# UPSC 2025
## CURRENT AFFAIRS
### MOST IMPORTANT
TOPICS FROM FEB 15 TO MARCH 3

National Technical Textiles Mission (NTTM)

Exercise Cyclone 2025

Autonomous District Councils (ADCs)

Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)

U.S.–India COMPACT Initiative

Climate Risk Index (CRI)

# REVISION NOTE

National Technical Textiles Mission (NTTM)

Autonomous District Councils (ADCs)

Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)

Climate Risk Index (CRI)

LEGENDARY IAS MENTOR
CIVIL SERVICE ACADEMY

NAMASTE Scheme

GREAT Scheme

NAKSHA Programme

# GREAT Scheme

Recently, the central government has approved 04 Start-Ups with a grant under the 'Grant for Research & Entrepreneurship across Aspiring Innovators in Technical Textiles (GREAT)' scheme.

**About GREAT Scheme**

- It was **launched in August 2023** with the aim to develop the Startup Ecosystem in Technical Textiles in India.

- It has evolved under the Research, Development, and Innovation Component of **National Technical Textiles Mission** (NTTM).

- It encourages young **innovators, scientists/technologists**, and startup ventures in the field of **Technical Textiles** to translate their ideas into commercial technologies/products and make India self-reliant.

- It supports **individual entrepreneurs or start-ups** for functional prototypes or commercialization of their technologies for Technical Textile.

- It supports innovations under application areas in all segments of Technical Textiles such as Agro-textiles, Building-textiles, Cloth-textiles, Geotextiles, Home-textiles, Industrial-textiles, Medical-textiles, Mobile-textiles, Oeko-textiles, Packaging- textiles, Protective-textiles, Sports-textiles, etc.

- **Funding:** A grant-in-aid of up to **Rs 50 lakh for up to a period of 18 months** will be provided.

# National Technical Textiles Mission (NTTM)

**The National Technical Textiles Mission (NTTM) was launched in February 2020 by the Ministry of Textiles to boost India's technical textiles sector. It aims to position India as a global leader in high-performance textiles, reduce import dependence, and promote domestic manufacturing.**

## What are Technical Textiles?

Technical textiles are engineered textile materials designed for functional applications across industries such as healthcare, agriculture, defence, infrastructure, and automobiles. These textiles are distinct from conventional textiles, which are primarily used for aesthetic and clothing purposes.

**Examples of Technical Textiles in Different Sectors**

| Category | Application | Example in India |
|---|---|---|
| Agrotech (Agricultural Textiles) | Used for crop protection, irrigation, and weather resistance | Shade nets for tea plantations in Assam, geotextiles for soil conservation in Maharashtra |
| Meditech (Medical Textiles) | Healthcare and hygiene products | PPE kits and N95 masks produced in Tamil Nadu during COVID-19 |
| Geotech (Geotextiles) | Civil engineering applications | Use of geotextiles in the Sikkim and Northeast road infrastructure projects |
| Protech (Protective Textiles) | Safety and defence | Bulletproof jackets developed by DRDO for Indian Army |
| Buildtech (Construction Textiles) | Infrastructure and real estate | Architectural fabric used in stadiums like Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad |
| Mobiltech (Automobile Textiles) | Car interiors, airbags, seatbelts | Airbags in Tata and Mahindra vehicles |

**Objectives of NTTM**

1. **Enhance R&D and Innovation** – Promote indigenous research in high-performance textiles.

2. **Increase Domestic Production & Exports** – Reduce import dependence and boost exports of technical textiles.

3. **Skill Development & Capacity Building** – Establish technical textile courses in IITs and NIFT.

4. **Encourage Investment & Infrastructure** – Attract private sector investment.

5. **Promote Use Across Sectors** – Encourage mandatory use in government projects like highways and defence.

**Structure of NTTM**

**The mission is structured into four key components:**

1. **Research, Innovation, and Development** – Supporting projects for new product development.
   - Example: DRDO's lightweight bulletproof jackets for defence personnel.

2. **Promotion & Market Development** – Increasing awareness and industry adoption.
   - Example: Government push for geotextiles in Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY).

3. **Export Promotion** – Strengthening India's position in global markets.
   - Example: India's export of PPE kits during COVID-19.

4. **Education, Training & Skill Development** – Enhancing workforce capabilities.
   - Example: Introduction of technical textile courses in IIT Delhi, NIFT, and NITRA.

## Significance of NTTM

✅ **Reduces Import Dependence** – India imports over ₹10,000 crore worth of technical textiles annually. The mission aims to substitute imports with domestic production.

✅ **Boosts Exports** – The global market for technical textiles is $260 billion, and India's share is only 5%. NTTM can enhance competitiveness.

✅ **Employment Generation** – The sector is expected to create 50 lakh jobs directly and indirectly.

✅ **Strengthens Infrastructure & Defence** – Encouraging technical textiles in projects like Bharatmala, Smart Cities, and defence modernization.

✅ **Supports Make in India & Atmanirbhar Bharat** – Encouraging domestic innovation and self-reliance in textile manufacturing.

## Challenges

- ⚠ **Lack of Awareness & Adoption** – Farmers and MSMEs are unaware of technical textile benefits.

- **Example: Low adoption of agrotextiles like crop covers and irrigation fabrics in rural India.**

- ⚠ **Limited R&D Ecosystem** – India lags behind China and the US in technical textile patents.

- ⚠ **High Capital Investment** – Advanced machinery and raw material procurement require high investment.

- ⚠ **Dependence on Imports for Raw Materials** – High-performance fibers like carbon fiber and aramid fiber are still imported.

## Government Initiatives to Boost Technical Textiles

- **PLI Scheme for Textiles** – ₹10,683 crore scheme to boost manufacturing of high-value technical textiles.

- **Mandatory Use in Government Projects** – Use of geotextiles in road construction (NHAI), defence, and space research.

- **Centers of Excellence (CoEs) – Specialized institutes promoting technical textiles:**
    - **SASMIRA – Focus on agrotech**
    - **NITRA – Protech (defence textiles)**
    - **ATIRA – Geotech (civil engineering textiles)**
- **BIS Standards for Technical Textiles – Standardization to ensure quality and reliability.**

**Way Forward**

- ✅ **Strengthening R&D and Innovation – Collaboration between IITs, DRDO, and private sector for indigenous high-performance fibers.**
- ✅ **Incentivizing Domestic Manufacturing – Lowering GST rates on raw materials and providing financial incentives.**
- ✅ **Awareness & Training Programs – Conducting workshops for MSMEs, farmers, and defence personnel.**
- ✅ **Global Competitiveness – Positioning India as a top exporter through FTAs with textile-importing nations.**

# PLACES IN NEWS

# DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

1. **Bukavu (South Kivu Province)** – Experienced a chaotic withdrawal of the Congolese army on February 14, 2025, followed by looting and M23 rebel occupation, leading to a humanitarian crisis.

2. **Goma (Eastern DRC)** – Strategic city witnessing clashes between Congolese soldiers and militia fighters backed by Rwanda, resulting in mass displacement.

3. **Boloko and Bomate Villages (Northwestern DRC)** – Outbreak of a mysterious disease linked to bats (since January 21, 2025), with 1,096 infections and 60 fatalities, resembling hemorrhagic fever.

4. **Uvira (South Kivu Province)** – Affected by the 2023-24 mpox epidemic, with challenges in healthcare accessibility and disease identification.

5. **Kahuzi-Biega National Park** – UNESCO World Heritage Site near Bukavu, home to eastern lowland gorillas, threatened by ongoing conflict.

6. **Virunga National Park** – Africa's oldest national park, impacted by regional conflicts, affecting mountain gorilla conservation and tourism.

7. **Kinshasa (Capital City)** – Protests and heightened tensions due to the eastern DRC conflict, including attacks on the Rwandan Embassy.

# Crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), one of Africa's largest and most resource-rich nations, has been plagued by armed conflicts, humanitarian crises, and foreign interventions for decades. The recent escalation of violence, particularly in eastern DRC, involves clashes between the Congolese military and M23 rebels, allegedly backed by Rwanda, leading to mass displacement and severe human rights violations.

**Historical Background**

**A. Pre-Colonial and Colonial Era (Before 1960)**

- **The region that is now the DRC was home to powerful pre-colonial African kingdoms, including the Kingdom of Kongo, Luba Empire, and Lunda Empire. These societies engaged in trade, agriculture, and metallurgy long before European intervention.**

- **European colonization (1885-1908):** The DRC was personally owned by King Leopold II of Belgium, who exploited its resources through forced labor, leading to the deaths of millions. Rubber extraction was particularly brutal, with widespread atrocities committed against the native population.

- **Belgian Congo (1908-1960):** Under Belgian rule, infrastructure and administration were developed, but local populations were denied political rights and economic benefits. The push for independence intensified in the 1950s, influenced by Pan-Africanism and anti-colonial movements.

**B. Post-Independence Instability (1960s-1990s)**

- **Independence and Crisis (1960-1965):** The DRC gained independence on June 30, 1960, with Patrice Lumumba as Prime Minister and Joseph Kasavubu as President. However, political rivalries, regional secessions (Katanga crisis), and Western intervention led to instability. Lumumba was assassinated in 1961 with alleged CIA and Belgian involvement.

- **Mobutu Era (1965-1997):** General Mobutu Sese Seko seized power in 1965, renaming the country Zaire. His rule was marked by extreme corruption, authoritarianism, and close ties with the West during the Cold War. The state collapsed under economic mismanagement, and Mobutu lost control of the eastern regions.

## C. Congo Wars and Regional Conflicts (1996-Present)

- **First Congo War (1996-1997):** After the 1994 Rwandan Genocide, Hutu extremists fled into eastern DRC, using refugee camps as bases to launch attacks on Rwanda. This prompted Rwanda and Uganda to back a rebel group led by Laurent-Désiré Kabila, which overthrew Mobutu in 1997. Kabila became President, renaming the country back to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

- **Second Congo War (1998-2003):** Often called "Africa's World War," this conflict involved nine African nations and multiple rebel factions. Kabila's decision to expel Rwandan and Ugandan forces led to their direct invasion. Angola, Zimbabwe, and Namibia intervened in support of Kabila. The war resulted in over 5 million deaths, mainly due to famine and disease.

- **Post-2003 Conflicts and Armed Groups:** Even after peace agreements, various armed groups like the March 23 Movement (M23), Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), and Mai-Mai militias continued fighting over ethnic grievances and resource control.

- **Current Conflict (2024-2025):** The resurgence of M23 rebels, allegedly backed by Rwanda, has led to territorial seizures, mass displacements, and heightened regional tensions.

## Causes of the Crisis

### A. Ethnic and Political Conflicts

- Tensions between ethnic groups like Hutus and Tutsis, aggravated by spillover effects from the 1994 Rwandan Genocide.

- M23 rebels, primarily Tutsi-led, claim discrimination and demand political inclusion.

### B. Foreign Interference

- Rwanda and Uganda are accused of supporting M23 rebels to control resource-rich territories.

- UN reports suggest Rwandan military involvement, escalating tensions with the DRC government.

### C. Resource Exploitation

- DRC is rich in cobalt, gold, diamonds, and coltan (critical for electronics & batteries).

- Armed groups finance their activities through illegal mining and smuggling, fueling conflict.

## D. Humanitarian Crisis

- Over 6 million people displaced, making DRC home to one of the world's worst internally displaced populations (IDPs).

- Sexual violence is used as a weapon of war, with thousands of reported cases annually.

- Malnutrition, disease outbreaks, and lack of healthcare services further exacerbate suffering.

### Recent Developments (2024-2025)

- February 2025 – M23 rebels seized Bukavu (South Kivu Province), causing a chaotic withdrawal of Congolese forces.

- Goma under siege, leading to mass displacement and economic disruption.

- Outbreak of hemorrhagic fever in Boloko & Bomate villages – 1,096 infections, 60 deaths.

- Protests in Kinshasa over Rwandan involvement, with attacks on the Rwandan Embassy.

## Impact of the Crisis

### A. Humanitarian Consequences

- Over 10 million people need urgent humanitarian aid (UN reports).

- Thousands killed, with women and children suffering the most.

### B. Environmental and Conservation Threats

- Virunga & Kahuzi-Biega National Parks face risks from illegal activities and deforestation.

- Endangered species like mountain gorillas are at risk due to habitat destruction.

### C. Regional & Global Implications

- Strained relations between DRC and Rwanda, increasing the risk of a larger regional war.

- DRC's instability affects Central and East African geopolitics, including the African Union (AU).

## Challenges in Resolving the Crisis

⚠ **Weak Governance** – Corruption, lack of political will, and ineffective law enforcement.
⚠ **Armed Groups & Illicit Economy** – Over 100 armed groups operate in eastern DRC.
⚠ **Limited International Action** – UN Peacekeeping Mission (MONUSCO) has been ineffective in preventing violence.
⚠ **Humanitarian Aid Shortages** – Relief agencies face funding gaps and security threats.

The crisis in DRC remains one of the world's most complex conflicts, driven by ethnic tensions, resource exploitation, and foreign interventions. Without strong regional cooperation, governance reforms, and international pressure, long-term peace remains uncertain. The situation demands urgent global attention to prevent further humanitarian catastrophe.

# EXERCISE CYCLONE 2025

India and Egypt will hold Exercise Cyclone 2025 from February 10 to 23 in Rajasthan.

**About Exercise Cyclone 2025**

- It is a **joint military exercise** held between **India and Egypt army.**

- This is the **third edition** of Cyclone exercise.

- The first edition of the exercise was conducted in 2023 (In India) and second edition (In Egypt) was in 2024.

- **Goal of Exercise Cyclone 2025:** The goal is to improve coordination between the two armies. Training will include real-world scenarios and tactical drills.

- **Motto of Exercise Cyclone 2025:** "Together we train, together we excel"

- The exercise will involve the special forces of both countries. The Indian Army and the Egyptian Army would train together in desert conditions.

The focus will be on counter-terrorism, high-intensity combat, and survival techniques.

- Military cooperation between India and Egypt has strengthened in recent years. Both countries have emphasised the need to strengthen security efforts. The exercise will allow both forces to operate together in simulated combat situations.

- **Significance of Exercise Cyclone 2025:** The exercise is expected to enhance defence cooperation and improve readiness for security challenges.

# AUTONOMOUS DISTRICT COUNCILS

The **Autonomous District Councils (ADCs)** are administrative bodies created under the **Sixth Schedule** of the Indian Constitution to provide self-governance to certain tribal areas in **Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram**. These councils are empowered with legislative, judicial, and financial autonomy to protect the cultural and social rights of indigenous tribes.

**Latest News (2025)**

- The elections for the **Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council (KHADC) and Jaintia Hills Autonomous District Council (JHADC)** are scheduled for **February 21, 2025** in Meghalaya.

- These elections are significant as they will determine local governance policies, tribal rights protections, and developmental initiatives in these regions.

**Constitutional Provision & Jurisdiction**

- The **Sixth Schedule** of the Constitution lists **ten tribal areas** across four northeastern states:
    - **Assam (3)**: Bodoland, Dima Hasao, and Karbi Anglong.
    - **Meghalaya (3)**: Khasi Hills, Jaintia Hills, and Garo Hills.
    - **Tripura (1)**: Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council.
    - **Mizoram (3)**: Chakma, Lai, and Mara Autonomous District Councils.

- Each of these tribal areas is designated as an **autonomous district** and is governed by an **Autonomous District Council (ADC).**

**Structure of Autonomous District Councils**

- Each ADC consists of **up to 30 members**, serving a **five-year term**.

- **26 members are elected** through **adult franchise**, while **4 members are nominated** by the **Governor**.

- The **Governor has special powers** regarding the administration of these councils and can **modify or annul their laws**.

**Functions and Powers of Autonomous District Councils**

ADCs have **legislative, administrative, and financial** functions aimed at safeguarding tribal autonomy. These include:

**A. Legislative Powers**

- Formulating **laws on land, forests (except reserved forests), water resources**, and community governance.

- Regulating **inheritance of property, marriage, divorce, and social customs**.

- Overseeing **appointment of traditional tribal chiefs and headmen**.

- Establishing and managing **village courts** to resolve local disputes.

**B. Executive and Administrative Powers**

- Managing **primary schools, dispensaries, markets, fisheries, roads, and ferry services**.

- Controlling **money lending and trade by non-tribals**, subject to **Governor's approval**.

- Enforcing regulations to **preserve tribal customs, traditions, and languages**.

**C. Judicial Powers**

- Autonomous District Councils have the power to **constitute village courts** for resolving disputes among tribals.

- Cases involving non-tribals, or those exceeding their judicial powers, are referred to the **High Court of the state**.

## Examples of ADCs and Their Impact

- **Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC)**: Played a key role in preserving tribal culture and providing land rights to indigenous communities.

- **Bodoland Territorial Region (Assam)**: Established under the Bodo Accord, it has been instrumental in self-governance and economic development of the Bodo people.

- **Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council (Meghalaya)**: Enacted laws to protect Khasi customary practices and regulate land ownership among tribals.

- **Chakma Autonomous District Council (Mizoram)**: Facilitates education and welfare programs for the Chakma tribe, helping in cultural preservation.

## Challenges Faced by Autonomous District Councils

- **Limited Financial Resources**: ADCs rely heavily on state and central government funding, limiting their financial independence and capacity for effective governance.

- **Interference by State Governments**: The Governor holds the power to override ADC decisions, restricting their autonomy and self-governance.

- **Conflict Between Customary Laws and State Laws**: Many tribal laws and traditions are in conflict with national legal frameworks, leading to jurisdictional disputes.

- **Political Instability and Corruption**: Allegations of mismanagement, inefficiency, and corruption hinder the effective functioning of ADCs.

- **Demand for More Autonomy**: Various tribal groups demand greater autonomy, with some advocating for full statehood instead of ADCs, leading to frequent political unrest.

## Government Initiatives & Reforms

- **Increased Financial Assistance**: The central government provides financial grants for ADCs to ensure smoother functioning and governance.

- **Infrastructure Development**: Initiatives to improve **education, healthcare, and road connectivity** in tribal areas.

- **Review of Sixth Schedule**: Ongoing discussions to **expand ADC powers** and include more tribal areas under the Sixth Schedule.

- **Digitization Initiatives**: Implementation of **e-governance** measures to enhance administrative efficiency and transparency.

- **Strengthening Legal Framework**: Efforts to resolve conflicts between **customary laws and state/national laws** to streamline governance.

- **Skill Development & Capacity Building**: Programs for training ADC members and tribal populations in **administrative and economic self-reliance**.

- **Inclusion in National Development Schemes**: Aligning ADCs with **tribal welfare programs** like Vanbandhu Kalyan Yojana and Skill India Mission.

**Way Forward**

- **Strengthening Financial Autonomy**: Ensuring ADCs have sufficient resources for self-governance and reducing dependency on state and central grants.

- **Decentralization of Power**: Reducing state government control and granting more decision-making power to ADCs to enhance autonomy.

- **Integration with National Schemes**: Linking ADCs with **tribal welfare and infrastructure programs** such as Jal Jeevan Mission and PMGSY.

- **Capacity Building & Training**: Providing training programs for ADC members to improve governance, administration, and financial management.

- **Preserving Tribal Identity**: Formulating policies to protect **tribal languages, customs, and traditions**, ensuring the preservation of indigenous cultures.

- **Enhancing Digital Governance**: Implementing **e-governance** initiatives to streamline administration and improve service delivery in tribal regions.

- **Better Coordination with State and Centre**: Encouraging a cooperative federal approach where ADCs, state governments, and the central government work in tandem for holistic development.

# Climate Risk Index (CRI)

The **Climate Risk Index (CRI)** is an important tool that assesses the impact of **extreme weather events** on countries. It provides insights into the level of vulnerability of nations to climate change by analyzing the human and economic consequences of disasters such as **floods, cyclones, and heatwaves**.

- According to the latest **Climate Risk Index report (2025)**, **India ranks sixth** among the **top 10 countries** most affected by extreme weather events from **1993 to 2023**.

- The report highlights the growing impact of climate change on **India's economy, infrastructure, and population**, emphasizing the need for urgent mitigation and adaptation strategies.

**About Climate Risk Index**

- **First published:** 2006.

- **Purpose:** Assesses the impact of **extreme weather events** on different countries.

- **Type of Index:** A **backward-looking index** ranking countries based on the **realized risks and damages** caused by extreme climate events.

- **Published by: Germanwatch**, an independent development, environmental, and human rights organization based in **Bonn and Berlin**.

- **Data Sources:**

  o **Extreme weather event data:** International Disaster Database (**EM-DAT**).

  o **Socio-economic data: International Monetary Fund (IMF)**.

**Ranking Methodology**

- The index ranks countries based on two key factors:

  1. **Human impact:** Includes **fatalities, injuries, and people affected or rendered homeless**.

  2. **Economic impact:** Assesses **financial losses** due to extreme weather events.

- The country with the most severe impact is ranked highest in vulnerability.

**Highlights of the 2025 Climate Risk Index**

**India's Performance**

- **Rank: 6th** among the most affected countries from **1993-2023**.

- **Contribution to global fatalities: 10%** of all deaths due to extreme weather events.

- **Economic loss: $180 billion** in damages (4.3% of global economic loss).

- **Total extreme events faced: Over 400 disasters**.

- **Major climate disasters in India:**

  - **Floods:** 1993 (Maharashtra Floods), 1998 (Bihar Floods), 2013 (**Uttarakhand Flash Floods**).

  - **Heatwaves:** 2002 (Andhra Pradesh Heatwave), 2003 (North India Heatwave), 2015 (**Telangana and Andhra Heatwave** with 2,500+ deaths).

  - **Cyclones:** Regular occurrences, including major ones like **Cyclone Amphan (2020)** affecting West Bengal and Odisha, and **Cyclone Tauktae (2021)** devastating Gujarat and Maharashtra.

**Global Rankings (2025)**

- **Countries ranked ahead of India:**

  1. **Dominica** (Severe hurricane impacts, including Hurricane Maria in 2017)

  2. **China** (Frequent floods and typhoons, such as the 2020 Yangtze River Floods)

  3. **Honduras** (Vulnerable to hurricanes, including Hurricane Mitch in 1998)

  4. **Myanmar** (Cyclone Nargis in 2008 causing 138,000+ deaths)

  5. **Italy** (Extreme heatwaves and flooding, including the 2022 European heatwave)

## Challenges Posed by Climate Risks in India

- **Rising temperatures** leading to more frequent and intense **heatwaves**.

- **Increased flooding** due to erratic monsoons and glacier melts, as seen in **Kedarnath floods (2013)** and **Chennai floods (2015, 2021)**.

- **More destructive cyclones** affecting coastal states like **Odisha, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, and Gujarat**.

- **Agricultural losses** affecting food security and rural livelihoods, such as **droughts in Maharashtra (2018) and Bundelkhand region**.

- **Health hazards** due to rising vector-borne diseases such as **dengue and malaria outbreaks** in **Delhi and Kolkata** during post-monsoon periods.

## Government Initiatives to Address Climate Risks

- **National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC):** Framework to address climate adaptation and mitigation.

- **State Action Plans on Climate Change (SAPCCs):** Region-specific adaptation strategies.

- **National Adaptation Fund for Climate Change (NAFCC):** Financial support for projects tackling climate change.

- **Renewable Energy Targets:** Commitment to achieving **500 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030**.

- **Early Warning Systems:** Strengthening disaster preparedness through **IMD (Indian Meteorological Department)** forecasts and disaster response mechanisms.

- **Smart Cities Mission:** Integrating climate resilience into urban planning, particularly for coastal cities vulnerable to rising sea levels.

- **Afforestation programs:** Initiatives like **Green India Mission** and **CAMPA** (Compensatory Afforestation Programme) to enhance carbon sequestration and reduce environmental degradation.

**Way Forward**

- **Enhancing Climate Resilience:** Developing **flood-resistant infrastructure, sustainable agriculture practices, and improved urban planning**.

- **Strengthening Early Warning Systems:** Improving disaster preparedness to reduce casualties and economic losses.

- **Investing in Renewable Energy:** Accelerating transition to **solar, wind, and hydro energy**.

- **Community-Based Adaptation:** Engaging local communities in climate adaptation strategies.

- **International Cooperation:** Collaborating with global initiatives like **Paris Agreement and COP summits** for financial and technological support.

# U.S.-India COMPACT Initiative

The **U.S.-India COMPACT Initiative** is a newly launched framework aimed at **deepening strategic, technological, and economic cooperation** between the two nations. It marks a significant step in **strengthening bilateral ties**, particularly in the domains of **defence, trade, innovation, and space exploration**.

**Latest Updates (2025)**

- **Launched by** the **President of the USA** and the **Prime Minister of India**.

- Focuses on accelerating cooperation in **military partnerships, technology, trade, and defence industrial collaboration**.

- Aims to deliver tangible outcomes this year, **demonstrating mutual trust** and strategic alignment.

**Objectives of the COMPACT Initiative**

- **Enhancing defence cooperation** through long-term frameworks.

- **Advancing joint technological innovation** in emerging domains.

- **Boosting trade and economic collaboration**.

- **Strengthening space exploration and critical minerals partnerships**.

- **Promoting industrial and academic linkages** for cutting-edge research.

## Key Features of the U.S.-India COMPACT Initiative

### A. New Defence Procurements & Regulatory Reforms

- Establishment of a **ten-year framework** for the **U.S.-India Major Defence Partnership**.

- **Increased defence sales** and **co-production initiatives**.

- **Regulatory reforms** to ease defence trade and technology transfer.

- **Example:** Expansion of **GE Aerospace and HAL partnership** to co-produce jet engines for the Indian Air Force.

### B. Advancing Defence Technologies & Military Collaboration

- Collaboration in **space, air defence, missile systems, maritime, and undersea operations**.

- **Launch of the Autonomous Systems Industry Alliance (ASIA)** to spur innovation in **AI-enabled counter-UAS** and **maritime defence**.

- Expansion of **joint military exercises** and intelligence-sharing mechanisms.

- **Example:** Inclusion of **India in the AUKUS Pillar 2 talks** to strengthen military technology collaboration.

### C. Economic & Trade Expansion

- **Mission 500**: Aim to **double bilateral trade to $500 billion by 2030**.

- **Negotiation of the first phase of a Bilateral Trade Agreement** by fall 2025.

- Focus on **fair trade, national security, and job creation**.

- **Example: US-India Semiconductor Supply Chain Partnership**, supporting India's goal of becoming a global chip manufacturing hub.

### D. Strengthening Technology & Innovation Ties

- Launch of the **U.S.-India TRUST Initiative** to enhance cooperation in:
  - **Defence and AI**
  - **Semiconductors and quantum computing**
  - **Biotechnology, energy, and space technology**

- **Joint research and development (R&D) programs** between Indian and U.S. institutions.
- **Example:** Collaboration between **IIT Madras and U.S. National Science Foundation** for AI and quantum computing research.

**E. Boosting Space Cooperation & Critical Minerals Partnership**

- **Deepening space collaboration** through industrial and academic linkages.
- Introduction of **INDUS Innovation**, inspired by the **INDUS-X platform**, to drive advancements in **space and emerging technologies**.
- Strengthening **critical minerals supply chains** to ensure strategic independence.
- **Example:** Joint effort in **rare earth mineral exploration in India**, reducing dependency on China.

**F. Space Collaboration in 2025**

- **NASA and ISRO partnership via AXIOM** to send the **first Indian astronaut to the ISS**.
- **Expedited launch of the NISAR dual-radar satellite** for earth observation and climate monitoring.
- **Example:** Collaboration on **Lunar Gateway project**, supporting India's ambitions in deep-space exploration.

**Significance for India**

- **Strategic Autonomy**: Strengthens India's position as a global power while maintaining **independent foreign policy**.
- **Technological Advancement**: Boosts innovation in **AI, space, quantum computing, and semiconductors**.
- **Defence Modernization**: Expands access to **cutting-edge U.S. military technology**.
- **Economic Growth**: Strengthens trade, investment, and industrial collaborations.
- **Space Leadership**: Enhances India's role in **global space exploration**.

## Challenges & Concerns

- **Technology Transfer Restrictions**: Concerns over U.S. export control policies and restrictions.

- **Regulatory Bottlenecks**: Need for streamlined procedures in defence and trade collaborations.

- **China Factor**: Potential geopolitical implications due to growing Indo-U.S. strategic ties.

- **Economic Protectionism**: Divergent trade policies may slow negotiations on trade agreements.

- **Implementation Hurdles**: Ensuring timely execution of proposed initiatives.

## Way Forward

- **Enhancing Bilateral Trust**: Strengthen diplomatic mechanisms for transparent and effective cooperation.

- **Institutional Frameworks**: Establish joint working groups for smoother implementation.

- **Encouraging Private Sector Participation**: Involve industries and startups in technology collaboration.

- **Regional Cooperation**: Align COMPACT with Indo-Pacific strategies for broader engagement.

- **Policy Reforms**: Streamline defence procurement and trade regulations.

# Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)

The **Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)** is the **most widely used global ranking** to assess public sector corruption across nations. Published by **Transparency International**, it provides a comparative analysis of corruption levels based on expert assessments and business surveys.

**Latest Updates (2024)**

- **India ranked 96 out of 180 countries** in the 2024 CPI, reflecting a decline from previous years (39 in 2023, 40 in 2022).

- **Denmark topped the index**, followed by **Finland and Singapore**.

- The **Asia-Pacific region's average score fell to 44**, indicating weak enforcement of anti-corruption measures.

- The report linked **corruption to climate action**, emphasizing its impact on **climate financing and governance**.

**About the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)**

- **Launched in 1995** by **Transparency International**.

- Ranks countries based on **perceived levels of public sector corruption**.

- **Definition of Corruption**: "Abuse of entrusted power for private gain."

- **Scoring Mechanism**:

  - **Scale: 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean).**

  - Derived from **at least three data sources** out of 13 corruption surveys and assessments.

  - Data gathered from reputed organizations like the **World Bank and World Economic Forum**.

**Key Highlights of the CPI 2024**

- **Global Trends**:

  - Countries with **strong democratic institutions** continue to perform better.

  - **Authoritarian regimes and conflict-ridden nations** show high corruption levels.

  - **Linkage between corruption and climate financing** identified as a major concern.

- **India's Performance**:
  - **CPI Score: 38**, indicating a decline from 39 (2023) and 40 (2022).
  - India faces **challenges in enforcement of anti-corruption laws**.
  - Issues in **public procurement, political funding, and bureaucratic inefficiency** remain.
  - **Comparison**:
    - India lags behind **China (65), UAE (68), and Malaysia (47)**.
    - Performs better than **Pakistan (28) and Bangladesh (25)**.

**Notable Examples:**

- **Electoral Bonds Controversy**: Lack of transparency in political donations led to concerns over anonymous funding.
- **Commonwealth Games (CWG) Scam (2010)**: Massive financial irregularities in organizing CWG, highlighting corruption in public infrastructure projects.
- **Vyapam Scam (Madhya Pradesh)**: Large-scale exam and recruitment fraud exposed systemic corruption in education and employment.
- **PNB Bank Fraud (2018)**: Nirav Modi scam exposed fraudulent transactions worth ₹11,000 crores, undermining banking sector integrity.

## 5. Significance for India

- **Governance & Institutional Integrity**: A declining CPI score suggests the need for **stronger anti-corruption measures**.
- **Impact on Economy**:
  - **Investor confidence declines** due to lack of transparency.
  - **Increased cost of doing business** due to bureaucratic inefficiencies.
- **Effect on Public Services**:
  - Corruption affects **social welfare schemes, infrastructure development, and public procurement**.
  - Leakage of funds in **schemes like MGNREGA and PDS**.

## 6. Challenges & Concerns

- **Lack of Stringent Enforcement**: Anti-corruption laws exist but implementation is weak.

- **Political and Electoral Funding Issues**: **Electoral Bonds controversy** highlighted lack of transparency in political donations.

- **Judicial & Bureaucratic Corruption**: Delay in justice delivery and administrative inefficiencies.

- **Sectoral Corruption**:

  - **Defence**: Scams like **Bofors and AgustaWestland**.

  - **Banking & Financial Sector**: NPAs due to **fraudulent loans**.

  - **Real Estate**: Illegal land acquisition and bribery in urban planning.

## Government Initiatives to Tackle Corruption

- **Legislative Measures**:

  - **Prevention of Corruption Act (1988)**: Amended in 2018 to include stricter provisions.

  - **Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act (2013)**: Establishes an independent ombudsman.

  - **Whistleblower Protection Act (2014)**: Protection for informants exposing corruption.

  - **Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act (2016)**: Crackdown on undisclosed assets.

- **Digital & Structural Reforms**:

  - **DBT (Direct Benefit Transfer)** to reduce leakages in welfare schemes.

  - **e-Governance initiatives** like **GeM (Government e-Marketplace)** for transparent public procurement.

  - **Aadhaar linkage** to curb fraudulent beneficiaries.

  - **FASTag, GST, and JAM Trinity** to reduce rent-seeking behaviors.

**Way Forward**

- **Strengthening Anti-Corruption Bodies**: Empower **CVC, Lokpal, and Lokayuktas** with more autonomy.

- **Electoral Reforms**: Greater transparency in **political donations**.

- **Judicial & Administrative Reforms**: **Fast-tracking corruption cases** through special courts.

- **International Collaboration**: Adopting global best practices in anti-corruption measures.

- **Public Awareness & Citizen Participation**: Strengthening RTI Act implementation and public audits.

India's declining rank in the CPI **signals a need for stronger institutional reforms and stricter enforcement of anti-corruption measures**. Ensuring **transparent governance, fair political financing, and accountable administration** will be crucial in improving India's standing on the global index.

# NAMASTE SCHEME

- The **National Action for Mechanized Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE) Scheme** aims to eliminate hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks, promoting **mechanized and safe sanitation practices**.

- It is a flagship scheme of the **Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (MoSJE)** and the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)**.

- Recently, PPE kits and Ayushman health cards were distributed to sewer and septic tank workers under this scheme.

**Objectives of NAMASTE Scheme**

- **Eradication of manual scavenging** and prevention of hazardous cleaning practices.

- **Skill development and rehabilitation** of sewer and septic tank workers (SSWs).

- **Promoting mechanization** in cleaning operations to ensure safety.

- **Livelihood and social security benefits** for sanitation workers.

**Key Features of NAMASTE Scheme**

- **Implementation Period:** FY **2023-24 to 2025-26** (3 years).

- **Target Group:** Sewer and septic tank sanitation workers (SSWs) and waste pickers in **urban areas**.

- **Implementing Agency: National Safai Karmacharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC)** under MoSJE.

- **Health & Safety Measures:**

  o Provision of **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits**.

  o **Ayushman Bharat health cards** for healthcare benefits.

- **Skill Development:**

  o Training for sanitation workers in mechanized cleaning technologies.

  o Facilitation of employment in alternative sectors.

- **Mechanization of Cleaning Operations:**

  o **Financial support** for procuring mechanized cleaning equipment.

  o Promotion of **robotic and AI-based sewer cleaning technologies**.

**Examples:**

- **Indore, Madhya Pradesh**: The municipal corporation has deployed robotic machines for sewer cleaning, significantly reducing the need for manual scavenging.

- **Chennai, Tamil Nadu**: Implementation of mechanized suction and jetting machines to clean sewer lines, improving worker safety.

- **Pune, Maharashtra**: Introduction of training programs for sanitation workers to operate modern cleaning equipment under the NAMASTE scheme.

**Significance of NAMASTE Scheme**

- **Social Justice:** Addresses caste-based occupational hazards, especially for Dalits.

- **Public Health & Hygiene:** Reduces health risks associated with manual scavenging.

- **Urban Development:** Aligns with **Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM-Urban)**.

- **Economic Empowerment:** Provides financial support and alternative livelihood options.

- **Gender Inclusion:** Recognizes the role of women in sanitation work.

## Challenges in Implementation

- **Lack of Awareness:** Many sanitation workers remain unaware of their rights and benefits.

- **Slow Mechanization Adoption:** Limited availability of mechanized cleaning equipment.

- **Resistance to Change:** Social stigma and informal employment structures hinder transition.

- **Gaps in Rehabilitation Measures:** Need for stronger monitoring and enforcement.

## Government Initiatives Complementing NAMASTE

- **Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers & Rehabilitation Act (2013).**

- **Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM).**

- **National Safai Karamchari Commission (NSKC).**

- **Aatmanirbhar Bharat Schemes for skill development.**

## Way Forward

- **Strengthening Implementation:** Effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms.

- **Enhanced Awareness & Outreach:** Targeted campaigns to educate workers.

- **Technology Integration:** Adoption of **AI-based cleaning solutions**.

- **Improving Rehabilitation Programs:** Ensuring employment post-skill development.

- **Stakeholder Collaboration:** Coordination between urban local bodies and private sector.

The NAMASTE scheme is a **significant step towards mechanization of sanitation work**, ensuring **dignity, safety, and economic upliftment** for sanitation workers. **Its effective implementation is crucial for achieving a manual scavenging-free India.**

# GULF OF EILAT (GULF OF AQABA)

- The **Gulf of Eilat**, also known as the **Gulf of Aqaba**, is a **northeastern extension of the Red Sea**, playing a crucial role in regional geopolitics, trade, and marine biodiversity.

- A recent study revealed that the coral reefs in the Gulf of Eilat experienced a **3,000-year growth shutdown (4,400 to 1,000 years ago)**, possibly due to **global cooling and sea-level drop**.

## Geographical Significance

- The Gulf of Eilat lies **at the southeastern edge of the Sinai Peninsula**, west of the Arabian Peninsula.

- It is part of the **East African Rift System**, formed by seismic activity along the **Afro-Syrian Rift**.

- The **Tiran Strait** connects the Gulf of Eilat with the Red Sea and serves as a key **maritime trade route**.

## Bordering Countries & Strategic Importance

- The Gulf of Eilat is bordered by **Israel, Jordan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia**.

- Major coastal cities include:

  o **Eilat (Israel)** – Israel's only access to the Red Sea.

  o **Aqaba (Jordan)** – Jordan's key port city and economic hub.

  o **Taba (Egypt)** – A significant tourist and trade area.

- **Strategic maritime chokepoint:** Essential for international trade and naval movements, particularly for Israel and Jordan.

## Environmental & Ecological Importance

- The Gulf supports **some of the world's richest coral reefs**, hosting diverse **marine ecosystems**.

- **Climate Resilience:** Corals in the Gulf of Eilat are highly resistant to climate change compared to other reefs globally.

- **Threats:** Pollution, climate change, and increasing tourism pressure.

## Economic & Trade Significance

- **Port activities:** Aqaba and Eilat serve as major hubs for regional and global trade.

- **Tourism & Economy:** The Gulf's coral reefs and beaches attract global tourism, boosting the local economies.

- **Energy & Resources:** Offshore **oil exploration and maritime logistics** enhance economic prospects.

## Geopolitical & Security Concerns

- **Israel-Saudi maritime access:** Negotiations over Saudi-Israeli cooperation for Red Sea navigation.

- **Tiran Strait Dispute:** Historical tensions over naval passage between Egypt and Israel.

- **Terrorism & Piracy Risks:** Security challenges impacting commercial shipping routes.

## Way Forward

- **Strengthening Environmental Protection:** Regional cooperation for sustainable marine conservation.

- **Enhancing Security & Trade:** Promoting diplomatic dialogues for peaceful maritime navigation.

- **Developing Eco-tourism:** Sustainable development initiatives to protect marine biodiversity

# NAKSHA PROGRAMME

- The **National Geospatial Knowledge-based Land Survey of Urban Habitations (NAKSHA) Programme** aims to create and update **accurate land records** in urban areas.

- Launched by the **Ministry of Rural Development and Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare**, it focuses on ensuring transparency and reducing land disputes.

- Recently, the Union Minister inaugurated the programme at **Raisen, Madhya Pradesh**.

**Objectives of NAKSHA Programme**

- **Accurate and updated land records** to ensure clear property ownership.

- **Reduction in land disputes** by providing legally backed documentation.

- **Ease of urban planning** through comprehensive geospatial mapping.

- **Empowering citizens** by enhancing transparency in land administration.

- **Supporting sustainable development** through digital property records.

**Key Features of NAKSHA Programme**

- **Technology-Driven Land Survey:** Uses **geospatial technology, aerial surveys, and orthorectified imagery** for precision mapping.

- **Implementation Partners:**
  - **Survey of India**: Conducting aerial surveys and providing orthorectified imagery.
  - **Madhya Pradesh State Electronic Development Corporation (MPSEDC)**: Developing the **web-GIS platform**.
  - **National Informatics Centre Services Inc. (NICSI)**: Providing data storage facilities.

- **State and UT Governments' Role:** Conducting **field surveys and ground truthing** before publishing urban land records.

- **IT-Based System:** Enables efficient property record administration.

- **Example:** Karnataka's **Bhoomi Project**, which digitized land records, has significantly reduced land disputes and increased transparency.

## 4. Significance of NAKSHA Programme

- **Land Ownership Clarity:** Helps in reducing legal disputes related to land.

- **Boost to Urban Governance:** Facilitates planned urban expansion and infrastructure development.

- **Digital Land Records:** Aligns with the **Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP)**.

- **Economic Growth:** Encourages **real estate investment and financial security**.

- **Prevention of Encroachments:** Reduces unauthorized land occupations.

- **Example:** Telangana's **Dharani Portal** has streamlined land transactions and ownership clarity.

## 5. Challenges in Implementation

- **Data Accuracy Issues:** Possible discrepancies in survey results.

- **Coordination Gaps:** Involvement of multiple agencies may cause delays.

- **Infrastructure Limitations:** Need for advanced technology and skilled workforce.

- **Public Awareness:** Lack of awareness about digital land records among citizens.

- **Example:** The slow implementation of **SVAMITVA Scheme** in some states due to lack of trained personnel.

## 6. Government Initiatives Complementing NAKSHA

- **Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP).**

- **SVAMITVA Scheme** - Property validation in rural India.

- **Urban Governance Reforms under Smart Cities Mission.**

- **Bhoomi Rashi Portal** - Facilitating land acquisition.

- **Example:** Rajasthan's **Apna Khata portal** has digitized land records and improved governance.

**7. Way Forward**

- **Strengthening Coordination:** Effective collaboration among central and state agencies.

- **Improving Survey Techniques:** Adoption of AI-based geospatial mapping.

- **Enhancing Public Awareness:** Educating citizens on digital land records.

- **Regular Updates and Maintenance:** Ensuring continuous monitoring of land records.

- **Integrating Blockchain Technology:** For secure and tamper-proof land records.

The **NAKSHA Programme** is a significant step toward **modernizing urban land governance** through geospatial technology, ensuring **transparent, efficient, and legally-backed land records**. Its success depends on **effective implementation, technological adoption, and public participation**.

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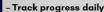–Strengthen your foundation

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