment (OOAT)** clinics and private centers.
 - Ensures accountability in dispensing detox medicines, preventing misuse.
 - Integrates a **secure data vault** for Aadhaar-related information to protect patient privacy.
 - Includes around **10 lakh substance abuse patients**, with 7 lakhs treated in private facilities.
 - Monitored by a **State Steering Committee** led by the Chief Secretary and Principal Secretary as nodal officer.

Relevance in UPSC Exam Syllabus:

- **General Studies (GS) Paper 2:**
 - **Governance and Policies:** Role of state governments in implementing policies for social welfare and addressing public health crises.
- **General Studies (GS) Paper 3:**
 - **Internal Security:** Tackling drug

abuse and trafficking as a socio-economic and security concern.

- **Technology in Governance:** Use of digital platforms like Aadhaar in public service delivery and policy implementation.
- **Ethics Paper:**
 - **Accountability and Governance:** Ethical considerations in addressing public health issues.

INDUS VALLEY SCRIPT

Context: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister offer of a \$1 million prize for anyone who deciphers the [Indus Valley script](#) serves a purpose beyond solving the lingering mystery regarding the 5,000-year-old civilization.



12: M-304 A

About Harappan Script:

- **What it is:**
 - The writing system of the [Indus Valley Civilization](#) (c. 2600-1900 BCE), featuring undeciphered symbols with **no confirmed linguistic association**.
- **Material used:**
 - Found on **steatite seals, clay impressions, pottery, bronze tools, stone-ware** bangles, shells, ivory, and small copper tablets.
 - Seals were often **square, about 2.54 cm**, and occasionally made of materi-

als like silver, faience, and calcite.

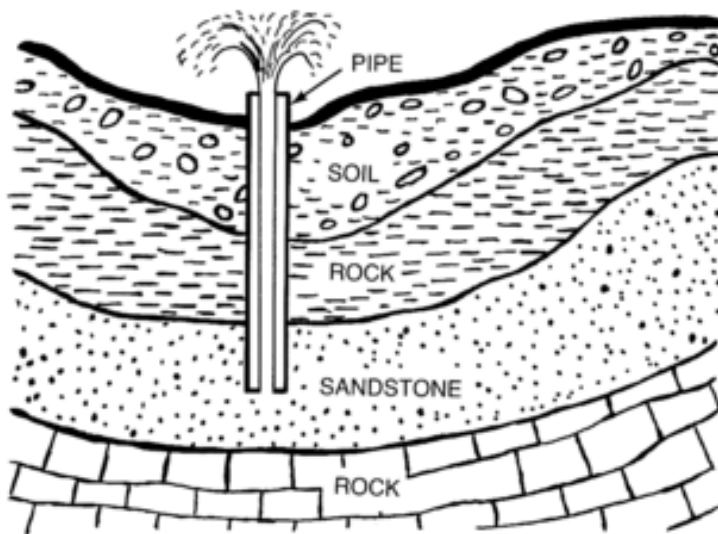
- **Features of the script:**
 - Short inscriptions averaging **five symbols**, with the longest known being **26 symbols**.
 - Early forms appeared during the **Ravi and Kot Diji phases** (c. 3500-2700 BCE).
 - The script appears to have fully developed by the Urban period (c. 2600-1900 BCE).
- **Motifs found on script:**
 - Animal motifs such as **unicorns, bulls, tigers, elephants, and mythical creatures**.
 - Depictions of human figures, often in symbolic or narrative contexts, including combat or ritual scenes.

Insta links:

1. [100-years-of-discovery-of-the-Indus-valley-civilization](#)

ARTESIAN CONDITION

Context: In December, [artesian water](#) flow in Taranagar, Jaisalmer, Rajasthan, revealed unique geological features, dispelling myths like the Saraswati River.



About artesian condition:

- **Definition:** An artesian condition occurs when groundwater is confined under pres-

sure between layers of impermeable rocks, called an artesian aquifer.

- **Factors leading to artesian condition:**
 - **Confined aquifer:** Water trapped between impermeable rock layers.
 - **Pressure gradient:** Natural geological pressure caused by the weight of overlying impermeable layers.
 - **Rupture or Drilling:** Release of pressure when the top layer is punctured (e.g., during drilling).
- **How it works:**
 - Artesian water flows naturally to the surface when the confining layer is breached, propelled by the **internal pressure**.
 - The water may gush out forcefully, depending on the depth and pressure within the aquifer.
- **Significance:**
 - **Water Source in Arid Regions:** Provides access to groundwater in deserts like Rajasthan.
 - **Geological insight:** Reveals subsurface hydrogeological conditions.
 - **Agricultural utility:** Enables irrigation without pumping in confined aquifers.
 - **Global examples:** Found in Australia, Africa, and historical wells like Artois in France.

Insta links:

1. [Saraswati-river](#)

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Context: The controversy arose in Tamil Nadu's Legislative Assembly when Governor left without delivering the customary address, citing the absence of the [National Anthem](#).



About National Anthem:

- **Written by:** Composed by [Rabindranath Tagore](#) in Bangla.
- **Adopted in:** The Hindi version was adopted as the **National Anthem of India** by the **Constituent Assembly** on **January 24, 1950**.
- **Procedure for Singing the Anthem:**

- **Full Version:**

- **Time:** Approximately **52 seconds**.
- **Conditions & Occasions:**
 - During **civil and military investitures**.
 - When the **President or Governor** arrives at or departs from formal state functions.
 - At **parades** or when the **National Flag** is unfurled.
 - On arrival or departure of the President for any **public function**.
- Preceded by a **drum roll** when played by a band.

- **Short Version:**

- **Short Version of Anthem:**

*Jana-gana-mana-adhinayaka
jaya he,*

Bharata-bhagya-vidhata,

*Jaya he, jaya he, jaya he, Jaya
jaya jaya jaya he.*

- **Time:** Approximately **20 seconds**.

- **Conditions & Occasions:**
 - Played during **toasts in Messes**.
 - On occasions with **special orders by the Government of India**.
- **Mass Singing:**
 - **Conditions & Occasions:**
 - During the **unfurling of the National Flag**.
 - At **cultural or ceremonial functions**, with choirs or public participation.
 - On arrival or departure of the **President** at non-state public functions.
 - **Schools:** Encouraged as part of morning assemblies to instill respect for the nation.

Insta links:

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| 1. MHA orders |
|-------------------------------|

BHARATPOL PORTAL

Context: Union Home Minister launched the BHARATPOL Portal, in New Delhi.



About BHARATPOL Portal:

- **Ministry Involved:**

- Ministry of Home Affairs, in collaboration with the CBI as the National Central Bureau (NCB) for INTERPOL in India.

- **Aim:**
 - To enable **real-time information sharing** and streamline international police assistance through INTERPOL, addressing challenges posed by transnational crimes.
- **Features:**
 - Centralized platform to **process INTERPOL requests**, including Red Notices and other color-coded notices.
 - **Accessible via the CBI's official website** for seamless communication among **CBI**, INTERPOL Liaison Officers (ILOs), and Unit Officers (UOs).
 - Enhances efficiency for field-level officers in combating crimes like cybercrime, drug trafficking, human trafficking, and financial fraud.
 - **Reduces reliance on traditional communication** methods like letters, emails, and faxes.
 - Facilitates **faster access to international police assistance** for criminal investigations.

Insta links:

1. [CBI](#)

UGC DRAFT REGULATIONS 2025

Context: Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan unveiled the UGC Draft Regulations 2025, which introduce significant reforms in the appointment of Vice-Chancellors (VCs) and academic staff, aligned with the [National Education Policy \(NEP\) 2020](#).

Draft Guidelines for Vice-Chancellor Appointment:

- **Organisation involved:** University Grants Commission ([UGC](#)).
- **Key features of VC appointment guidelines:**
 - **Authority for Selection:** Chancellors or Visitors are empowered to form a **three-member search-cum-selection committee** for appointing VCs.
 - **Selection Process:**
 - Applications are invited via **all-India newspaper advertisements** or through nomination/talent search processes.
 - A committee consisting of nominees from the Visitor/Chancellor (Chairperson), UGC Chairperson, and the university's apex body (e.g., Senate, Syndicate) selects the VC.
 - **Eligibility:**
 - Distinguished professionals from academia, industry, public administration, or policy-making with proven academic contributions are eligible.
 - **Inclusivity:** Encourages representation of economically weaker sections (EWS), SC, ST, OBC, and persons with disabilities.
 - **Transparency:** Mandates public notification and objective assessment methods.
- **Consequences of Non-Compliance:**
 - Non-compliance with these guidelines may result in institutions being barred from UGC schemes or offering degree programs.

NEW FACULTY RECRUITMENT NORMS

Highlights of the latest draft UGC regulations

Subject Flexibility: Candidates can teach based on their highest academic specialization, regardless of prior degree subjects or NET focus

Expanded Vice-Chancellor Eligibility: Professionals from fields like industry and policymaking with academic contributions are now eligible

Inclusivity Focus: Relaxations for EWS and PwD categories alongside SC/ST/OBC, with emphasis on Indian languages in academia

Transparent Recruitment: Teaching candidates will be assessed on practical teaching and research aptitude

Fair Career Advancement: Promotions consider leave for maternity, childcare, or study.

Recognising Innovation: Criteria now include teaching innovations, digital content, and community engagement

Revised Librarian and Sports Roles: Emphasis on digitization, indigenous sports, and public health contributions

Professor of Practice: Industry experts can join HEIs for teaching and research outside sanctioned posts

Improved Leadership Selection: Vice-Chancellor appointments ensure transparency through expert-led committees

Strict Compliance Measures: HEIs violating regulations risk penalties like exclusion from UGC schemes and degree programmes



Insta links:

1. [UGC](#)

PLI SCHEME 1.1

Context: Union Minister of Steel and Heavy Industries launched [PLI Scheme](#) 1.1 to enhance India's self-reliance in steel production under Atmanirbhar Bharat.



ORGANIC FISHERIES CLUSTER

Context: Union Minister inaugurated India's first Organic Fisheries Cluster in Soreng District, Sikkim.

- This initiative, under the **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)**



About PLI Scheme 1.1:

- What it is:** Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme 1.1 focuses on enhancing domestic production of specialty steel in five key categories.
- Launched by:** Union Ministry of Steel and Heavy Industries.
- Aim:**
 - Reduce dependency on imports of specialty [steel](#).
 - Promote high-value steel manufacturing.
 - Strengthen India's position as a global steel powerhouse.
- Key Features:**
 - Five Product Categories:** Coated/Plated Steel, High Strength/Wear Resistant Steel, Specialty Rails, Alloy Steel Products & Steel Wires, and Electrical Steel.
 - Reduced Thresholds:**
 - Investment threshold for CRGO (Cold-rolled grain-oriented steel) reduced to ₹3,000 crore.
 - Production threshold reduced to 50,000 tonnes.
 - Carry Forward Excess Production:** Companies can carry forward surplus production to the next year for incentive eligibility.
 - Focus on Existing Capacities:** Investments in augmenting existing facilities are now eligible for participation.
 - Incentive Period:** FY 2025-26 to FY 2029-30.

About India's First Organic Fisheries Cluster:

- What it is:** A fisheries cluster designed for sustainable and eco-friendly fish farming using organic practices.
- Features:**
 - Focuses on **minimal environmental pollution** and sustainable production.
 - Incorporates **amur carp** and other key species for organic fish farming.
 - Supported by NABARD** through funding for infrastructure, capacity building, and forming [Farmer Producer Organizations \(FFPOs\)](#).

About Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)

- Launched by:** Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying in **2020**.
- Aim:** Accelerate growth in the fisheries sector, enhance productivity, and align with the **Blue Economy vision**.
- Features:**
 - Cluster-Based Approach:** Promotes economies of scale, competitiveness, and value-chain strengthening.
 - Covers production, processing, and marketing for fisheries like freshwater, brackish water, ornamental, and organic fisheries.

Insta links:

1. [Production-linked-incentive-scheme](#)

- **Two components:**
 - Central Sector Scheme (CS)
 - Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) with beneficiary-oriented and non-beneficiary-oriented subcomponents.
- Focus on technologies like **Biofloc systems** and **Recirculatory Aquaculture Systems (RAS)**.

Insta links:

1. [Tuna-cluster](#)

Mapping:

UMRED-PAUNI-KARHANDLA WILD-LIFE SANCTUARY

Context: The Bombay High Court took suo moto cognizance of an incident involving tourists cornering a tigress and her cubs in Umred-Pauni-Karhandla Wildlife Sanctuary, exposing lapses in wildlife protection and monitoring protocols.



About Umred Karhandla Wildlife Sanctuary:

- **Location:** Situated in **Pauni Tahsil, Bhandara district, and Umred, Kuhi, and Bhivapur Taluka, Nagpur district, Maharashtra.**
- **National Park:** Connected to **Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve** via the forest along the **Wainganga River**, forming a crucial tiger conservation corridor.
- **River:** Bounded by the **Wainganga River** and the **Gose Khurd Dam** to the northeast.
- **Flora:** Dense deciduous forests with teak, bamboo, and other hardwoods dominating the landscape.
- **Fauna:**
 - **Mammals:** Tigers, leopards, sloth bears, wild dogs, Indian gaur, sambar deer, and spotted deer.
 - **Birds:** Rich avian population with various endemic and migratory species.
 - **Reptiles:** Cobras, pythons, and other reptiles add to the biodiversity.

Insta links:

1. [Kawal-tiger-reserve](#)